THE ACCOMMODATION OF THE BLACK GRADE NINE LEARNER IN A TRADITIONALLY WHITE SCHOOL

by

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The highest wisdom has but one science, the science of the whole.   *(Leo Tolstoy,* War and Peace)

To my parents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thanks to:

To God, the honour and the glory for blessings undeserved!

SUMMARY

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DEPARTMENT	:	**Orthopedagogics**
DEGREE	:	**Philosophiae Doctor**

In South Africa, First World and Third World elements exist side by side, representing different social, economic and political realities. The current educational dispensation advocates the exposure of members of various cultures to one another at school.

This study focuses on the quality of accommodation and possible accompanying problems and the degree of belonging experienced by black learners attending traditionally white schools. Differences between the cultural orientation, socio-economic situation and historico-political background of black learners, as opposed to the orientation of the schools they attend, could hinder their adjustment to these schools. Additional influencing factors could be these learners' expectations of the self, school and society, as well as a possible educational backlog.

This study endeavoured to research and describe black learners' life-worlds, especially their experience of the multicultural school environment in traditionally white schools. The aim of the empirical research was to identify any specific educational and underlying emotional needs that could arise from hailing from a different cultural background. This aim was realised firstly by undertaking a theoretical investigation focusing on the literature on the subject, and secondly by an empirical investigation in two phases into various aspects of black Grade Nine learners' life-worlds.

In the theoretical investigation, which served as a basis for the empirical study, an attempt was made to research the cultural and home situation of Grade Nine black learners. The discussion of problems that these learners could encounter within traditionally white schools was based on an eighteen-theme "culture-general framework" applied to the South African school situation.

The empirical research involved visits to a sample of eight traditionally white schools in Gauteng. Qualitative and quantitative methods were combined in a two-phase research design. In the quantitative phase, a questionnaire directed at the learners was applied to a sample of 332 learners. The questionnaire gathered biographical information, and data on the family, individual and school/cultural dimensions to identify stumbling blocks to and facilitating elements in the process of accommodation in these schools. The qualitative phase consisted of participating data collection techniques, namely sixteen semi-structured focus interviews with eight selected learners and eight teachers, one learner and one teacher from each of the eight participating schools. The interviews concentrated on the learners' and teachers' feelings regarding the same dimensions addressed by the questionnaire. The combination of these two procedures allowed a holistic and more in-depth picture of the nature of the learners' experiences and needs at school to emerge. The validity of the eventual conclusions was heightened by the process of triangulation between the theoretical, qualitative and quantitative findings.

Racism was identified as a prominent stumbling block, and effective accommodation strategies were lacking at schools. Learners displayed definite emotional and social needs within the school situation. On the other hand, several facilitating elements are already present in these schools and could be developed further. This challenging situation is addressed by means of various guidelines aiming to improve the quality of accommodation within schools. Suggestions for future research are also made.

Key words:

- black Grade Nine learner

- traditionally white school

- school accommodation

- educational/emotional needs

- culture-general framework

- stumbling blocks

- facilitating elements

- two-phase research design

- quantitative/qualitative research

- racism

- multiculturalism and anti-racism

- intercultural interaction

- double-bind situation

- holistic approach

- whole-school approach

SAMEVATTING

DIE AKKOMMODASIE VAN DIE SWART GRAAD NEGE LEERDER IN 'N TRADISIONEEL-BLANKE SKOOL

deur

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In Suid-Afrika bestaan Eerste en Derde wêrelde sy aan sy en is verteenwoordigend van verskillende sosiale, ekonomiese en politieke realiteite. Die huidige onderwysbedeling bepleit die blootstelling van verskeie kulture aan mekaar op skoolvlak.

Hierdie studie fokus op die kwaliteit van die akkommodasie en moontlike meegaande probleme en die graad van samehorigheid wat swart leerders in tradisioneel-blanke skole ervaar. Swart leerders se kulturele oriëntasie, sosio-ekonomiese situasie en histories-politiese agtergrond, in teenstelling met dié van hulle skool, kan hulle aanpassing by hierdie skole bemoeilik. Dit wil voorkom of hulle verwagtinge van hulself, skool en samelewing, sowel as 'n moontlike opvoedkundige agterstand ook hul ervaring van akkommodasie kan beïnvloed.

Die doel van hierdie studie is om swart leerders se leefwêrelde, veral hulle ervaring van die multikulturele skoolomgewing in 'n voorheen tradisioneel-blanke skool, na te vors. Die spesifieke doelstellings van die empiriese navorsing was om die opvoedkundige en onderliggende emosionele, sowel as enige ander behoeftes wat kan voortspruit uit verskillende kulturele agtergronde, te identifiseer. Hierdie doelstellings is gerealiseer deur eerstens 'n teoretiese ondersoek en tweedens deur 'n empiriese ondersoek na verskeie aspekte van die leefwêrelde van swart Graad Nege leerlinge te loods.

In die teoretiese ondersoek, wat dien as basis vir die empiriese studie, is 'n poging aangewend om die kulturele en huislike gesitueerdheid van Graad Nege swart leerlinge na te vors. Probleme wat hierdie leerlinge binne die tradisioneel-blanke skool kon teekom, was gebaseer op 'n agttien-tema "kultuur-algemene raamwerk" wat toegepas is op die Suid-Afrikaanse situasie.

Die empiriese ondersoek het bestaan uit besoeke aan agt tradisioneel-blanke skole in Gauteng. Kwalitatiewe en kwantitatiewe metodes is gekombineer gedurende die empiriese studie. Gedurende die kwantitatiewe ondersoek is 'n vraelys gemik op 'n steekproef van 332 leerders gebruik. Die vraelys het biografiese inligting, data oor die gesins-, individuele en skool-/kulturele dimensies ingewin om struikelblokke en fasiliterende elemente in hierdie skole te identifiseer. Die kwalitatiewe ondersoek het bestaan uit deelnemende data-insamelingstegnieke, naamlik sestien semi-gestruktureerde fokusonderhoude met agt leerders en agt onderwysers, een leerder en een onderwyser van elk van die agt deelnemende skole. Die kombinasie van hierdie twee prosedures verteenwoordig 'n holistiese en meer in-diepte prentjie van die aard van leerders se ervaringe en behoeftes op skool. Die geldigheid van die uiteindelike gevolgtrekkinge is aangehelp deur die proses van triangulasie tussen die teoretiese, kwalitatiewe en kwantitatiewe bevindings.

Rassisme is duidelik 'n prominente struikelblok, en doeltreffende akkommodasiestrategieë was nie in plek by die skole nie. Leerders het spesifieke emosionele en sosiale behoeftes getoon binne die skoolsituasie. Aan die ander kant was daar ook verskeie fasiliterende elemente teenwoordig in die skole, wat dan ook verder uitgebou kan word. Hierdie uitdagende situasie word aangespreek deur verskeie riglyne wat poog om die kwaliteit van akkommodasie in skole te verhoog. Voorstelle vir verdere navorsing word ook gemaak.

Sleutelwoorde:

- swart Graad Nege leerling

- tradisioneel-blanke skool

- skoolakkommodasie

- opvoedkundige/emosionele behoeftes

- kultuur-algemene raamwerk

- struikelblokke

- fasiliterende elemente

- twee-fase navorsingsontwerp

- kwantitatiewe/kwalitatiewe navorsing

- rassisme

- multikulturalisme en anti-rassisme

- interkulturele interaksie

- "double-bind" situasie

- holistiese benadering

- hele-skool benadering

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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND, CONTEXTUALISATION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.1   BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY AND ACTUALITY OF THE PROBLEM

*"My teacher is always telling me that she does not see my colour and that she treats all children the same. If she does not see my colour then she does not see **me**"* (Klein, 1993:128).

The learner who made the statement above accepts that his skin colour is undeniably part of his unique personal identity. Skin colour does not denote any particular inherent abilities or deficiencies. However, if this learner had been born and bred in South Africa during the apartheid era, his skin colour would certainly have influenced his early life-world to a greater or lesser degree.

Prior to South Africa's first fully democratic election in April 1994, skin colour was indeed a powerful determinant of a person's social standing. It determined, amongst other things, the neighbourhood where learners lived, their parents' employment profiles and the quality of the medical care, schooling and recreation available to these learners.

Turning a blind eye to learners' physical characteristics (in this case skin colour), by implication, denies the totality of their being. It implies overlooking different cultural and social realities. Such denial compels learners to cope at school with an environment of quasi-acceptance, often tainted by undercurrents of racism. Epstein (1993:101) states: "...we know that racism and racial prejudice do damage the life chances and life experiences of black people." A school that denies the existence of intercultural and interracial differences and lacks effective accommodation strategies for its learners could thwart the learners' feelings of truly belonging to the school. This could leave them feeling that they are outsiders – an experience that could have a negative

impact on their school careers and future lives. Racism and prejudice appear to be among the most prominent aspects that could affect South African learners every day. This study focuses on the quality of accommodation and accompanying problems experienced by black learners who attend traditionally white schools. To accomplish this broad aim, it was essential to formulate research questions by which to gauge Grade Nine black learners' experiences of and feelings about school.

These research questions were approached from the perspective of educational psychology, a discipline which endeavours to further the total well-being of children within their educational setting or environment. Van Greunen (1993:103) equates the educational setting with an educational ecosystem. Van Niekerk (1982:3) refers to such a system as the "entire panorama of possible educative contents". This system includes educational relationships such as trust, understanding and authority. It also includes educational aims and objectives, educative participation by adults, self-actualising participation by children as well as the physical, social, political, economic and religious components of the educational setting. According to Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (1997:34), the ecosystemic perspective demonstrates that individuals and groups of people across the social context are linked in dynamic, interactive and interdependent relationships.

In this study, the approach used is holistic, in other words, the study focuses on the whole, rather than just on selected parts (Hornby, 1995:568) of the phenomenon studied. A holistic approach enhances the possibility of providing a global picture of the phenomenon within the limited scope of the study. Educational anthropology, which developed when non-Western groups came into contact with Western education, studies the socio-cultural changes and educational problems which result from such contact (Van Heerden, 1992:12). This discipline employs a holistic approach in order to find explanations for and reach further understanding of a specific phenomenon. Because educational anthropologists favour a holistic approach for socio-cultural research questions similar to those examined in this study, a holistic approach seems to be the best suited to this study also.

The holistic approach used in this study implies that, to understand and assist learners, one must see them against the backdrop of their life-worlds – their family, friends and the society in which they function. The aim is to understand the range, the nature and the impact of the influences in

the life-worlds of these learners on themselves and consequently on the degree to which they experience accommodation at school.

There is a considerable need for research regarding the accommodation of black learners in secondary school. This need emerges clearly from a number of sources (Zafar & Keet, 1999:17-18). According to a front page article in the *Pretoria News* of Friday, 5 March 1999, the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) released a report dealing with solutions to racism in South African schools. In the compilation of the report, about ninety high schools were visited across the country. The report claimed that blatant racist, segregationist and discriminatory practices were frequently found. None of the schools in the sample polled by the SAHRC "had any anti-racist programme in place, while the few schools which embraced what they perceived to be multiculturalism, focused on tolerance of other cultures, instead of dealing with racism".

The report showed that some teachers were eager to experiment with anti-racist programmes, but battled to obtain relevant material. One educator repeatedly screened the movie *To Sir With Love* for learners in an attempt to help them to cope with the situation. This film may be helpful, but in itself it is not enough. The film cannot address the South African situation in all its complexity. The commission recommended that in-service education and training in human rights should become compulsory for educators. In order to address the problem of racism in South African schools (a problem which is closely linked to a sense of belonging to and being accommodated at school), **the experiences and needs of the learners concerned should first be identified.**

Much of the literature on black scholars in South Africa tends to create the general impression that assumptions are simply made as to what black learners think, feel, do and experience, projecting knowledge acquired from Western education and school systems (Van Heerden, 1992:14). Such practices must be considered unacceptable. Hence, there is clearly a need for research in this field **to elicit black learners' true feelings and thoughts regarding their schools.**

The South African societal situation is indeed very complex, as the following section indicates.

1.1.1   The composition of South African society

It is well known that South Africa is a microcosm of the world, since all of the world's problems and contradictions can be found in this country (Govender, 1995:132). The composition of South African society is extremely complex. Govender (1995:133) comments on the fact that South African society consists of several societal levels (pre-industrial, modern and post-modern) and maintains that South Africa has to find ways for people on these different levels to share a common future. In addition, Hoopes (1980, referred to in Cushner, McClelland & Safford, 1992:270) discerns three levels of society, describing existing divisions between societal levels. Hoopes's classification can be used effectively to discuss the South African situation. These levels are:

- the local-traditional level;

- the national-modern level; and

- the global-postmodern level.

At the first level, little interaction between groups is required in order to satisfy ordinary requirements. Where interaction does occur, a great deal of conflict, disagreement, apprehension and fear is evident. These responses are associated with tribal groups, extended families and clans, and some small rural villages and towns.

At the second level, bartering, trading and/or negotiation is necessary in order to satisfy group needs. Currency is an important medium of exchange and communication increases. Nation-states have relative autonomy. Most Western societies function at this level.

At the third level, individuals and nations can satisfy their needs only with the help of many others, creating a global society or economy. It appears that the very survival of the planet may, in the very near future, depend on the effective interdependent functioning of governments, economies, technologies and communication systems, as well as the individuals who operate these systems.

South Africa has to face the reality that a large segment of its population lives in Third World circumstances. According to Hoopes's rationale and model of intercultural education, this Third World segment would resort under the local-traditional level and implies physically deprived

living conditions such as shortages of water, nutritious food, sanitation, adequate shelter and health-care services (Atmore, 1993:123; Ferreira, 1991:53).

An awareness of what this "culture of poverty" entails is vital if one is to grasp the complexity and actuality of some learners' home circumstances. Coutts (1992:86) explains what this "culture of poverty" encompasses:

- Often home circumstances are such that it is almost impossible for learners to attend to their studies.

- In many cases, the necessary parental guidance and stimulation is lacking, especially during the critical period from birth to the age of six years. This has a negative influence on the formation of numeracy and language skills.

- The stage from birth to the age of six years is equally critical for the development of empathy with children from other cultures and races, suggesting there is another vital skill which might not be developed. Epstein (1993:93-94) and Cushner *et al.* (1992:263) indicate that children are aware of others' thoughts and feelings from a very early age (perhaps even from their second year). Children begin to understand and construct dominant ideologies at this early stage of their lives. This would be the age during which to introduce anti-racist strategies to ensure a true and lasting effect.

- Previous schooling may have been inadequate, resulting in a narrowing of ability, understanding and experience.

- The parents of these learners and even the learners themselves may have "inflated initial expectations of what open schooling can achieve" with regard to producing "solutions to problems that only society as a whole, and the state in particular, can solve" (Coutts, 1992:86).

The above socio-economic factors are prevalent in a large section of South African society. These factors may seriously affect schooling because they counteract the development of a positive culture of learning.

1.1.2 Preparing for the demands of the twenty-first century

Pretorius (1993:24) argues that "the way in which a society educates its children will co-determine what that particular society will be like in a few years". In order to preserve itself, South African society is obliged to invest in its learners through good quality schooling that will prepare them to cope with the demands of the future. Schooling aimed at the future must consider the fact that the world in general is currently moving into the post-industrial age, with corporations splitting into mini-centres and with work done on home computers at all hours of day and night. Diversity rather than standardisation is becoming the norm. Millman (1995:99) predicts that people's working lives will become more fragmented and discontinuous, and will include periods of unemployment, education and training, as well as part- and full-time work. Personality traits sought after in this post-industrial age include self-discipline, creativity, an ability to carry out a variety of tasks and to work well alone or with others (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:332).

The twenty-first century also brings with it a quest for skills and concepts unheard of and unimagined until recently. According to calculations, 80% of the job opportunities that will be available by the year 2010 do not exist at present (Mittner, 1996:10). Learners therefore have to be prepared to take their place in a culturally diverse society and ultimately to operate as inhabitants of the global village. Pretorius (1990:203) indicates that the complex industrial, urban societies of the future will require highly schooled human resources. South Africa in particular, as a developing country, needs such resources. Society in general cannot afford to carry the failures of education. Govender (1995:142) says: "It is very necessary for us to identify and describe the nature of the global situation of crisis, for this is the context in which the new South Africa is gaining its freedom, and in which it has to solve its problems." Banks (1990:210) maintains that "effective citizens in the twenty-first century must have knowledge, attitudes and skills to compete in a global world economy that is primarily service and knowledge-orientated". Mbigi and Maree (1995:11) argue that if the South African economy is to survive in the face of global competition, it must address its problems by capacity building and adapting its training strategies.

The task of South African education therefore lies in finding ways for learners from pre-industrial, modern and post-modern environments to contribute to and share in a prosperous

future. Most importantly, this implies ensuring access to scientific, technological and other advances of local-postmodern society. Only through such action can an affordable and higher standard of living for the general South African population be ensured.

Achieving this ideal necessitates an investment in human resources -- a concentrated effort to utilise all available brain-power and to aim for academic excellence even at school level. This can only be achieved through the creation of a stabilising and accommodating atmosphere within schools. Such an atmosphere will allow learners to realise their scholastic potential without cultural or social constraints. The researcher takes cognisance of the fact that the very concept of excellence has fallen into disrepute in South Africa, due to the denial of opportunities for black people to excel in the past (Ramphele, 1992:24-25). This issue is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 2.

As the key role player in formal education, the school merits a closer look.

1.1.3 Role of the school

The "handicaps" of black learners at school do not only pertain to material deprivation. It should be remembered that traditionally hailing from a non-technological or non-Western cultural group could also be tantamount to being handicapped within a traditionally white school. Feeling uncomfortable within the school environment can be detrimental to learners' school adjustment. It can eventually interfere with their preparation and hinder adolescent learners' identity development.

Schools, as the rendezvous for youths from various cultural backgrounds and educational contexts, are ideally suited to create an awareness amongst learners of their various educational and underlying emotional needs and render the necessary support and in this way act as agents of change (Siraj-Blatchford, 1995:9,12).

The South African educational system is currently in a state of flux and transition, creating a responsiveness to new and alternative ways of thinking and behaving. The present educational dispensation advocates a multicultural policy, aiming for a non-racial and non-sexist education system. When local-traditional meets national-modern and global-postmodern levels under this dispensation, as is happening in South African education, interests can and do conflict. This is

particularly the case if the infrastructure of the school is inadequate and the teaching staff is underprepared and unqualified to handle this very demanding situation.

The problem is highly complex, particularly when the role demands made on the school are unrealistic, because different societal levels have different expectations. Troyna (1993:25) indicates that there is a "widely held belief that education can compensate for society". Coutts (1992:86) and Cushner *et al.* (1992:158) maintain that schooling has proven its inability to solve deep-seated social problems. Hartshorne (1992:53) states: "Schooling systems cannot solve economic problems, provide employment or reduce social and political inequalities. They must be used for those things they are best equipped to do and not be expected to serve as a general rescue net for all the problems of society that others have not been able to do anything about!" It is of particular concern that this fact appears not to be readily understood or accepted by those from deprived backgrounds. Klein (1993:21) shares the latter concern and says that some ethnic minority parents respect education as the provider of the surest method of self-improvement. If economic prospects remain bleak, schools can become the targets of their learners' anger. Coutts (1992:86) points out that teachers in Great Britain are sometimes regarded as "agents of an uncaring state that is not doing enough for the underprivileged". Ramphele (1992:19) indicates that in South Africa, schools became the targets of anger in the mid-1980s because they failed to address the perceived needs of township residents.

However, it is very important for the South African situation that other research has also shown that despite the size, complexity and political nature of the task, schools **can** challenge the racism that is at work within and beyond the school walls (Gillborn, 1995:2). Hartshorne (1992:53) argues that schooling systems have creative possibilities in this regard, but warns: "... they can become active change agents only with state support and initiatives, backed by broad political will and popular acceptance."

The role demands on the school as an agent of change are complex and varied. The eventual success of any given school is determined largely by the school's internal policy and educational approach. The multicultural and anti-racism approaches to education which are discussed in Sections 1.1.4 and 1.1.5 are particularly important in this context.

1.1.4 Multicultural education

If the concept of multiculturalism is coupled to education, definitions are varied and plentiful, indicating that the concept incorporates a wide variety of complex issues. Multicultural education is not ideologically based and recognises the school as "a complex social system characterized by its diversity" (Squelch, 1993:199). This approach implies the exposure of various cultures without reserve to one another at the basic educational level.

According to Coutts (1992:97), in multicultural education, provision is made for children from different cultural heritages to receive education in the same classrooms. The various cultures are used to enrich the learning experiences of all pupils.

Ferreira (1991:16) cites Smolicz (1982), who explains multiculturalism as an opportunity for individuals to make use of various cultures in their everyday lives in the spheres of language, family life, social manners, ideology, literature and art. This approach does not assume that all individuals are bicultural. It does assume, though, that individuals are generally positively disposed to and participate in a multicultural society according to their abilities and desires.

Epstein (1993:20) quotes the 1981 Rampton Report compiled by the Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups: "A 'good' education cannot be based on one culture only, and in Britain where ethnic minorities form a permanent and integral part of the population, we do not believe that education should seek to iron out the differences between cultures, nor attempt to draw everyone into the dominant culture. On the contrary, it will draw upon the experiences of many cultures that make up our society and thus broaden the cultural horizons of every child. That is what we mean by 'multicultural' education."

Zafar (1999:34) maintains that good multiculturalism "allows for a complex, substantive understanding of culture and identity and accepts that individuals are free to make choices with respect to their identities".

Much criticism has been levelled at the multicultural approach, however (Zafar, 1999:34). It appears that a multicultural approach in education can effect superficial changes within schools, as is demonstrated by the following quotes. Rushdie (1991:137) says: "And now there's a new catchword: 'multiculturalism'. In our schools, this means little more than teaching the kids a few

bongo rhythms, how to tie a sari and so forth. In the police training programme, it means telling cadets that black people are so 'culturally different' that they can't help making trouble. Multiculturalism is the latest token gesture . . . and it ought to be exposed, like 'integration' and 'racial harmony', for the sham it is." Klein (1993:65-66) states: "Multicultural education of the 'saris, samosas and steel pan' variety may be worthless or even harmful ... Where multicultural education fails to embrace an anti-racist perspective, however, it invites criticism as tokenist, ... and as not addressing the fundamental issue of inequality of power."

Troyna (1993:26) criticises "the voyeuristic imperatives of multiculturalism in which 'they' rather than 'us' become the subject of scrutiny". He also mentions the iconography of multiculturalism and the accompanying conviction "that in a context of cultural understanding racial conflict would 'be unnecessary and would wither away'". Troyna emphasises that true multicultural education has to go beyond providing only information on the expressive and historical features of ethnic minorities. Zafar (1999:34) says that a multicultural approach operates on the incorrect assumption that all cultures enjoy equal status in society. The very apparent limitations of a purely multicultural approach increase the desirability for other alternatives, such as an anti-racism approach, as discussed below.

1.1.5   An anti-racism approach

Clearly, the nature of racism is multifaceted and extremely complex, and there are no simple approaches (Gillborn, 1995:130).

Solomos and Back's (1994, quoted in Gillborn, 1995:5) conceptualisation of racism states that "racism is not purely an academic matter, it is connected with a wider political culture in any given historical conjuncture".

Gillborn (1995:2) argues that recognising race is a vital component of any attempt to understand education and to challenge racism at schools. He goes on to say: "Race and ethnic identity are complex and changing factors that we must constantly review against the real world experience of teachers and students."

In view of such insights, it may be argued that to merely teach tolerance for other cultures by providing information about their expressive and historical features is not enough. The issue of

racism should be dealt with effectively. This can be achieved through exposing and challenging the power relations associated with race, sex and class in educational strategies. Troyna (1993:26) maintains that the "antiracist paradigm ... centralizes the need to provide the appropriate organizational, pedagogical and curricular context which enables children to scrutinize the manner in which racism rationalizes and helps to maintain injustices and the differential power accorded particular class, ethnic and gender groups in society". Troyna (1993:133) also argues that while multiculturalism is microscopic in that it focuses narrowly and intensely on culture-related issues, especially within ethnic communities, an anti-racism approach targets the identification of oppression in its various forms.

The anti-racism approach is just as heavily criticised for its short-comings as the multiculturalism approach, but it falls beyond the scope of this study to determine which is the most effective approach. Troyna (1993:135) refers to Rattansi's (1992) identification of a need to move beyond both anti-racism and multiculturalism, but could provide no alternative. Troyna suggests that in the absence of clear-cut superior alternative approaches, educationists could ensure that anti-racist education involves more than a mere episodic intervention in learners' lives. It should also be borne in mind that the effectiveness of these approaches is largely determined by the contexts of the schools where they are implemented.

1.1.6 The issue of cultural identity

An obvious way to facilitate change and good cross-cultural interaction would be to start with young pre-schoolers. As has already been pointed out above (Section 1.1.1), Epstein (1993:93-94) believes that children in their second year are already aware of people's thoughts and feelings. She cites Dunn's (1988) findings that children of that age can decentre sufficiently to discuss views on moral and social issues and think about different points of view to some degree, a key element in the construction of an anti-racist understanding. This basic work, however, is not the concern of this study. Instead, the focus is black adolescents who currently attend traditionally white schools. They may find themselves entering an unfamiliar, and for them unaccommodating, scholastic environment.

Although a detailed narration of the socio-political and historico-political aspect of black South African cultures and its effects on all concerned would add a wider perspective on the issue

under discussion, it falls beyond the scope of this study. Instead, using a holistic perspective, the focus is on the identification and description of the influence of cultural, socio-economic and historico-political heritage(s) on learners' educational needs and expectations.

In order to understand the educational and underlying emotional impact of exposure to or an upbringing in a culture of poverty and a black cultural orientation, it is necessary to examine several issues. For this reason, the issues are listed below, not necessarily in order of importance:

- Historical background

  Black education in South Africa has a particularly turbulent socio-political history, resulting in poor standards in teacher training, schooling and a decrease in school enrolment – all of which has created educational backlogs (Le Roux & Gildenhuys, 1994:39; Pacheco, 1996:35; Smit & Le Roux, 1993:32). Inevitably, those who share this history tend to be particularly sensitive with regard to their perceptions and expectations of schools.

- Socio-economic aspects

  A culture of poverty is to be found amongst a large percentage of South Africa's black population, with concomitant material deprivation (Le Roux & Gildenhuys, 1994:43; Pacheco, 1996:112-113).

- Cultural deprivation

  Cultural deprivation is an inevitable consequence of a culture of poverty, with neglect in areas such as personal and language development and education (Le Roux & Gildenhuys, 1994:44; Lemmer, 1993:157-158; Pacheco, 1996:114).

- Work

  Attitudes in non-technological (traditional) communities regarding general behaviour in work-related settings differ from those generally viewed as acceptable in technological societies (Van Heerden, 1992:261-262).

- Time and space

  Technological and non-technological (traditional) societies have different time and spatial orientations (Coutts, 1992:85; Van Heerden, 1992:243-44, 372).

- Language

Language proficiency, particularly in English, is often lacking, or limited, giving rise to the term Limited English Proficiency (LEP) (Lemmer, 1993:131). The learning programme (previously called a syllabus) is often written in a language other than the learner's mother tongue(s) – English is frequently used as the medium of instruction. Often learners are not skilled enough in this second or third language to display Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) to the degree that would allow them to master scholastic concepts adequately (Cummins, 1981:23-30; Lemmer, 1993:151-153). Cummins also mentions Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS). A combination of Limited English Proficiency and a lack of Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills could create barriers when learners try to communicate with teachers and fellow students, thereby creating numerous misunderstandings.

Sociolinguistics and ethnolinguistics add further dimensions to the study of language and its effects. Sociolinguistics is a field of research that regards language as "a social or cultural phenomenon: it is a part of society, it is partly shaped by society and in certain circumstances it also itself shapes society" (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:1).

Ethnolinguistics is a closely related field in that it studies language in relation to culture (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:9). This field of study therefore covers not only the linguistic (grammatical) competence of speakers, but also their communicative competence. Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:10) refer to Gumperz (1972) who explains that this means that speakers can select from grammatically correct expressions available to them those "forms which appropriately reflect the social norms governing behaviour in specific encounters". In other words, ethnolinguistics highlights the importance of understanding the beliefs and customs of others in order to facilitate effective cross-cultural communication. Coutts (1992:85) mentions such cultural determinants of communication as the undesirability of asking questions or establishing eye-contact and the extent of personal space preferred during conversations. Language is closely linked to culture and the one influences and moulds the other, creating fertile

ground for misunderstandings between people in a multilingual and multicultural society such as that in South Africa.

- Group orientation versus the interests of the individual

  Within black cultures, the interests of the group are regarded as a top priority (Ramphele, 1992:20; Mbigi & Maree, 1995:58), taking precedence over the interests of individuals.

- Rituals, veneration of the ancestors, witchcraft and traditional practitioners

  Belief in the power of witchcraft (Scotch, 1970:248), veneration of the ancestors (Van Heerden, 1992:273-278), the consultation of traditional healers (Van Heerden, 1992:263, 279-280), as well as taking part in rituals, generally play a very important role in black cultures.

- Values

  People come to accept what is "proper" in areas such as religion, economics, aesthetics, political organisation and interpersonal relationships through learning (as part of the socialisation process). Because socialisation differs in different cultures, what is regarded as "proper" also often differs between cultures. Black learners might therefore not understand what the school system expects of them and if, why or how they have to conform (Van Heerden, 1992:216).

- Practical problems

  Black learners often experience demographic problems. Some of the learners live far away from the school and have to rely on unreliable forms of transport (often public transport). This situation causes many misunderstandings, but could also provide a means for learners to manipulate the school rules and discipline (for instance, using a lack of transport repeatedly as an excuse for arriving late at school).

1.2   DEFINITION OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Some key concepts are used repeatedly in this study. As these terms and concepts have very specific meanings in this research, it is necessary to explain their usage in this context.

1.2.1 Accommodation

The New Webster's Dictionary of the English Language (1985:7) defines this term as the "act of accommodating; adjustment; adaptation; **adjustment of differences**; **reconciliation**; anything which supplies a want, ... **willingness to help others**" (researcher's emphases).

In this study, accommodation implies the readiness of a school to fully accept and allow for black learners as individuals with a particular history and very specific emotional and educational needs. This means recognising inherent differences and the need for self-esteem (see Section 1.2.11 for more detail on this term). Pityana (1995:170) refers to Taylor (1992) whose description of the principle of "recognition" captures the meaning of the concept of accommodation as used in the context of this study. He describes "recognition" (in other words, accommodation) as an "acknowledgement of the presence and the humanity of another". Pityana (1995:170) also quotes Cox (1988) as saying that recognition involves an acknowledgement of everyone's "limited part in the whole human story".

1.2.2 Learner

The term "learner" in the context of this thesis refers mainly to black adolescent scholars, who enter the Westernised technological school system from a culturally and possibly socio-economically different background. This study focuses on black Grade Nine learners.

To minimise repetition (he/she, his/her, him/her) in this thesis, there is no gender differentiation. The plural "learners" and the pronouns "they", "their", "them" are therefore used wherever possible to denote both genders, unless essential in the context.

1.2.3 Parent

Throughout the study this term has been used in its broadest sense. It therefore includes not only biological parents, but also legal guardians as well as primary care-givers such as grandparents.

1.2.4 Adolescent

Adolescence is the period between puberty and adulthood, stretching between the ages of 12 and 18 years for females and 13 and 21 years for males (Plug *et al.*, 1989:6). Within the social sciences, it is customary to discern between the various phases of adolescence, namely early,

middle and senior adolescence. As behavioural patterns can vary markedly between these phases, for the purposes of this study, the term "adolescent" refers to the adolescent in the middle adolescent phase, 14 to 17 years.

During this period, adolescents tend to engage in self-definition and discover their sexual, occupational and ideological identities (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997:250). This process is achieved by combining certain aspects of earlier childhood identifications with the acceptance of certain socio-historically influenced systems of values, norms and standards.

Erikson (1971:156-167) emphasises the concept of a "psychosocial moratorium" in the process of identity formation. He views adolescence as a psychosocial moratorium in which society provides a period of grace for adolescents to experiment with different roles and pursue various identities. For the "premature conclusion to this process in which self-definition is attained without exploring different possible identities", he chose the term "identity foreclosure" (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997:251). The latter authors emphasise that Erikson (1963) is one of the few theorists to address the adolescent period of human development. Erikson places particular emphasis on the socio-cultural factors in the process of identity formation. For this reason, a study dealing with South African adolescents should not ignore the influence of socio-cultural factors on adolescent identity development.

Stevens and Lockhat's (1997:253) view that the current political dispensation has a severe impact on black adolescents is important. These learners are expected to define themselves in terms of the most prevalent social norms and values, while many of these were the very norms and values many black people rejected and opposed in the mid-1980s as part of apartheid. Stevens and Lockhat (1997:253) refer to the Eriksonian framework according to which such a double-bind situation could lead to role-confusion rather than identity integration. Also, new role models, economic structures and an emphasis on Western ideologies encourage "an ideological shift from collectivism to individualism. Increasingly apparent, is the emergence of what could be referred to, as a 'Coca-Cola' culture - an embracing of American individualism, competition, individualistic aspirations and general worldview" (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997:253). The latter authors also explain that these shifts among black adolescents serve the purpose of maintaining their material and psychological integrity. Gangsterism, substance abuse, anti-social behaviour and an emerging ethnic separatism are also increasingly gaining ground. These are ways in which

black adolescents either collectively redefine themselves or deal with the double-bind of the present situation in South Africa. It should be realised then that the learners in this study probably experience a more problematic adolescence than usual, due to socio-cultural and political factors.

1.2.5 Culture of learning

A number of elements, namely learners and their personal characteristics, family factors, home environment, school factors and societal factors work together to create an atmosphere conducive (or not) to learning in a school (Pacheco, 1996:5).

1.2.6 Traditionally white school

This term refers to schools in previously white suburbs and traditionally attended by white learners.

1.2.7 Culture

The concept of culture is an extremely complex phenomenon. Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:15) quote anthropologist Walter Goodenough's definition of culture: "... the culture of a society consists of the particular knowledge and beliefs that members of a community have which enable them to operate in a manner acceptable to the group, and in any role that the group finds acceptable."

Van Heerden (1992:67-68) regards culture as a set of shared ideas acquired through learning and influenced by experience. This behaviour materialises through social interaction and constitutes a system of knowledge that people could use in a social context to react to their world. She goes on to say that ideas are expressed through behaviour and material goods, whilst behaviour and material goods in turn stimulate new ideas or changes in ideas. It is difficult to discern between new and other (foreign) values and ideas, since, during the process of socio-cultural change, people revise these imported values and make them part of their own. Culture therefore does not possess a "cut-off" point where the indigenous-traditional stops. For this reason, cultural values and ideas in individuals' lives are not limited to the indigenous-traditional aspects of their society.

Ellsworth (1994:41) maintains: "...cultures are not static. Focal events, beliefs, and value systems change over time, and we may expect corresponding changes in the emotional lives of the members of the culture."

1.2.8 Socio-economic classes

Socio-economic classes indicate broadly identifiable social levels and levels of wealth that are shared by groups of people in society. At the lowest level, there is a culture of poverty. In a working class culture, employment is restricted to menial, poorly paid and mostly manual jobs. The more affluent and better educated groups form middle-class culture. Each of these groups has different interests and views issues such as education differently. Generally, not much sympathy or empathy exists between these classes or levels, and, even within each group, rifts and divisions can be found (Coutts, 1992:98).

1.2.9 Specific educational needs

In the literature, various terms are used to refer to learners' needs. The term "special needs" has gathered a great deal of "baggage" (as discussed below). Therefore, in this study, the more neutral term "specific educational needs" is preferred.

Taylor and Costley (1995:21-22) say that the term "special needs" was generally applied in educational circles from as early as 1981 and was readopted in 1993 to avoid references to disability or handicaps. However, the generic term "special needs" still covered the same range of disabilities and deficits. In other words, although labels were laundered, amended and updated, they still served the same purpose. This term can be regarded as an umbrella term which covers an extensive range of negative and ultimately discriminatory labels, in that it conveys differences and separate needs which could in turn imply an "abnormality". This may lead to discriminatory thinking and practice. Taylor and Costley do concede that from time to time everybody requires extra support. The degree to which needs can be managed relates to the support given. These authors suggest replacing the term "special needs" with "individual needs".

Lang (1995:163) argues that special educational needs should be assessed in a reflective way with conclusions based on as much hard data as possible. There is a danger of oversimplifying or stereotyping these needs.

For effective learning to take place, the education system must be able to accommodate a diverse range of needs covering the learner population (South Africa, 1997:xv).

Donald *et al.* (1997:69) point out that, although special needs normally relate to problems within learners, in South African society, such needs can often be created and maintained by external factors. Donald *et al.* (1997: 71-72) distinguish three kinds of special needs, namely:

- Contextual disadvantages and special needs:

    These are primarily external in origin and reflect disadvantaged social and educational contexts, as well as the individual person. Special needs in this case **cannot** be regarded as "exceptionalities" since they are basically differences in familial, educational, socio-economic and political contexts.

- Social and interpersonal problems and special needs:

    These are specific factors that influence these needs. Youth problems relating to violence, alcohol, drug abuse and sexuality are examples of such problems. The factors that influence these needs are both external and internal. Here also, these needs cannot be understood as "exceptionalities".

- Individual disabilities and differences in learning and special needs:

    These are disabilities and difficulties in learning and can be regarded as "exceptionalities".

Troyna (1993:41) indicates that "special needs" can also be identified in the context of anti-racism. These are examples which require "special treatment" through certain refinements to the education system. The implication is that without these concessions, ideals of political and social cohesion, stability and harmony are unlikely to be realised.

Donald (1994:137-138) says that the very idea of a special educational need is relative and not absolute. This allows for the assumption that special educational needs can also be

found among learners who have no intrinsic deficit as assumed under the disability definition but who are in fact structurally "handicapped". Due to both the structural and systemic inadequacies of education in South Africa, these learners have become disadvantaged to the extent that they have real special educational needs. Due to the entrenchment of needs due to environmental factors, it is "suggested that instead of referring to 'special needs' we should refer to barriers to learning and development" (South Africa, 1997:ii).

In this study, the term "specific needs" is used, not to imply that "exceptionalities" are present, but to concede that everybody requires specific support from time to time. As defined above, these needs may relate to contextual disadvantages or to social and interpersonal problems. The term also expresses those needs that these learners experience in terms of their adjustment in the school, and hence their successful accommodation in the school.

1.2.10 Holistic

After considering the various important theories concerning psycho-social discomfort in a child, Van Greunen (1994:85-86) says the conditions under which a crisis can develop in a child can be attributed to environmental, personal and interactional factors. He says that the "child in crisis" should be explained from a holistic viewpoint. This implies that learners experience psycho-social discomfort when a non-supportive socio-educational setting thwarts their innate potential for development and learning. Such an approach demands that learners should be seen in their total context, namely as developing individuals who interact with specific dimensions in a particular environment, for example, socio-economic, historico-political, family, individual and school/cultural.

Gilmour and Soudien (1994:130) indicate that schooling is perceived as a complex process. In order then to account for learners' failure or success, a broader view should be taken of factors such as social and cultural backgrounds and the socio-economic status of the family. In addition, these authors emphasise the importance of giving voices to the learners by considering their own interpretations of such influences and experiences.

Since institutionalised discrimination has adversely affected the lives of black people in South Africa, black learners cannot be regarded as learners in the normal sense without

taking into account their immediate background and family history and the impact of these on these learners' learning environment (Chinkanda, 1994:196).

1.2.11 Self-concept/self-esteem

"Self-esteem" refers to the evaluative aspect of the "self-concept". It refers to an individual's acceptance and approval of his/her characteristics (Plug *et al.*, 1989:317), his/her sense of his/her own worth or capabilities (Stratton & Hayes, 1993:175).

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

As has already been stated, in South Africa, First World and Third World situations exist side by side, representing different social, economic and political realities – splintered in diversity. The current educational dispensation advocates the exposure of various cultures to one another in the school situation.

From the background given above, it appears that black learners who attend traditionally white suburban schools could experience specific emotional and educational needs due to their different cultural, socio-economic and historico-political backgrounds. These needs have to be identified and taken into account in order for learners to experience a sense of belonging to the school, as well as to be accommodated meaningfully within the education system.

The subject matter of this study requires the situation and life-world of black learners to be examined holistically against the background of black cultural orientations, as well as a problematic educational situation. The problem examined in this study can be formulated using the following questions:

- How does an orientation that is culturally, socio-economically and historico-politically different from that subscribed to in a modern technological society influence black learners' experience(s) of attending a traditionally white but now multicultural school?

- Which specific educational and underlying emotional needs could arise from this orientation?

- Bearing in mind these educational and underlying emotional needs, how can black learners from a different cultural, socio-economic and historico-political background be accommodated meaningfully and successfully within a modern (Western) technological school culture?

1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Black Grade Nine learners attending a traditionally white suburban secondary school could find themselves unprepared for the challenge this choice presents and could therefore display specific educational and underlying emotional needs.

In the light of the problem formulation in Section 1.3 above, it can be postulated that Grade Nine black learners in a traditionally white suburban school experience specific educational and underlying emotional needs. These needs stem from a different cultural, socio-economic and historico-political orientation to that regarded as the norm in these schools, as well as a probable educational backlog and different perceptions and expectations of the self, the school and society. These needs require specific accommodation strategies within the school system to aid the emotional and scholastic well-being of these learners. Therefore, these needs require identification.

1.5 RESEARCH AIM

The aim of this study is to identify which educational and underlying emotional needs could arise from the cultural, socio-economic and historico-political orientations of Grade Nine black learners who attend traditionally white schools. These needs encompass those needs which originate from any possible educational backlog, as well as from different perceptions and expectations of the self, the school and society. This information could then be used as the basis for the development of an educationally sound and accountable support structure. The nature of this support structure should be such that disadvantaged learners should not be penalised in any way, but are instead given every opportunity to realise their potential to the full in order to counter any possible educational backlog.

CHAPTER 2

THE CULTURAL AND HOME SITUATION OF BLACK LEARNERS

2.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses the cultural and home situation of black Grade Nine learners who attend traditionally white schools. A large number of these learners hail from non-technological cultural backgrounds. Also, many have been brought up in, or at least exposed to, a culture of poverty at some point in their lives.

In order to render adequate support services within schools, it is necessary to remember that all learners carry the baggage of previous and current formative influences and experiences. Garbers (1980:51) recognises this problem when he states that it is important for educators never to think of children as isolated from their educational situation. Siraj-Blatchford (1995:11) agrees with the work of Vygotsky and Bruner (1960) and Donaldson (1978), who emphasise "the importance of educating the whole child".

Chinkanda (1994:196) is of the opinion that, in the past, the lives of black people in South Africa have been adversely affected by institutionalised discrimination and repressive laws. The researcher is in complete agreement with Chinkanda that black children cannot be treated as learners in the normal sense without considering the immediate background and family history and the impact of these factors on their reaction to the learning milieu. Similar opinions are expressed by Mayeske and Beaton (1975:4) and Hartshorne (1992:53). In order to ensure that black learners' true identities are not denied and that they are not and do not feel discriminated against in school, this research uses a holistic approach to gain a better understanding of the life-world(s) of black learners.

Although the study focuses on urbanised African communities, it is important to take note that these urban communities cannot be viewed as "microcosms of culture". An urbanised African community is not the equivalent of an isolated rural village which may represent an ethnic and linguistic unit of which this village tends to be an intimate part.

Mitchell (1970:257) says that the African peoples have become part of what Furnivall (1948) called a "pluralistic society", what Radcliffe-Brown (1952) termed a "composite society" and what Redfield (1955) called a "compound society". Radcliffe-Brown (1952) defines a "composite society" as a "political and economic structure in which the Europeans even though few in numbers, exercise a dominating influence". At present, there is a new, emerging township culture. Within this new structure different classes are represented, with different languages, customs and modes of life, as well as different sets of ideas and values. It is generally agreed that black communities display "a distinct way of life productive of distinct urban institutions which exert strong pressures on individuals and groups alike to act as urban men" (Gutkind, 1970:183).

This emerging township culture is likely to include tribal traditions and customs. Gutkind (1970:184) mentions the findings of a study by Pauw (1963) on urban born black Africans in East London. Pauw's study showed that traditional values, such as boys' initiation and the giving of *lobola* (marriage goods) were still accorded "emotional" importance, contradicting or at least qualifying an observation by Gluckman (1961, quoted in Gutkind, 1970:183) that "we are dealing with townsmen in towns and not with tribesmen in towns". However, more recently, Letlaka-Rennert *et al.* (1997:237) refer to Cock's (1993) statement that, for instance, the traditional system of *lobola* no longer serves its intended purpose, namely to protect women, but that "the premise of patriarchal control has never changed" and that the continued paying of *lobola* is "testimony to the continued subordination of women".

Mitchell's observation (1970:261) that there is often an integrated cultural system within which quite different belief systems may co-exist and are called into action in different social situations is of particular importance to this study. Peltzer (1993:14) holds a similar view. Such an integrated cultural system implies that members of different traditionally non-Western cultures are able to live in Western industrialised communities, whilst retaining their traditional belief in the efficacy of magic, for instance. This may indicate that they are "unaware" that such beliefs are regarded as incompatible with Western beliefs, or it may imply that their culture is more flexible in assimilating non-traditional beliefs and customs in addition to traditional ideas. According to Mitchell, this indicates that change has not penetrated equally to the different sectors of culture and belief and that the "adoption of a

new set of customs and beliefs in one context does not necessarily imply a corresponding modification of custom and beliefs in another" (Mitchell, 1970:261). Landrine and Klonoff (1996:1-2) have found similar trends in their study on African-American acculturation.

Peltzer (1993:14) uses the term "personhood" to discuss relational and contextual aspects of African personality concepts, which, unlike the Western personality concept, do not separate the individual from the social context and do not emphasise a pronounced self. He distinguishes three types of "personhood" amongst black Africans, namely traditional, transitional and western "personhood". Most rural black people can be regarded as traditional persons, whilst the majority of urban black people can be considered to be transitional. The term "transitional" indicates that the person is in the process of shifting from the traditional to Western culture and may turn back, especially in times of crisis. Mitchell (1970:261), as was mentioned above, has found that different belief systems may co-exist and may be called into action in different social situations. While people's minds are Western-oriented, they may still be psychosocially rooted in traditional culture. The third type, the Western person, is not often found in African cultures.

Landrine and Klonoff (1996:1-2) discuss the concept of acculturation (the extent to which ethnic-cultural minorities participate in the cultural traditions, beliefs, values and practices of their own culture versus those of the "dominant" Western society). On a continuum ranging from "traditional" to "acculturated", Landrine and Klonoff distinguish between traditional people at the one end of the continuum, bicultural people in the middle and highly acculturated people at the other end. Traditional people remain immersed in the beliefs, practices and values of their own culture. Bicultural people have retained the beliefs and practices of their culture of origin, but have also assimilated the beliefs and premises of the dominant Western society, thereby participating in two different cultural traditions simultaneously. The highly acculturated people at the other end of the continuum have either never acquired their own culture's traditions or have rejected these in favour of the beliefs and practices of the dominant culture. Some people could be described as marginal, which means that they have not rejected, nor acquired the beliefs and practices of either their own, or of the dominant culture.

Stevens and Lockhat (1997:253) argue that post-apartheid South Africa has generated greater opportunities for black adolescents. However, the new dispensation "also impacts

on black adolescent identity development in a complex, nuanced and ambiguous manner". There may be a need to develop identities that will allow black adolescents to cope with an ideological shift from collectivism to individualism in the face of new role models, economic structures and the dominance of Western ideologies. New role prescriptions may be experienced as contradictory and confusing – a double-bind situation. This may result in a situation which marginalises and alienates these adolescents from their own social realities. At the same time, they may be left without the necessary support, guidance and coping skills to negotiate their new roles successfully.

Peltzer (1993:16) explains that a traditional person's behaviour is a manifestation of the collective virtues of the family and the group. No intrinsic value exists outside the kinship network. Social status depends upon the group and its norms, values and ideals. When the transitional person has undergone an individuation process which emphasises achievement, competition and a desire to excel, he/she can no longer be regarded as a "group person". During adolescence, transitional persons realise that they are individuals who are responsible for their own destiny and are, in fact, in opposition to others. There is a breakdown in the traditional "clan consciousness", which could result in increased feelings of guilt, "since the responsibility for bad events can no longer be projected so easily onto others".

Following a similar line of argument, Bulhan (1980, cited in Stevens & Lockhat, 1997:254) explains that the process of acculturation often undermines the containing culture of collectivity left over from the 1970's and 1980's. More importantly, it leaves the historically oppressed "experiencing a psychological tension related to [their] straddling different worlds that all become increasingly alien".

In order, then, to understand how the life-worlds of black learners influence their perceptions and expectations of school, as well as their specific educational needs, a short overview of the historico-political background is given and the cultural and home situation of these learners is discussed in this chapter.

2.2   HISTORICO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND

The legacy of political factors and apartheid on black education in South Africa is well known and well documented. Mokwena (1992:46) says: "The casualties of apartheid education will remain central in the 'new' political dispensation, and cannot be written off as a bad debt." Aspects of the policy of apartheid that the learners in this study have most probably experienced include ineffective educational policies and exposure to political violence.

2.2.1   Ineffective educational policy

There were separate education departments for the different population groups. There were not enough black schools, and those that existed, were poorly equipped. There were not enough trained black teachers. Many black teachers, however dedicated they were, were poorly trained, due to few and poor training facilities for black teachers and the policies of separate training institutions for different population groups. Less money was available per capita to spend on black learners as opposed to white learners.

2.2.2   Exposure to political violence

In the 1980's, black people were regularly exposed to political violence. This happened due to confrontations with the security forces or during demonstrations when schools became sites central to the political struggle. At times, family or family friends were involved in political activities, which periodically resulted in detention without trial.

Since 1990, the pattern of violence has changed. Now it is mainly characterised by violent (often intraracial) attacks on unarmed civilians in townships, informal settlements and on public transport. The threat of violence remains virtually omnipresent and is frequently combined with a lack of clarity as to who the perpetrators are (Dawes, 1994:177-178).

Dawes (1994:177-178) adds that, according to the view held in the Western industrialised world of the ideals of childhood, growing up in a high-risk environment against a backdrop of violence could prejudice optimal psychological development. Rudenberg, Jansen and Fridjhon (1998:112) refer to Gibson (1993), who suggests that children tend to turn their anger inward rather than act it out. This proposition and the results of their study led

Rudenberg *et al.* to hypothesise that proximity to high levels of violence is more likely to lead to depression than to delinquency.

There are, however, factors that could counteract the negative effects of violence. According to Dawes (1994:185), it appears that "a supportive social context gives the child a sense of being contained by the social objects in the outer world and serves to facilitate the child's mastery over inner terror and turmoil". Ramphele (1992:22-23) holds a similar view. Dawes (1994:184) says a resilient primary caretaker is not only a protective factor, but also serves as a role model for coping behaviour and provides a sense of control and certainty. A close individual (not necessarily an adult) who can promote emotional support and can sensitively interpret occurrences reduces the risk of the negative influences of violence on children. Also, a person who allows the child to express his/her reaction in culturally appropriate ways can help the child to cope and to control damage. Ramphele (1992:23) states that the presence of an interested adult, acting as a mentor, can protect against social pathology. The same principle applies to stable family circumstances and home environment, and to the presence of positive societal role models.

Other possible outcomes of exposure to violence during childhood could be that children may be sensitised to such an extent that they may be rendered more vulnerable to future stress. On the other hand, they may become more resilient (though not invulnerable) to the effect of future struggles. A "sleeper" effect could be latent – this means that children appear to be able to cope with crises over the short to medium term, but then the effects of the ordeal show up in adulthood (Dawes, 1994:186).

From the above studies, one can conclude that the outcome in terms of learners' emotional status with regard to their exposure to violence depends largely on the nature and quality of the support systems available to these children. If this support system is lacking in any way, it could mean that learners will not be able to handle stressful situations, or that (in the case of the "sleeper" effect) a "time-bomb" is ticking – and could "explode" at any time. Both possibilities can influence learners' accommodation in school negatively.

2.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS

A culture of poverty – indicating that general needs are being inadequately met – is currently one of South Africa's biggest problems. Le Roux and Gildenhuys (1994:31) quote Heyneman (1991) who maintains that 25% of the black population in South Africa live below the proverbial breadline, which is evidence of a culture of poverty. The following statistics highlight the extent of poverty in the black community:

- In 1996, more than 22% of households in South Africa were earning below R500 per month (Sidiropoulos *et al.*, 1997:378).

- In 1996, 31% of African households earned less than R500 per month, compared with 3% of coloured, Indian and white households (Sidiropoulos *et al.*, 1997:378).

- A fifth of coloured, Indian and white households earned more than R9000 per month, compared with fewer than 1% of black households.

- According to the Institute for Development Planning and Research at the University of Port Elizabeth, in 1996, the monthly income of black households on average was R1252 per month, while for a lower middle-income family of five, the household subsistence level in the Pretoria urban area in September 1996 was R1442 per month. (The household subsistence level is defined as an estimate of the income required by an individual household to maintain a minimum level of health and decency in the short term. It is calculated as the lowest retail cost of a budget of necessities of adequate quality, and includes rent, lighting, food, clothing, washing and cleaning materials, transport and fuel.) Pretoria and Brits, which fall within the greater Gauteng area on which the present research was focused, were regarded as two of the three most expensive South African centres in which to live in 1996 (Sidiropoulos *et al.* 1997:387-388).

These figures suggest that, for most black learners, total escape from the devastating effects of poverty during their early formative years is highly improbable. Furthermore, social and economic realities are linked and interdependent. It follows then that, since the black community was economically and therefore socially and culturally under strain, the powerful potentially negative influence of these factors on the developing cognition and character of

learners should not be underestimated. Le Roux and Gildenhuys (1994:38) agree with Pretorius (1990), Orem (1975) as well as Berger and Berger (1972) that a culture of poverty certainly poses risks for the physical and psychological well-being of black learners.

It must be understood, however, that the effects of low socio-economic status or poverty and deprivation on a child's development is not inevitably negative, according to Richter (1994:43). Richter cites Belsky (1984), who maintains that variables such as social cohesion, family stability and the personal resources of parents lead to a wide variety of outcomes in children, including excellent adjustment and achievement. Ramphele (1992:23) and Chinkanda (1994:191) hold similar views. Richter (1994:43) refers to Ricciuti (1977), who challenges the concept that poor socio-economic homes are homogeneous. Ricciuti maintains that differences found in the intellectual performance and social competence of low socio-economic status children are determined by various factors, including the children's temperaments, parental education, social networks and maternal attitudes.

One could therefore conclude that, depending on the quality and nature of variables operating within children and their life-worlds, highly individual outcomes may be expected amongst learners and these outcomes need not be negative.

This conclusion places some responsibility on the school as a variable to utilise its role to the full to facilitate as many positive individual outcomes as possible. In order to achieve such positive effects, teachers have to be knowledgeable about the needs and aspirations of disadvantaged learners in their classes. Teachers have to know what a culture of poverty entails as well as how it influences learners' educational needs and expectations.

2.3.1 A culture of poverty

The terms "poverty", "middle-class" and "wealthy" are all relative concepts and can best be defined against the background of a specific period, society and social dispensation. For the purposes of this chapter, it must be remembered that the learners under discussion most probably hail from relatively "wealthy" or "middle-class" black families living in townships or suburbs, and cannot be counted amongst the poorest of the poor. However, it is also important to take into account the fact that the early formative years of these Grade Nine learners (the 1980's and early 1990's) coincided with a time and were spent in an

environment where the likelihood of exposure to unfavourable living conditions, if not most of the time, then at least some of the time, cannot be ruled out.

In the light of the context of the early formative years of these learners, it is important to study the experiences shared by members of a culture of poverty. Le Roux and Gildenhuys (1994:38-39) have examined several views on deprivation and consequently classify the experiences of a culture of poverty as follows:

- Material deprivation

    (undernourishment and malnutrition, familial poverty, poor and overcrowded housing);

- Cultural deprivation

    (sensory and language deprivation, educational neglect); and

- Emotional deprivation

    (a lack of personal warmth and affection, divorce, paternal absence, and an autocratic or positional style of child rearing).

Pretorius (1990:208) also classifies deprivation in a similar way.

The above aspects constitute experiences of shared deprivation. Because these can contribute to the development of specific backlogs, which in turn can inhibit scholastic achievement and adjustment, they warrant a more detailed discussion.

2.3.1.1   Material deprivation

Due to their poverty, these parents are incapable of providing their children with adequate housing, food, clothing, medical care, hygiene and relaxation facilities. These deprivations indicate suffering and neglect, which in turn hamper optimal growth and development. The following types of material deprivation can be distinguished:

- Undernourishment and malnutrition

    The syndrome of malnutrition does not exist in isolation. Indeed, it is inseparable from poverty. A variety of economic, social, psychological and medical factors act as co-determinants.

Burgess, Ireland and Hoogenhout (1988:28) indicate that the most common form of malnutrition is known internationally as "Protein Energy Malnutrition". Richter and Griesel (1994:66) also discuss this phenomenon. Protein Energy Malnutrition is caused by a food intake that is deficient in both quantity and quality. Because the kilojoules are so low, the body is forced to burn up protein instead of building up new tissue.

The negative influence of malnutrition on learners' intellectual development and scholastic performance is especially perturbing. Behavioural effects include a reduction in persistence in solving problematic tasks, exploratory behaviour and concentration, coupled with an increase in irritability and fear of unfamiliar situations (Richter & Griesel, 1994:78). Barrett (1987, cited in Richter & Griesel, 1994:79) states that early malnutrition affects social and emotional development, attention, social responses and emotional adjustment adversely. In addition, the human body's immunity system is weakened, leaving the body defenceless against diseases and illnesses; physical growth is stunted (Richter & Griesel, 1994:74).

Burt's (1958) view (in Le Roux & Gildenhuys, 1994:42) that quite often children suffer from inappropriate rather than insufficient food is particularly pertinent. From this, one could deduce that malnutrition can often be caused by well-meaning, but misinformed parents or caregivers who lack adequate nurturing skills. Children's choice of food may also be constrained by cultural factors (Bennett, Sohal & Wale, 1995:146). This means that learners do not have to be amongst the poorest of the poor to suffer from nutritional imbalances and related effects, a finding especially relevant with regard to this study. Bennett *et al.* (1995:146) warn that messages from school in a Westernised environment about food and diet may conflict with learners' home backgrounds (see Section 3.2.2). This may have unhappy consequences when learners take these messages to their parents, and some even ask their overweight parents not to attend school events.

The need for adult education with regard to nutrition becomes very clear. It would appear that only sustained government support for health and social services can counter the effects of malnutrition in financially strained communities, but that education on nutrition may be equally important.

- Familial poverty and poor and overcrowded housing

Two main types of family are found within the black community, namely nuclear and extended families. Modernisation and urbanisation have, in many cases, caused the disintegration of traditional family life, particularly the extended family. However, nuclear families do not necessarily fit the Western definition of such a family, since members of the kin network often continue to fulfil a very significant role within such a unit (Chinkanda, 1994:174). Chinkanda (1994:174) explains that marriage is still a matter between two families rather than a matter concerning the marriage partners only. Gutkind (1970:183) reports similar findings. Parents of both marriage partners may also play a dominant role in various aspects of the couple's life.

A normal household may be shared by an extended family if the urban dwelling is big enough. A survival technique employed by black families is to have loose boundaries, where as many relatives (individuals) as possible are accommodated within the extended family (Chinkanda, 1994:181; Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:20). Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:22), Peltzer (1993:16) and Van Heerden (1992:37) point out that the concepts "father", "mother", "brother" and "sister" include more people when used in an African language than is usually understood when these concepts are used by Westerners.

The repeal of influx laws in 1986 led to many black people's moving into urban areas (Chinkanda, 1994:179). Because extended families often remain together, it is not uncommon to find up to 15 people sharing a two-bedroomed house. This practice causes overcrowding and accommodation problems.

Disadvantaged neighbourhoods are normally characterised by dilapidated living units, noise, alcoholism, licentiousness and similar evils (Le Roux & Gildenhuys, 1994:43; Pretorius, 1990:207). Dawes and Donald (1994b:5) also pinpoint political violence as a problem which is compounded by child sexual abuse as well as criminal, domestic and sexual violence, especially in the poorer areas of South Africa. It is obvious that these deprived surroundings are not conducive to the creation of opportunities for intellectual stimulation and development.

Homes are overcrowded and offer virtually no life space, with family members missing out on the opportunity to really live together as a family (Van Greunen, 1993:91). There is often very little space for doing homework (Coutts, 1992:86; Pretorius, 1990:208; Swart-Kruger, 1994:215), and the privacy an adolescent sometimes craves is virtually non-existent.

Chinkanda (1994:180) indicates that children are exposed to parental sexuality at an early age, as well as to many evils against which they should be protected. Pretorius (1990:207) holds a similar view. Such exposure is not generally found and is a taboo which is not sanctioned in Western culture and could predispose these learners to an unhealthy preoccupation with sex, which may complicate accommodation at school.

Chinkanda (1994:180) is convinced that space limitations cause these children to spend too much time outside the home. This could inhibit normal interaction between parents and children. Consequently, the communication gap could widen, and thereby rob learners of much-needed emotional support and positive identification figures. Also, it could increase the chances that learners will become involved with gangs and gang activities, which in turn could provide the springboard for involvement in crime. Mokwena (1992:41) says gangs provide an alternative home for marginalised youngsters.

Garbers (1980:51-53) argues that milieu-disadvantaged learners are caught up in the consequences of their educational milieu. These then perpetuate themselves in a so-called poverty spiral, offering very little chance of escape.

2.3.1.2   Cultural deprivation

Cultural deprivation refers to the fact that learners are not given the necessary sensory, language and educational stimulation needed to prepare them for the demands of the school situation (Van Heerden, 1992:353). Aspects of cultural deprivation such as sensory deprivation, educational neglect and language deprivation are discussed briefly below.

- Sensory deprivation

To benefit from technology (a right which is imbedded in effective education) learners must be equipped to profit from these benefits (Le Roux & Gildenhuys, 1994:39). The parents of culturally impoverished children cannot provide such technology. Books, computers, educational toys and excursions are in short supply (Van Heerden, 1992:208). A shortage of funds therefore presents a very real handicap and results in a spiral of sensory and intellectual deprivation that spans generations. These parents are generally not enlightened with regard to the concept of providing intellectual stimulation (Garbers, 1980:16-17,49,102; Van Heerden, 1992:196,208). Therefore, when money does become available, it is often spent on luxury items in order to compensate for the low income and deprived milieu (Pretorius, 1990:207). Such items do not necessarily contribute to the cultural enrichment of family members.

- Educational neglect

The public school system has replaced the way education was handled in traditional African societies, namely informal teaching and initiation schools (Chinkanda, 1994:190). Traditional African education focused on collective ceremonies, rituals, story tellers, dancing and music as well as facilitation by an outsider, such as a soothsayer and sangoma (Mbigi & Maree, 1995:110).

The public school system is different in that the family must now play a very important role in the education of learners by providing support and stimulation at home. Macbeth (1993:27) argues that schools alone cannot educate learners or solve social problems. The family, however it is defined, remains the main source of care, protection, nourishment, belonging **and education** for learners.

A love for books and reading is closely related to an orientation imbedded during childhood. This stimulation appears to be lacking in the general black population, leading to inadequate intellectual (reading) stimulation (Van Heerden, 1992:196). This might be due to the fact that within black suburban communities, information is generally distributed informally by word-of-mouth at public transport terminals, via

women's groups, burial societies, cultural clubs, shebeens and at "gigs" (Bekker & Lategan, 1988:66), instead of via newspapers and other reading matter. Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:20) emphasise the strong oral history of the Xhosa tradition compared to the shorter recorded (written) history.

Parents as the legal guardians of their children also need to take an active interest in their recreational activities, controlling or eliminating behavioural excesses where they are observed (Chinkanda, 1994:192). Also, if there is a lack of parental involvement in encouraging schoolwork, this could indeed hamper learners' scholastic progress, especially if this occurred during the learners' early formative years. Unfortunately, many black parents are themselves illiterate or poorly educated and can therefore not support or actively participate in their children's education (Chinkanda, 1994:190; Van Heerden, 1992:194,215).

- Language deprivation

South Africa is a multi-lingual country where eleven languages have now been granted official status (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:1,9,14). In South Africa, Afrikaans and English were, for a long time, the only two official languages. The other languages spoken by the majority of the population were granted a lower status.

Klein (1993:124) states: "Language is a significant part of our identity – if someone devalues our language, they devalue us." This statement implies that language is closely interwoven with self-concept. Since language is the medium through which culture, norms and values are transmitted, it follows that, just as the languages of the majority of South Africans was devalued, the corresponding cultures were also regarded as inferior for a long time (Chinkanda, 1994:193). The implications of this linguistic and cultural marginalisation are many and complex, culminating in the 1976 uprising against white domination in South Africa, which started as a protest action against the language policy in schools (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:9).

2.3.1.3   *Emotional deprivation*

Parents from impoverished environments are often not child-oriented. Verbal communication with their children appears inadequate, resulting in a lack of a sense of being loved, personal warmth, being cherished and intimacy (Pretorius 1990:209; Van Heerden, 1992:193). Disadvantaged learners' basic needs, in terms of the hierarchy of human needs set out by Maslow, are often not adequately met. Pretorius (1990:212) refers to this hierarchy of needs and shows how it could influence learners. Physical needs, the need for safety, social needs, I-needs and the need for self-actualisation are discussed below.

• Physical needs

Due to poverty, deprivation and neglect, the physical needs (which constitute the most basic needs on Maslow's hierarchy) of milieu-disadvantaged learners are not adequately met. For this reason, such learners cannot be optimally motivated to learn.

• Need for safety

Beckmann (1994:247) agrees with Dreyer's (1980) opinion that during a transitional phase between cultures, children are often at risk, since there are unaccustomed standards of behaviour, moral standards and ways of living that rob "them of certain assurances". Industrialisation compounds this effect by leading to uncertainty about what is right and what is wrong. Due to the emotional deprivation, unpredictability, chaos and a sense of threat in the environment, learners do not feel safe and they experience fear. Smit and Le Roux (1993:32) quote Barkhuizen (1990) as saying that each day millions of South African children have to cope with poverty and violence. Atmore (1993:121-122) describes the conditions of squalor and deprivation.

Young women and girls are particularly at risk, since they can be abducted and raped, or are liable to experience other forms of violence in a male-dominated society (Mokwena, 1992:43-44). In this regard, Beckmann (1994:237-8) mentions Kotze's (1990) belief that incest is "prevalent in a society in which the authoritative

relationships between parents and children and men and women are unequal, and where this imbalance is regarded as normal".

The constant experience of fear could block learners' cognitive orientation towards learning. Also, a sense of curiosity (an essential element in effective learning) only develops once learners experience a sense of security and competence through their relations with their families (Chinkanda, 1994:191). The concept of safe schools, referring to institutions that guarantee physical and mental safety, provides for this need (see Section 6.8.1).

- Social needs

Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds could easily experience rejection and contempt at school, and feel that they do not belong there, due to their backlogs and failures. At school, they could also feel like social misfits and are often not motivated to learn. Should their need for group acceptance not be met, this creates the potential for them to be drawn into a life of crime.

Mokwena (1992:41) indicates that gang activities may provide emotional support and material benefits to youths, therefore such activities present youths with the means of obtaining power, status and a sense of belonging. When these learners enter the senior school phase, they could have thwarted social ambitions, which would not necessarily fit in with the ethos of the school.

- I-needs

The self-concept of learners from disadvantaged backgrounds is extremely poor. They do not receive recognition or approval and have no status or prestige. Their I-needs are thwarted. This in turn creates feelings of inferiority which prevents them from achieving more and improving their behaviour (Pretorius, 1990:212).

Chinkanda (1994:182) believes that having to teach their children self-respect and respect for their elders places black parents in a dilemma, since they themselves are demeaned by society. Ramphele (1992:23-24) holds a similar view to Chinkanda; he states that children who grew up with messages that black culture, education,

religion and other institutions are inferior tend to develop a poor self-concept. This negative stereotyping then becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy (Chinkanda, 1994:184-185,192). Such an orientation can very easily be carried over from parents to learners and thence into the school situation.

- Need for self-actualisation

Maslow's hierarchy of human needs identifies self-actualisation as the "highest" developmental need of humans. If basic needs remain unfulfilled, this "higher" need cannot be met by disadvantaged learners (Pretorius, 1990:212). The implication is that such learners are not able to fulfil "higher" ambitions, since they remain caught up in a quest to satisfy their basic needs. Group pressure to conform to set norms could provide another hindrance to self-actualisation (see also Section 3.5.3.3 for a more detailed discussion of this issue). Chinkanda (1994:193) maintains that parents from oppressed communities tend to suppress intellectual growth as well as assertiveness in their children, since it is regarded as safer not to be outspoken or to stand out in a group. Coutts (1992:85) also argues that in some traditional societies, girls are expected to be compliant and non-assertive. This can lead to problematic classroom behaviour if female learners lack initiative, are unresponsive or non-assertive or do not ask questions.

The concept of the "*madoda* score" which results from such an orientation is a matter of great concern (Ramphele, 1992:24-25). Ramphele explains that, due to the denial of opportunities to excel in the past, the concept of excellence has fallen into disrepute. Students have come to aim at the "*madoda* score" (50%), at merely passing their courses. Those who dare to excel sometimes meet with pressure, since excellence seems "out of line". This attitude leads some students to conceal their (good) test and examination results for fear of censure. Such practices lead to the legitimisation and entrenchment of mediocrity.

South Africa needs all the brain power it has available to promote quality living for its people in the context of the global community. It is clear then that an orientation such as that mentioned above can influence the scholastic performance of learners negatively, with dire long-term consequences for this country.

2.3.2 Child-rearing style

The choice of child-rearing style is important in that it sets the emotional tone in the home, thus creating an environment which could either enhance or stunt personality growth. Pretorius (1993:10) distinguishes between three child-rearing styles, namely:

- the personal child-rearing style – a sophisticated child-rearing style which is person-directed (indicating a direction at the well-being of the child as a person), democratic and flexible;

- the positional child-rearing style – a "primitive" child-rearing style which is position-directed (indicating a direction at the positions of the father, mother, teacher and child), autocratic, rigid and inflexible; and

- the permissive child-rearing style – an over-indulgent, non-punitive, excessively accepting and flexible approach.

The child-rearing style generally used by milieu-disadvantaged families is the positional style (Pretorius, 1990:209; Smit & Le Roux, 1993:35). Chinkanda (1994:183-184) cites Pinderhughes (1982), who advocates that, to counteract the erosion of their authority and parental role, milieu-disadvantaged parents could

- adopt an authoritative and inflexible attitude;

- treat children harshly in order to toughen them in an attempt to prepare them for coping with the powerlessness of the victim of the system;

- simply ignore the situation and leave the children to cope with their shortcomings as best they can; or

- explain the complexities of the victim system with its accompanying sense of powerlessness.

Richter (1994:40) indicates that a decrease in the expression of love and affection, a tendency to give commands without explanation, a tendency to use corporal punishment more often and a decrease in verbal praise and encouragement is typical of the positional

child-rearing style. Richter (1994:39) quotes Hess (1970), who argues that working-class parental behaviour is not due to the fact that mothers prefer punishment as a control strategy or that they do not wish to perform adequately as mothers. Instead, it is due to the fact that they "lack alternatives in their own exchanges with the institutions of the community ... and they are poorly motivated to seek other techniques because there is little reason to expect [a] reward".

Married women in particular have too many burdens to carry. Consequently, their children become the victims of their mothers' excessive work burden since the increased workload may make mothers more irritable and hostile towards their children (Le Vine, 1970:176). Van Heerden (1992:239) and Pretorius (1990:207) argue that many women provide the main economic support for their families, maintaining more than one job simultaneously.

Consequently, traditional mother-infant interactions, which included prolonged breast-feeding, holding and fondling, carrying on the back and sleeping close together, all of which help to develop kinesthetic empathy, are minimised (Peltzer, 1993:17). In the transitional person, bodily forms of expression have been reduced due to formal education, changes in child-rearing practices and an economy that has shifted from subsistence to market production (Peltzer, 1993:17).

Unfortunately, quality westernised child-care facilities are not readily available to these parents. In the traditional system of education and imitation of respected persons, black children learned how to behave towards others. In this process, children became capable of transferring their mothers' power to satisfy all their needs to other authorities (Peltzer, 1993:15). Sadly, the disintegration of the extended family system eliminates this as a quality child-care option. Consequently, black children are often poorly cared for (Smit & Le Roux, 1993:38). When one considers the following, the picture looks very bleak indeed: Richter (1994:40) concurs with Fried's (1982) conclusion that poverty and hardship could cause endemic chronic stress. This could ultimately result in pervasive low-level depression. Endemic stress could give rise to feelings of resignation, helplessness, despair and a decline in self-esteem. Poverty could therefore affect child-rearing negatively by diminishing the adult's capacity for consistent and supportive child-centred parenting (Ramphele, 1992:23).

2.3.2.1   *Paternal absence*

Generally black groups in South Africa can be described as being patriarchal or as having a traditional ideal of male domination in the husband-wife relationship (Mokwena, 1992:43-45). Letlaka-Rennert *et al.* (1997:236) cite various authors who concluded that black women were the single most oppressed group in South Africa, since they were discriminated against in terms of both their race and their gender.

When the previous South African government deliberately fostered a pattern of migrant labour, which required black men to leave home to work in the cities, returning home only occasionally, this caused many young adult males to be absent from their families. Chinkanda (1994:190-191) identifies this as a problem, since absenteeism by fathers creates disciplinary problems. The traditional role of mothers is that of the subservient parent. Moreover, Chinkanda (1994:191) says that mothers are expected to take the lead in the upbringing and education of their children, but that "the dichotomy is that they often lack the authority to do so, since their role in the community has traditionally been that of the inferior parent". Richter (1994:37-38) concurs with Wagner, Schubert and Schubert (1985) who maintain that single mothers often stress obedience in their children. Richter (1994:37-38) also refers to Segal (1985) who indicates that single mothers tend to enforce discipline through corporal punishment. She cites Gelles (1992), who found that single mothers are significantly at risk to abuse children, particularly if the family is poor.

Although emancipation from their traditionally subordinate role is possible, because they become working women in the city, single mothers still struggle to maintain discipline in their households. Research showed that the mother often acts as a go-between the father and children since her relationship with the children is often more intimate (Van Heerden, 1992:191-192). It was also found that in the absence of fathers (especially where sons were concerned) either paternal or maternal uncles played an important role if they lived in the vicinity. This again highlights the importance and functioning of the extended family (see also Section 2.3.1.1 above).

The absence of both parents also results in problems for effective parenting. While the absence of one parent as a migrant worker puts a heavy strain on the family, the absence of both parents traumatises both parents and children (Smit & Le Roux, 1993:38). An

important influence on parental absence would be the demographic realities parents have to cope with. Even urban parents usually travel long distances to and from work, leaving home very early and returning late, which in turn has a severely detrimental and limiting effect on parental contact with their children. This leaves children to their own devices or in the care of members of the extended family. Alternatively, especially due to the demise of the extended family, other child-care arrangements (often of poor quality) have to be made (Smit & Le Roux, 1993:38).

The prolonged absence of parents working far from home deprives adolescents of positive role models and leads to communication problems between parents and children (Monyemorathwe, 1992:9). Chinkanda (1994:180) claims that children who grow up in poor circumstances are bound to develop negative character traits. He says that they cannot develop a sense of trust, or relate positively to authority, since there is often no-one to teach them appropriate societal values.

2.4 A CULTURE OF LEARNING

A culture of learning is a prerequisite for scholastic progress. It is generally accepted that the culture of learning in many of the former Department of Education and Training schools was not of a high standard. Mbigi and Maree (1995:52) mention the poor quality of Bantu Education. This caused

- early school dropout;

- an anti-academic attitude;

- low morale among teachers and pupils;

- a loss of teaching time; and

- poor results.

Pacheco (1996:57) describes a culture of learning as the disposition towards learning and the atmosphere of diligence or industry that develop in a school as a result of a combination of the personal characteristics of pupils, certain elements in the family, elements in the school and elements in the community. This description makes it clear that there is more

than one force at work – creating a cumulative outcome resulting in a positive or negative culture of learning.

Pacheco (1996:51) favours a systemic theoretical analysis of the culture of learning, since such an analysis provides a holistic view of the phenomenon, as well as the interrelatedness of the various systems concerned. Four systems that determine the nature of a culture of learning can be discerned, namely a personal, home, school and society system (Pacheco, 1996:51). Pacheco bases her view on the belief that learning is determined by intrinsic as well as extrinsic variables. The former refers to the personal characteristics of learners, namely cognitive, affective and physical factors, whilst the latter refers to family, school and societal factors.

Features that inhibit a culture of learning can be grouped as pupil, family and school factors (Pacheco, 1996:Abstract).

2.4.1   Features of pupils

These features include:

- irregular school attendance and lack of punctuality;

- inadequate language code and therefore limited capacity for expression;

- inadequate study methods;

- an inferior knowledge base or frame of reference;

- the absence of a work ethic;

- an unconcerned attitude towards learning; and

- a lack of motivation and discipline.

2.4.2   Features of families

Family features that inhibit a culture of learning include:

- disintegrated families;

- a lack of parental involvement;

- illiterate parents; and

- inadequate facilities in the home.

2.4.3 Features of schools

In the school itself, a culture of learning may collapse due to:

- disorder and a lack of discipline;

- an ineffectively functioning principal;

- an inadequate culture of teaching/instruction;

- the wasting of time; and

- over-occupation and inadequate facilities.

From the above it is clear that adequate exposure to a culture of learning is vital for emotional stability and optimal psychological development, both prerequisites for scholastic success in the secondary school.

2.5 SURVIVAL STRATEGIES

Ramphele (1992:20-23) explains that black people have not been mere hapless victims of society, but have developed survival strategies which in turn have definite implications for the process of transformation. A number of the most important strategies are discussed below.

2.5.1 Ubuntu

According to Mbigi and Maree (1995:7-8), material poverty has forced disadvantaged or marginalised groups the world over to survive on collective unity or solidarity and consciousness, with the resultant downplaying of individualism. The philosophy of Ubuntu is a direct outcome of such collective unity or solidarity. In fact, Mbigi and Maree value it so highly that they attribute the birth of the new South African nation to the emancipating spirit of Ubuntu.

The essential belief of Ubuntu is that "a man can only be a man through others" (Mbigi & Maree, 1995:2). Key values are the following:

- group solidarity;

- conformity;

- compassion;

- respect;

- human dignity; and

- collective unity.

Prized behavioural patterns include sacrifice, suffering, conformity on survival or group issues and patriotism – in short, individual conformity and loyalty to the group on all survival issues such as liberation, strikes, mass action and rent boycotts. Mbigi and Maree (1995:58) add: "...failure to do so will meet harsh punitive measures such as evening 'Dunlop treatment' or 'necklacing', burning of houses and assassination."

Mbigi and Maree (1995:120-122) describe a number of principles according to which villages function:

- Regular discussion forums, called "indabas" in Zulu, "dane" in Shona and "khotlas" in Tswana, are held. They have open agendas.

- Rituals and ceremonies characterise the celebration of achievements and the sharing of misfortunes.

- In the African tribal village, order and stability is maintained through respect for position, authority and expertise.

- Mutual trust, respect and care are important for the existence of the village.

- Villages share a common agenda and uphold a bond of collective unity. This concept opposes competition and division in society. Should competition be necessary, solidarity should be emphasised, not through speeches, but through rituals.

- In traditional African villages, it is assumed that there are no final solutions to problems. Discussions about issues are therefore important, but only serve as a means to come up with an acceptable, but not final, solution.

2.5.2 Economy of affection

An "economy of affection" has developed as an "African way of life" which involves solidarity action with extended family members, peers, comrades, homeboys, political and other groups (Ramphele, 1992:20-21). By applying this principle, the main economy has been subsidised, providing care for the needy, the aged, infirm and orphaned (Van Heerden, 1992:237-238). The income-earning members of these solidarity groups have large dependency ratios, requiring huge sacrifices. This leads to self-denial and the delegitimisation of the importance of the individual (Van Heerden, 1992:256).

The survival of the group is therefore regarded as a top priority, with resulting constraints for the individual's development and freedom of choice.

2.5.3 Crime

Ramphele (1992:21) says that crime may be regarded as a resource to balance family and personal budgets.

To protect against failure and disappointment and to fit the constraining physical, economic and intellectual environment, expectations of the self and others are lowered. This causes lowered self-esteem and a loss of respect for human dignity. Short-term gains are maximised at the expense of long-term goals, and ends and means can become confused, with crime as a means of survival becoming a way of life.

- The "shebeen culture" has become entrenched.

- Pilfering of organisational resources is regarded as a permissible part of a survival culture.

- Stealing is regarded as a form of redistribution.

- Respect for the law has diminished due to legislative practices in the past. Normal behaviour was criminalised – for example, the criminalisation of family life and the right to seek employment (as occurred under the pass laws).

This could influence learners' views of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and crime. Accordingly, the act of stealing, contrary to the view held in Western society, might be regarded as a form of redistribution (Ramphele, 1992:21). At school this could prove to be a particularly troublesome and sensitive issue.

2.5.4 Victim image

Another survival strategy is that of cultivating the image of "the victim", which has developed and "creates and exacerbates a culture of entitlement amongst those seeing themselves as victims" (Ramphele, 1992:22). This image is encouraged by an industry which has emerged in some parts of the world and depends on the perpetuation of the victim-image of black people for its survival. Some black people feel that as groups they are entitled to redress, since they have been deliberately impoverished.

The negative aspect connected to individual entitlement is that it can demoralise those on the receiving end, since to plead victimisation and demand special treatment, unless matched by determination of the individual to take responsibility for his/her own success, would prove futile (Ramphele, 1992:22; Mbigi & Maree, 1995:13). Ramphele (1992:22) warns that the danger inherent in this orientation of entitlement is that it could lead to society instead of the individuals themselves being viewed as the agent of change (compare Mbigi & Maree, 1995:13,22).

This could orient learners differently towards their school career – sending them there with great expectations of what they could achieve, whilst they view their own personal input as minimal.

2.6   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This chapter has given rise to the following research questions:

- How do learners feel regarding personal input?

- Are the learners in favour of corporal punishment?

- How important is group interest as opposed to individual interest to these learners?

- In what manner are conflicts mostly resolved?

CHAPTER 3

THE ADJUSTMENT OF BLACK LEARNERS IN A TRADITIONALLY WHITE SUBURBAN SCHOOL

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to describe and highlight the difficulties black learners might encounter upon entering the senior school phase in a suburban, traditionally white school, due to the unique and particular cultural situation of such black learners.

Definitions of culture are varied and plentiful. For the purposes of this chapter, however, it is important to discern the components of culture in order to identify how these components affect cross-cultural contact.

According to Triandis (1972, quoted in Cushner *et al.*, 1992:23), culture consists of two types of components, namely objective cultural components and subjective cultural components. The first type refers to tangible, visible aspects of culture, which include the artefacts people make, the clothes they wear and the way they name things. Subjective components refer to less tangible cultural aspects, including attitudes, values, norms for behaviour and social roles. The latter are more complicated to study and can be likened to an iceberg, where a very large part of the whole is invisible. It is at the level of people's subjective cultural differences that most intercultural misunderstandings and communication problems occur. It is therefore imperative to take a closer look at the phenomenon of subjective cultural differences and its impact on cross-cultural interaction within the school situation.

Accordingly, this chapter focuses on this phenomenon in an attempt to understand the complexities (if any) surrounding black learners' adjustment to a now multicultural, but traditionally white suburban school. The interview schedule and questionnaire used to determine the educational and underlying emotional needs of black Grade Nine learners in a multicultural school setting were based on the assumptions formulated within this chapter and in Chapter 2.

3.2 CROSS-CULTURAL INTERACTION IN THE SCHOOL

Schools cannot exist independently from other institutions and organisations that constitute the communities in which schools operate. There is no impenetrable wall around a school that makes learners, teachers and administrators immune to political, social and economic factors outside the school's classrooms, offices, hostels, sporting facilities and cafeterias (Epstein, 1993:7; Gillborn, 1995: 109). Siraj-Blatchford (1995:9) says: "Schools play a major role in reproducing the form of our society, providing an important means of socialization." This implies that society, which is determined by the *Zeitgeist* (spirit of the times) sets the tone for a school's ethos and must therefore be recognised as a considerable influence (Klein, 1993:120).

3.2.1 Culture shock

Within suburban schools, cross-cultural interaction occurs when learners who have been socialised by groups with different subjective cultural patterns come into contact with learners from other groups. Learners enter classrooms that uphold values different from those according to which they have been socialised. Brislin *et al.* (1986:16) maintain that the large number of adjustments that have to be made when people move into unfamiliar cultures is one of the reasons for the phenomenon called "culture shock".

According to Brislin and Pedersen (1976:13-14), the term "culture shock" was first described in detail by Oberg (1958) as anxiety resulting from losing one's sense of "when to do what and how". Oberg identified several stages in the process of culture shock. According to Cushner *et al.* (1992:44), the term implies "a disorientation that occurs whenever someone moves from their known, comfortable surroundings to an environment which is significantly different and in which their needs are not easily met". Brislin and Pedersen (1976:13) describe culture shock in a similar way.

This matter is extremely complex, since the various cultural milieus in which learners participate are not congruent. This divergence creates "a situation in which an individual may internalize conflicting subjective cultural elements – all of which become part of her or his cognitive and emotional makeup" (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:24). These authors also say that cross-cultural interaction at school level compels learners to participate in multiple life-

worlds, both between individuals of different national or ethnic heritages and between individuals of the **same** nationality or ethnicity who have been socialised in different ways (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:24). Ellsworth (1994:43) points out that the focus on differences between cultures may distract attention from differences within cultures. Landrine and Klonoff (1996:22) also point out the diversity of cultures within a specific race.

Such diversity complicates matters endlessly, as is borne out by a study by Gillborn (1995:159), which explored how students from the Mary Seacole and Garret Morgan schools in Britain (representing a wide range of social class and ethnic backgrounds) made sense of their schools' anti-racist pronouncements and practice. These students were angered by actions that they interpreted as a lack of understanding on the teachers' part. This is especially true "where teachers seem to adopt what, to the students, is a simplistic view of minority communities as homogeneous groups, neither changing nor internally differentiated" (Gillborn, 1995:158). Gillborn's study illustrates this aspect as follows: in view of the custom of arranged marriages, teachers assumed that all Muslim students were against casual relationships with members of the opposite sex – this assumption revealed a well-meaning, but simplistic perspective on their South Asian students. Bennett, Sohal and Wale (1995:147) point out that it should not be assumed that the experiences and practices of **all** Islamic families and children are the same.

By the same token, students can feel embarrassed when they are expected to speak for an entire community, for example, when they discuss racism or cultural diversity. Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:10) dispel the assumption that, for instance, Xhosa people, who share the same language, do in fact share the same culture, since, in certain circumstances, they may share essentially the same conceptual framework as speakers of the English language. The anti-racist programme used by the Mary Seacole school combats rousing resentment by emphasising the feelings of students as individuals rather than as representatives of a wider group.

It is necessary, therefore, "to question taken-for-granted assumptions about ethnic minority students and their communities; especially essentialist and reductionist perspectives that gloss over important internal differences" (Gillborn, 1995:159). For the purposes of this

study, black Grade Nine learners in a traditionally white school are discussed as minorities with diverse situations, problems and needs.

3.2.2   Cultural allegiance

Because most schools operate within a specific cultural framework or bias, this could create competition between learners' own original culture and the new "host" culture for their cultural allegiance. According to a paper on multiculturalism delivered in Toronto (Board of Education for the city of Toronto, 1975:3-4), learners could very easily:

(a)   be caught in an amorphous and marginal incapacitating existence between two worlds presented by the familiar base (the culture they were born into) and the new (the unfamiliar "alien" host culture of the new school);

(b)   align themselves with the culture of the school, a tiresome process of seeking acceptance in one culture and rejecting the other; and/or

(c)   maintain their alliance with their base culture and reject the school's culture.

By exercising Option (a), learners enter a "corridor" between two cultures. Brislin and Pedersen (1976:vii-preface) say that, in the process of destroying cultural differences, individuals are also destroyed. Van Heerden (1992:217-218) mentions a student who, as a learner, felt that he lived in two worlds, due to being caught in such a situation. Another student said: "School life and home life did not go hand in hand. The formal and the informal education did not strengthen each other."

Option (b) could imply alienation from learners' cultural foundation – even a loosening of family ties. As one Zimbabwean learner put it: "I was a white in a black skin, really" (Frederikse, 1992: 6). Another said: "At this new school there were better standards. I got to eat different types of foods. Before that all I would eat was sadza (mealie-meal porridge). When I got to the multiracial school, even when I came home I didn't want to eat sadza every day. But my mom would say, 'Remember where you came from.' So I just continued eating the same old sadza at home" (Frederikse, 1992:9). Different cultural messages at school, as is the case about food and diet, illustrate Bennett *et al.*'s (1995:146)

remark that cultural messages about food and diet could conflict with learners' home background (see also Section 2.3.1.1).

Such conflicting cultural messages could strengthen the dilemma of the double-bind situation and result in learners' feeling like one learner who, during one of the interviews done for this study, appeared sad when she said: "I don't fit in better with the, with the blacks, 'cause they call me a coconut, see ... It means like uhhm, I act white inside and black outside, I'm black outside..."

This alienation is unsatisfactory, as is pointed out by Landrine and Klonoff (1996:53-54) when they mention factors such as:

- age (as in nostalgic love for the "old" and one's roots);

- having children (and feeling obliged to educate them about their culture of origin); and

- racism and discrimination experienced in dominant-group local environments (which could encourage them to reject the dominant group culture and their original choice and to immerse themselves in their culture of origin).

These factors often prompt acculturated and bicultural people to become neo-traditionals. This trend indicates that they recognise that "something is missing" and that they long for stability in the form of an enduring set of traditions. For this reason, they return to their culture of origin.

Should learners choose Option (c), they lose the benefit of full involvement in the school system.

None of these possibilities is therefore educationally, socially, emotionally or culturally helpful to learners. It is important to minimise such complications and prevent cross-cultural misunderstandings, since cross-cultural misunderstandings and disputes are an underlying cause of many serious problems in schools. If they are not recognised, they may become the root cause of lingering disputes which eventually present themselves as crisis situations (Varney & Cushner, 1990:89).

3.2.3 Intercultural communication

Students from the Mary Seacole and Garret Morgan schools in Britain (Gillborn, 1995:157-8, already referred to in Section 3.2.1) are skilled in identifying actions that may have racist implications, although the intentions may be benign. They do, for example, recognise that certain issues, such as adhering to certain elements of a specific dress code, although overtly non-racial, potentially disadvantage people of specific backgrounds. An example would be the importance of shaving patterns in their hair to the black people in their community, since this practice is the only way they can really change their hair. To them, to be refused permission to exhibit these hairstyles is akin to discrimination.

Establishing effective intercultural communication is therefore a priority. This would require the parties concerned to suspend judgement, to seek comprehension of the reasons behind the other's actions and to explain others' behaviour according to intent. Also, if isomorphic attributions (that is, judgements of the causes of another's behaviour) are shared by the parties concerned, misunderstanding and miscommunication can be reduced (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:34).

3.3 THE U-CURVE HYPOTHESIS

Cushner *et al.* (1992:28-29) mention a hypothesis that distinguishes four marked phases when people adjust to an international or intercultural setting, the U-curve hypothesis. Brislin and Pedersen's (1976:13-14) reference to Oberg's (1958) detailed description of culture shock also explains the stages of the process. These four phases are the honeymoon phase, the hostility phase, the humour phase and the home phase.

During the initial **honeymoon phase**, one has certain expectations about what to expect and how one will adjust to this new culture. This is a highly exciting stage during which one is overcome by new stimuli, the unusual and the exotic, leaving one in a constant state of stress and anxiety.

The second stage is called the **hostility phase** – a natural reaction to stress. At this stage, three problems can be identified:

- No sense can be made of other people's behaviour.

- One's own behaviour does not bring about the expected result.

- There are so many new aspects in the environment that the individual cannot find ready-made answers to these.

This is a critical phase, as the subjective cultures of those involved appear and potential conflicts begin to crystallise. Frustrations can build up, leading to unpleasantness. Alternatively, one can confront the new cultural environment. Understanding the subjective culture allows one to comprehend why people behave as they do.

Completing the second phase enables one to proceed to the third phase, called the **humour phase.** Now one can laugh at some of the mistakes and assumptions made earlier.

The fourth and final phase is the **home phase.** It allows for interaction between members of various cultural groups and the interpretation of different perspectives.

To reach the fourth phase requires a considerable amount of time. Gillborn (1995:104-105) observes that there appears to be no magic formula in the field of multicultural education. That may be so, but from the aforementioned, the following becomes evident: firstly, within schools, the issue of cross-cultural interaction *per se* should be approached with the utmost care by knowledgeable and sensitive people in order to avoid evoking strong negative feelings between learners (and teachers). Secondly, it is particularly important to the South African educational system that learners as well as teachers facing unfamiliar environments and situations are allotted the time necessary to work through these phases.

3.4   A CULTURE-GENERAL FRAMEWORK: AN OUTLINE

Given the above, it is evident that cross-cultural interaction in schools, especially in respect of aspects of subjective culture (see Section 3. 1), presents many pitfalls. Also, according to the U-curve hypothesis, adjusting to another culture is a process that happens in phases and

that cannot be hurried. For these reasons it is imperative to take note of a discussion by Brislin *et al.* (1986:39-42) on a research-based framework developed to assist understanding a range of experiences people are certain to encounter in their intercultural interactions. (The framework is also discussed in depth by Cushner *et al.*, 1992:41-43.) This framework is based on the realisation that people have similar types of experiences and reactions to cross-cultural encounters, regardless of whom they are interacting with, where they are and their own role in a new setting. It follows then that this framework can be **applied locally**, to identify intercultural adjustment problems even if the specific situation in South Africa differs from that in America and Europe.

Although it is impossible to anticipate all the possible types of intercultural interactions that might be encountered, it is ideal that people can and should be prepared for similarities in experience. This approach allows one to identify, study and understand emotional and cognitive responses and the approach serves as the basis for this chapter.

In the discussion in this chapter, eighteen themes based on this culture-general framework are grouped into the following three broad categories:

- emotional experiences (experiences people are likely to have that could cause intense feeling and that engage their emotions);

- knowledge areas (these areas cover cross-cultural differences that those involved find hard to understand); and

- some bases of cultural differences (these concentrate on how people think about and evaluate information).

First, the eighteen themes are listed under these three headings, accompanied by short descriptive paragraphs of what is understood by each concept. Each of the eighteen concepts is given a number in brackets to simplify cross-referencing in the discussion and application. Then (in Section 3.5), the eighteen themes are discussed in more detail and applied to the adjustment problems that Grade Nine learners might experience within the school system due to their particular cultural, linguistic, socio-economic and historico-political situation. The same numbering system is used in Sections 3.4 and 3.5.

3.4.1 Emotional experiences and cross-cultural differences

This section aims to discern emotional experiences or reactions that may result from experiencing the status of an outsider, and feeling displaced and unfamiliar, due to encounters with other cultures.

3.4.1.1 Anxiety (1)

When people encounter unfamiliar demands, they tend to become anxious about whether or not their behaviour is appropriate.

3.4.1.2 Disconfirmed expectations (2)

People may become upset or uncomfortable, not because of the specific circumstances they encounter, but because the situation differs from what they expected.

3.4.1.3 Belonging (3)

People need to belong and feel at home, but often this need is frustrated because of their "outsider" status.

3.4.1.4 Ambiguity (4)

Living and working across cultures often leaves people with unclear messages on which decisions must be based and according to which action must be taken.

3.4.1.5 Confrontation with one's prejudices (5)

When interacting with another culture, people may discover that previously held beliefs about a certain group of people may not be accurate or useful when interacting with that culture.

3.4.2 Knowledge areas and cross-cultural differences

The following themes incorporate many cross-cultural differences in areas where, due to ignorance, misunderstandings can easily occur.

3.4.2.1 *Work (6)*

Various cultural differences are encountered in work-related settings. Difficulties can arise related to the appropriate relationship between on-task behaviour and social interaction, the onus of control, decision-making strategies and attitudes toward creative effort, for example.

3.4.2.2 *Time and space (7)*

Different attitudes exist regarding the importance of being "on time" for appointments, as well as the proper spatial orientation for people to adopt when they are interacting with each other.

3.4.2.3 *Language (8)*

Language differences are probably the most obvious problem to overcome when cultural boundaries must be crossed. This entails the difficulties of learning another language as it is actually spoken and written. It also includes culturally encoded language use.

3.4.2.4 *Roles (9)*

There is a generally accepted set of behaviours – people perform in relation to the roles they adopt. There are large differences in respect of the roles occupied, and how these roles are enacted in different social groups.

3.4.2.5 *The importance of the group versus the importance of the individual (10)*

All people sometimes act in their individual interest, at other times they act according to their group allegiance(s). The relative emphasis on group versus individual orientation varies from culture to culture and may have a significant impact on the daily lives of individuals as well as on the way they learn.

3.4.2.6 *Rituals, superstition, veneration of the ancestors, witchcraft and traditional practitioners (11)*

All cultures have rituals which help people meet their needs as they cope with life's everyday demands. People in all cultures engage in behaviour that "outsiders" may label as superstitious. One culture's rituals may be seen by others as based on superstitions. What

people believe in, as well as whom they consult when they are ill (be it physically, emotionally or mentally) could also be grouped under this heading.

3.4.2.7 *Social hierarchies – class and status (12)*

People often make distinctions based on various markers of high and low status. These distinctions differ from culture to culture and could have a significant impact on the education process.

3.4.2.8 *Values (13)*

People's experiences in broad areas such as religion, economics, politics, aesthetics and interpersonal relationships become internalised. Such internalised views affect attitudes, preferences and people's views of what is desirable and undesirable. Understanding these internalised views, called values, as well as the range of possible differences, is critical to cross-cultural adjustment.

3. 4. 3 The bases of cultural differences

These themes relate to the ways in which people in different cultures think about and evaluate information.

3.4.3.1 *Categorisation (14)*

People group similar bits of information into categories, because they cannot possibly process all the information they receive. Different cultures may put an identical piece of information in different categories, which creates confusion when people who use different sets of categories must interact.

3.4.3.2 *Differentiation (15)*

Information which people regard as important becomes more highly refined or differentiated. As a result, new categories may be formed. Confusion over seemingly small details could result when outsiders do not differentiate information in the same way as insiders.

3.4.3.3   In-group versus out-group distinctions (16)

The world over, people divide others into in-groups (those with whom they are comfortable and can discuss their concerns) and out-groups (those who are kept at a distance). When entering other cultures, people must realise that they will often be considered out-group members, and that there are some forms of behaviour associated with in-group membership in which they will most probably never participate.

3.4.3.4   Learning styles (17)

The style in which people learn best could differ between individuals and cultures. Teachers must be able to adapt their instruction to their students' preferred learning styles if they are to help these learners to achieve to their full potential.

3.4.3.5   Attribution (18)

When people observe the behaviour of others, they reflect upon their own behaviour. Judgements about the causes of behaviour are called attributions. Effective intercultural interaction is facilitated when people can make isomorphic (shared or agreed upon) attributions.

3.5   A CULTURE-GENERAL FRAMEWORK: AN APPLICATION

In this section, the eighteen themes (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:39; Cushner *et al.*, 1992:41-43) in the culture-general framework set out above are discussed in more detail. Using this framework as a point of departure, an attempt is made in this section to identify and describe the complexities surrounding the issue of intercultural interactions as they could become manifest in traditionally white South African schools as black learners enter secondary schools. The section is divided into:

- emotional experiences and cross-cultural differences;

- knowledge areas and cross-cultural differences;

- the bases of cultural differences.

3.5.1 Emotional experiences and cross-cultural differences

3.5.1.1 Anxiety (1)

Anxiety is non-specific, unlike fear, where the exact cause can be identified. It is normally accompanied by unpleasant psychological responses such as tension, worry, a fear of being hurt and even feelings of uselessness. Too much anxiety is counter-productive and impedes good scholastic performance, though a small amount of anxiety can be conducive to handling unknown situations well (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:244; Brislin & Pedersen, 1976:13).

Lemmer (1993:159) refers to Fradd, Barona and Barona (1989), who maintain that learners who are in the process of learning how to function successfully in a new language and culture could experience social trauma and emotional problems. This could, in turn, result in severe anxiety. This anxiety could be aggravated by an unfamiliar school environment which isolates learners from their support systems, leaving them to adopt ineffective coping mechanisms such as somatic symptoms (for example, nausea) or to avoid the situation altogether.

Brislin and Pedersen (1976:13) say that "when a person loses all the familiar cues to reality on which each of us depend[s]", this is tantamount to culture shock (see Section 3.2.1) and is accompanied by anxiety. Therefore, learners enrolling at traditionally white schools could suffer from severe anxiety due to the unfamiliarity of the situation, as well as the loss of their support system. Being supported by one's own cultural group gives one a chance to visualise and analyse the reasons for feeling as one does. This would lessen the unpleasant emotional reactions that accompany anxiety. Since anxiety affects classroom management as well as scholastic performance negatively, teachers should aim for the creation of optimum classroom conditions, as well as attending to ways of confirming identity, stimulation and security (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:49). This should diminish the learner's level of anxiety and consequently promote optimal teaching conditions.

3.5.1.2 Disconfirmed expectations (2)

When expectations are disconfirmed, people often display emotional reactions, which in turn lead to somatic changes (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:249-250). The higher the expectations are,

the more any deviation from them would be enlarged, with accompanying strong emotional reactions. Learners often have very high and sometimes unrealistic expectations with regard to the immediate as well as the eventual outcome of schooling. If these expectations are not met, frustration, which is a central component of people's reactions to disconfirmed expectations, sets in. Brislin *et al.* (1986:250) describe frustration as feelings of intense discomfort which stem from the obstruction of paths leading to people's goals. This can often lead to aggressive behaviour as learners vent their negative feelings. The consequences of such behaviour are obvious in the form of destroyed school buildings, and a lack of textbooks because these books have been destroyed by angry learners.

An effective way to cope with frustrations would be to create an intervention between the frustrating stimulus and the emotional response. It is important to provide people with information on cross-cultural encounters in order to "allow them to engage in thought processes that will help neutralise potentially negative emotional reactions" (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:250).

3.5.1.3   *Belonging (3)*

As social beings, humans have a great need to belong to a group. Anthropologists have found that the practice of exclusion was the ultimate punishment in some societies, indicating death, since the individual no longer existed in the minds of others (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:58). Belonging to social groups can be divided into voluntary membership (religious affiliation, political party membership, choice of neighbourhood), or involuntary membership (race, family, social class). These groups all have certain similarities and provide some benefits. Over time, the nature and number of groups one belongs to changes.

Cushner *et al.* (1992:58) quote Peplau and Perlman (1982) who propose that six needs are fulfilled by different social networks:

- social integration (a feeling of shared concerns and activities, usually provided by family and/or friends);

- attachment (a sense of security and commitment that is commonly derived from a romantic partner or family);

- sense of reliable alliance (assurance of continued assistance normally provided by the family or peer group);

- reassurance of worth (predominantly provided by co-workers, and to learners in school by teachers and other learners);

- guidance (which may be provided by mentors, teachers or older family members); and

- opportunity to nurture (which would be provided by offspring or other dependants).

The above demonstrate that the centre of all affiliative behaviour is the need for self-confirmation, emotional release, esteem and security. This provides structure, meaning and stability in people's lives. Overlap between the needs fulfilled by various groups may occur, depending on the situation and personalities involved. Within the school environment, anxiety-provoking situations could, for instance, encourage learners to seek out others who might help them interpret and validate reactions (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:58). Learners might find it difficult to locate peer support, since black learners who enrol at suburban schools often experience isolation, brought about by physical separation from their peers in their own cultural groups. Furthermore, in the cross-cultural context, isolation could be brought about by a lack of the language and social skills required to communicate effectively in another cultural context.

When they are isolated, people become negative, rejecting, self-deprecating, self-absorbed, less responsive and perhaps even hostile (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:59). Physical separation, for whatever reason, creates a void with regard to the provision of opportunities for validation and the interpretation of reactions.

3.5.1.4   Ambiguity (4)

When an important decision must be made and the relevant information is lacking, stress and frustration may result. Cushner *et al.* (1992:50) say that, although significant decisions have to be taken in intercultural settings, adequate information is generally unavailable. The gap in information may be "filled in" by incorrect and inappropriate guesses. This has an impact on the school situation, because confusion and frustration can result when cues from

peers or teachers are incorrectly interpreted, teachers misinterpret learners' behaviour, and learners, teachers and parents generally operate under different assumptions. These reactions can be combated by creating access to the relevant knowledge in order to make sensible and informed choices.

Should decisions have to be made in the absence of relevant information, it would help to:

- possess an open mind;

- possess the ability to withhold (pre)judgements;

- check one's attributions (see also Section 3.5.3.5 for more detail on attribution).

3.5.1.5 Confrontation with one's prejudices (5)

Cushner *et al.* (1992:55-56) say that prejudice implies a lack of thought and a certain carelessness when a judgement is made. Prejudiced responses are narrow in scope and not based on accurate information. Consequently, prejudice opposes reconciliation in that it tends to polarise people. For this reason, it could jeopardise learners' smooth adaptation to a new environment, and requires closer study.

Three components of prejudice are generally identified:

- The cognitive component encompasses the process of categorisation. It appears that the process of categorisation is "a cultural universal" (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:56) and that, except for broadening categories, not much can be done about changing the process.

- The affective component refers to feelings accompanying one's thoughts about a particular group of people.

- The behavioural component includes discriminatory behaviour directed towards others, especially when prejudiced individuals or groups hold powerful positions.

When, however, programmes advocating reductions in negative affect and behaviour are implemented, these components respond favourably.

Cushner *et al.* (1992: 55-56) refer to Katz (1968), who attributes four **functions** to prejudice, namely the adjustment function, the ego-defensive function, the value expression function and the knowledge function. These functions are discussed below.

(a)   The adjustment function

Prejudiced attitudes may help individuals to adjust to a complex life world. For example, the belief that members belonging to a certain group are incapable of achieving at high levels absolves a teacher of creating alternative methods of teaching that group, thereby reducing the work-related responsibilities of the teacher (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:55).

(b)   The ego-defensive function

Maintaining prejudicial attitudes could protect people's self-concept. Perhaps, individuals who would like to view themselves as academically talented may view another, more successful, group as cheaters. Their self-esteem as well as a positive view of their in-group is therefore protected and they do not have to examine the reasons for their own lack of success. Rejecting others therefore legitimises one's own viewpoint and nullifies the possibility that others might have a legitimate point of view or standards. In other words, a particular self-concept is protected through attitudes and behaviours that tend to put blame on others (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:55).

(c)   The value-expression function

This encompasses attitudes people use to project their own self-image on others. This implies that if one group has been successful through the use of new technology, it is presumed that those who do not have this technology must be "backward". A certain image is therefore projected onto the world (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:55).

(d)   The knowledge function

This pertains to the way information is organised. Some prejudicial attitudes provide knowledge as viewed by people's in-group. Certain out-group members might be considered undesirable as peers or romantic partners. These attitudes allow people to make instantaneous decisions when people are faced with daily decisions and choices. Should

individuals disregard the above, the consequences can be serious, such as being expelled from the in-group, which has a serious effect on the individual's sense of belonging (see Section 3.5.1.3 for a discussion of belonging).

Byrnes (1988) summarises prejudice formation in children (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:263-4):

- Children learn prejudice by observing others. The example that is set may be subtle or blatant, depending on the particular community the child grows up in.

- Children have a strong need to be part of a group. If excluding certain "others" or devaluing them is a prerequisite for group membership, children may learn prejudice as a survival technique.

- Exposure to the media and their reinforcement and introduction of new stereotypes is an important factor in teaching children prejudice. Physical beauty is often equated with goodness, while ugliness embodies evil. The symbolic association of physical disabilities with evil could cause children to equate hunchbacks, blindness, or crooked legs with the cause of personal ill fortune or disaster.

- The more orthodox or fundamental religious beliefs, the greater the prejudice: "Strict adherence to certain religious practices may actively encourage the belief that all other doctrines are at best 'wrong' and at worst dangerous – as are the individuals who believe in them".

It is evident that prejudice fulfils specific roles in the emotional functioning and well-being of individuals and groups. It can also lie at the root of many cultural misunderstandings and notions – leading in turn to a malfunctioning society, which in turn would have a negative impact on schools and therefore, finally, learners' situation within the school environment. Because prejudice is generally based on incorrect information, it follows that the cultural understanding approach, which is universalist in its orientation and involves all pupils in a process of reappraisal and change, can counteract ignorance effectively.

Troyna (1993:25, 47) refers to the third of Bullivant's (1981) propositions, the contact hypothesis. According to this hypothesis, learning about other cultures takes place naturally within multicultural schools. This implies that a learner's "school experiences are sufficient,

in themselves, to counteract the divisive racist influences which she or he may encounter outside the school gates" (Troyna, 1993:25). Bullivant's approach therefore singles out the school as sole reforming and stabilising agent in education. Troyna (1993:26) points out that society also plays an influential role in the perpetuation of racial prejudice. Bullivant's hypothesis nevertheless highlights the important role the school can fulfil in challenging racism and other societal ills with relevant and accurate informative strategies (Troyna 1993:47).

3.5.2 Knowledge areas and cross-cultural differences

3.5.2.1 Work (6)

In the workplace, a variety of interpersonal and intrapersonal differences can be found. In a cross-cultural setting, individuals bring with them particular ways of interacting and particular expectations of others that may be quite different from the behaviours and beliefs of others in the particular organisation. The school situation resembles the interpersonal relationships and interactions of a work setting to some degree. It can therefore be assumed that a variety of interpersonal and intrapersonal differences can complicate effective intercultural interaction in the school. It is vital to identify individual interactive style in order that the learners from various cultures can interact effectively.

Brislin *et al.* (1986:268) point out the fact that the skills exercised by Euro-Americans in their home culture (precision, perseverance, task completion and punctuality) – often the focus of peer-admiration and rewards through promotion – may be a hindrance in a more socially or group-oriented society. Since black learners tend to originate from a socially or group-oriented society that values different skills, this difference could indeed become a major stumbling block and frustration in learners' quests for achievement.

Handy (1976), according to Brislin *et al.* (1986:269), identified a variety of factors in organisational settings (for the purposes of this study, read school setting) that may vary between cultures. These include:

- differing beliefs about the way in which (school) work should be organised;

- beliefs about the way in which authority should be exercised;

- the amount of planning and time perspective applied to (school) work;

- the way in which rewards, reinforcement and control are implemented;

- the degree to which conformity and initiative are expected; and

- the physical setting of the work/school environment.

One could add to the above the differences in the ways in which skills are valued. Van Niekerk (1992:28,38,39) terms this a "pattern", namely that black people often appear not to feel bound by their own decisions. This means that they do not adhere to principles of consistency and reasonability – both recognised and important cornerstones of the (Western) industrialised work environment and the business world. Van Niekerk (1992:34) mentions the missionary Taylor's concept of the "scattered Self" as well as the psychologist Schoeman's "contextualised identity" in this regard. Van Niekerk (1992:34) explains that language is used as a means to outmanoeuvre and manipulate the opposition, and that it appears to be more important to gain and maintain power than to find the truth. Therefore the "I" that says one thing is not the "I" that says something else. As circumstances change, the person has to "renegotiate" his/her identity. This phenomenon coincides with the "magic" world view, where individuals do not regard themselves as personally responsible, but believe themselves to be controlled by forces outside reason, leaving them with the only "defence" left, namely to manoeuvre.

Also, traditional courtesy, an essential ingredient of good socialisation, often demands that negative and unacceptable things may not be said directly, but should be conveyed in a civil and positive indirect manner. This could mean that a courteous person may be mistrusted because he/she might be thought possibly to have a hidden agenda (Van Niekerk, 1992:35). Triandis (1994:293) points out that, because the maintenance of relationships is very important to collectivists (group-oriented people), they "prefer to suppress negative communications and tell others what they want to hear, rather than tell the truth and create bad feelings. Thus, collectivists are more likely to lie and less likely to say 'no' than are individualists. Individualists, by contrast, have no difficulties in 'telling it like it is'".

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These factors indicate that there is a minefield of possible misunderstanding with regard to intercultural interaction within the (school) organisation.

3.5.2.2   Time and space (7)

Brislin *et al.* (1986:271) quote Hall (1959; 1966), who argues that the issues of time perspective and spatial orientation are outstanding examples of how culturally determined behavioural patterns can give rise to confusion and unsettling experiences. Brislin *et al.* (1986:271) say that, except for a few circadian rhythms of the body, concepts of time are not innate to the human species.

(a)   Time

Not all cultures place the same emphasis on time and punctuality as the Western world does, where life revolves almost entirely around the clock. (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:271). Kearney (1984:95,103) says that perceptions of time vary across the world, depending on people's concerns and their degree of focus on the past, present and/or future. Mokwena (1992:48) observes, for instance: "Given the ever-deteriorating conditions, black youth tend to live for the present." Morlan and Ramonda (1968, cited in Pacheco, 1996:100), state that children caught in a poverty spiral are very concerned with the here and now. Pacheco (1996:100) also mentions Getzels (1981), who points out that these children tend to develop a value-orientation based on the present rather than on the future.

According to Kearney (1984:95,103), industrialised societies are future-oriented ("watch-oriented"). They also value scheduling and punctuality. Non-industrial societies are more present- and task-oriented and less concerned with punctuality and with keeping appointments. Even linguistic practices are dictated by a difference in pace – Xhosa oral traditions require a steady, measured and dignified pace; by contrast, English mother tongue speakers usually aim to be concise and to the point and may become impatient and intolerant with Xhosa cultural tradition in this regard (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:20).

Brislin *et al.* (1986:272) make the following points about how the Western, the Arab and the Hopi Indians' cultures influence their time perspective:

- In Western culture, the working unit of time is the five-minute block. An individual is allowed to be two or three minutes late for an appointment without apologising; if five minutes have lapsed, a short apology is expected; a delay of fifteen minutes (constituting three units of time) requires a lengthy, sincere apology or an advance warning such as a phone call.

- The Arab culture has a 6000-year history and therefore employs a historical perspective. The working unit of time is a much longer block than that of the Westerner, about fifteen minutes.

- For the Hopi Indians, a series of events involving changes in the environment (for example, the maturation of corn or the growth of livestock) constitute time. Therefore no fixed time exists in the Hopi culture according to which something has to be completed.

- The time concept of the traditional African person is cyclical (Peltzer, 1993:15). The life cycle, consisting of birth, youth, adulthood, old age and death, is viewed as a process by which a person passes from the present to the past. Death is not regarded as final, in contrast to the linear concept of time in Western societies.

When one considers the above details, it is evident that the concept of time and adherence to time are culturally determined behaviour patterns. Some cultures display a particularly relaxed orientation toward time. These attitudes give rise to phrases such as "Hawaiian Time" in Hawaii, "Rubber Time" in Malaysia and "Stateside Time" in the Philippines (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:273). In this country, the term "African Time" is used. One can infer that time may be a cultural issue in South Africa, especially in education, where the planning of a general school programme and more specifically timetables, periods, and cultural and sport events hinge on a specifically Western time concept.

Pacheco (1996:64-65) identifies disregard for punctuality, irregular school attendance and truancy as factors that exert an inhibiting influence on the culture of learning in South Africa. She also found no reference to this problem in the American and European literature. Van Heerden (1992:216) refers to local research that reported on learners who could make no sense of the punishment meted out for (what were to them) unimportant

trespasses such as arriving late at school. At home, activities were performed in their own time and at their own tempo. To quote one university student: "We are not interested in the watch, but in completing the task" (Van Heerden, 1992:241).

According to Van Heerden (1992:242-243), there is a definite tendency amongst the black population not to make appointments, but just to turn up. It is also expected of the host to make the visitors feel welcome, since, in terms of the values and norms of the black community, it is the expected thing to do. The general feeling is that as long as somebody has said he/she will come, it is acceptable if he/she still arrives, even though he/she may be late, since to reach the destination often involves great cost and effort. One should be thankful that the person turns up at all. It is viewed as more important not to hurt anyone's feelings than to insist on punctuality.

According to Eisenhart and Cutts-Dougherty (1991, referred to in Lemmer, 1993:157), a cross-cultural analysis in the United States showed that children whose parents insisted on fixed routines of eating and sleeping, as well as precise communication at home, generally performed better at school. On entering schools, these children were well practised in learning skills and adjusted more easily to the strict spatial and time rules, the rigid classroom format, demands for precision and the emphasis on correct answers. This finding points to the important influence of congruency between the home and school environments in preparing learners for achievement at school.

On the positive side for school, Van Heerden (1992:244) claims that there appears to be a gradual shift toward accepting and incorporating an industrialised (Western) view of time in Africa, which should iron out some of the problems of intercultural interaction in schools.

(b)   Space

Brislin *et al.* (1986:273) argue that humans are territorial creatures who feel threatened when their personal space is violated. The distance with which people of a given culture are comfortable is a preference which is culturally determined and maintained. Brislin *et al.* (1986:273) illustrate this point by the way Euro-Americans shuffle around in a crowded elevator to redistribute the space between them in order to maximise the distance from each other. An uncomfortable silence also normally ensues in such circumstances.

Latin-Americans, by contrast, are people who maintain a close distance during interaction. Coutts (1992:85) claims that black learners "might ... have little concern for personal space, and will crowd in on their neighbours without embarrassment".

Space is closely related to noise levels in a given space. English speakers tend to speak softly compared to Xhosa speakers, since English speakers are more concerned with privacy (which indicates the extent of personal space needed) and prefer not to force irrelevant issues onto people who are not involved (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:20).

3.5.2.3 *Language (8)*

(a) Language and culture

South Africa has been described as one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse countries in the world (Lemmer, 1993:146). Eleven different official languages are recognised (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:14). According to some of the claims of the Whorfian hypothesis, individuals' language determines or conditions their view of their environment or the world in general (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:17, 87, 94). This implies that "if you perceive things within the framework provided by your language, then your language controls your world-view" (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:18). These authors maintain that culture-specific aspects and norms are encoded in language. These include kinship systems, perceptions of colour and the relevant terminology, the organisation of society, religious beliefs and notions about taboos (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:15,21).

Lanham (1980, quoted in Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:21) argues: "Language offers its elements and structures as moulds in which mental representations of the culture acquire shape and are labelled. Without the linguistic means of encoding the culture, it would be subject to progressive attrition in the process of transfer from generation to generation .... Language is the vehicle of culture, the essential medium by which culture is conveyed afresh to each new generation." Nieto (1992, quoted in Robb, 1995:16) describes language as "a primary means by which people express their cultural values and the lens through which they view the world". Epstein (1993:105) states that "children's construction of meaning is conducted through their use and development of language".

According to Pretorius (1993:11-13), communication occurs mainly through language and as such language is the primary tool of I-you relationships and the way in which people come to share a common world. This means that inadequate actualisation of communication can impede learners education.

"Speaking out" in class, for instance, is sometimes viewed as a procedural aberration by learners. Van Heerden (1992:26,27,193-194,222) mentions that raising questions was actively discouraged in black cultures. Some teachers do not question students and do not expect responses from them to rhetorical questions. She cites Heath (1982), whose American study of a black community showed that within some cultures questions are not really relevant to the teaching of tasks. It follows then that children are not really exposed to "why" and "how" questions. Heath's research done in a black community in the USA showed that learners were scared to speak in the class situation. Also, there was a difference between the type of question asked within the class situation and those used in the black community on an everyday basis. Within that community, Heath found that there often appeared to be no "right answer" to "questions about whole events or objects and their uses, causes and effects .... Community members accepted many answers and ways of answering, and their answers almost always involved telling a story, describing a situation, or making comparisons".

Lemmer (1993:157-158) maintains that learners from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds do not have the benefit of drawing on early patterns of literacy and exposure to printed and other media consistent with those used in school. Black learners might also lack the Anglo-centric childhood heritage of the proverbs, metaphors, legends, nursery rhymes, songs and games that constitute English-speaking learners' cultural world. Although black learners possess a rich cultural background of indigenous folklore and idiom of their own, this differs considerably from that used in Anglo-centric literature (Lemmer, 1993:157-158). Language skills also imply – in addition to knowledge of vocabulary and correct sentence construction – a familiarity with the socio-cultural reference system of the language concerned (Van Heerden, 1992:364).

Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:21) emphasise that culture and language are interrelated. Effective communication in multicultural schools therefore requires that both teachers and

learners should be knowledgeable about one another's cultures. Teachers are therefore presented with an additional challenge that can complicate the teaching procedure.

(b)   Language and the school

Considering the aforementioned, it is obvious that within a multilingual and multi-cultural society such as that in South Africa, misunderstandings between people will occur (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:14).

This holds true particularly for learners within the school system. A difference between the language medium of the school and the language spoken at home can have serious ramifications. Learners who speak a different language from that expected in the school are often made to feel inferior by both peers and teachers (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:151.)

At home, the situation could be just as complex. As learners try to establish themselves in the new culture to gain acceptance, "the parents discover that they understand neither the strange vocabulary the child imports into the family configuration nor the tenor of the culture it represents" (Board of Education for the city of Toronto, 1975:6). The basic pragmatic implication is that communication between these parents and their children become strained and sometimes virtually impossible. This Canadian finding is confirmed in the South African situation by Robb (1995:16). Under such circumstances, children assume the role of pedagogue – a role reversal that implies humiliation for the parents and embarrassment and guilt for the children when their parents become "children" and these learners have to function as two-way interpreters.

According to the Board of Education for the city of Toronto (1975:9), if the meaning of opportunity is measured in terms of an internal capacity to exploit opportunities, problematic communication constitutes hindrances that challenge the personal securities of children and parents alike, diminishing their ability to develop this internal capacity. In effect, this indicates "a depreciation of educational opportunity for the ethnic student quite apart from the direct, academic handicap s/he must automatically assume because the school, its language and program, and perhaps its method of operation are totally alien to h/er."

- Language preference

With regard to the preferred medium of education, Chick (1992:275,285) says that so far, the English language has escaped the antagonism often directed towards an ex-colonial language in Africa, while Afrikaans has been stigmatised as the language of the oppressor. Van Heerden (1992:223) mentions that research has confirmed that learning Afrikaans presented a problem for some black learners, because the language has become linked to occurrences outside the school. From a purely pedagogic perspective, the use of the (ethnic) mother-tongue as a medium of instruction is regarded with suspicion by many in the black community (Chick, 1992:283; Lemmer, 1993:150). This and the fact that fluency in English is regarded as empowering in South Africa (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:39,59) have caused the black population to opt for English as the *lingua franca* in politics, in the workplace and as a medium of instruction in schools. Therefore, at present, the preferred school system is an English medium system.

Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:28,31,38-39) indicate that there is little critical language awareness within schools. Such an awareness focuses on the ways in which language is used to manipulate, dominate or subjugate others. Language is therefore not normally analysed in its social context, which includes linguistic prejudice. This means that certain psychological characteristics, such as regarding people as stupid, clever, racist or rude, are ascribed to people according to their accents. Luckett (1995:74-75) agrees with Kaschula and Anthonissen who say that English is regarded as a prestigious language in South Africa. Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:28) also state that learners will be encouraged to see English as superior and to regard the possession of an English accent which resembles the so-called standard English accent as used by mother-tongue English speakers as desirable. Such linguistic prejudice has serious implications for the learning process both for teachers and learners, in that prejudiced learners could "switch off" and absorb less than they would particularly from a teacher whose accent is Afrikaans. Other second language accents may also be problematised. This pervasive phenomenon can be counteracted by sensitising both teachers and learners to its presence and by encouraging a tolerant atmosphere within the classroom.

Apart from possible problems caused by the interrelatedness of culture and language, another problem is that quite often there is a disparity between the English proficiency level of learners and the proficiency level required of them in order to master all school subjects through English as a medium (Lemmer, 1993:149-150). It is a frustrating experience when learners know the answer, but do not possess adequate vocabulary to express it. Cushner *et al.* (1992:159-160) say that for learners who are not fully competent in the language of the school or have an English language deficiency, the experience of emotions such as anxiety, belonging and ambiguity are critical.

Lemmer (1993:150) and Cummins (1981:24) say that these learners might be sufficiently fluent in English to have passed an entrance test assessing language proficiency, but they still do not have the command of English needed for scholastic success. According to Cushner *et al.* (1992:159), language is a critical element for the understanding of culture, as well as for the development of a sense of belonging and acceptance in a specific (school) group. Therefore, the extent of the emotional and school-related problems resulting from an English language deficiency problem at school can be overwhelming.

3.5.2.4   *Roles (9)*

Brislin *et al.* (1986:278) define roles as "a set of behaviors one engages in that is specific to a certain position one holds, be it ascribed (as mother, wife, female) or achieved (as bank president, professor)". In daily interactions with other individuals, groups or organisations, different roles are assumed, depending on the nature of the task to be done. These roles are generally culture-bound, which means that they are determined by the community or culture. This means that within a cross-cultural context, role expectations differ.

According to Brislin *et al.* (1986:278-279), individuals are socialised into roles, which include acquiring ways of interaction with others according to their specific roles. Some values, behavioural patterns and expectations become internalised and as such are integrated into the players' personalities. When these values, expectations and behavioural patterns are exhibited by the community in general, one could say that these roles have become institutionalised, since people generally aim to conform with the expected and shared norms and values of their society.

Given that a variety of roles with accompanying expectations may arise in the cross-cultural context, it appears that these varying role expectations can lead to misunderstanding and friction if learners and teachers are not aware of role differences within cultures. Furthermore, a sense of worthlessness can develop when a suitable role cannot be found in the new culture. The detrimental effect this could have on learners' school careers is evident.

The specific roles that have become institutionalised within black cultures warrant a more detailed discussion.

(a)   Roles within the family

Within black cultures, the family is normally extended. This implies that the aged are honoured, and often have the final say, and that the adage "children should be seen, not heard" is adhered to. One can deduce from this that children's opinions are regarded as inferior or unimportant. Children are simply supposed to observe those around them. In Western culture (certainly in the United States) the opposite happens -- youth is idolised and the aged are frequently separated from the mainstream and placed in old age homes (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:280). The orientation of black learners generally, as well as within the school situation, could differ from that of many white learners with regard to facets such as the following:

- self-assurance;

- self-image;

- whether they are able to formulate and voice questions and ideas.

Because family-child orientations are culturally based, it follows that these orientations differ between cultures and could contribute to misunderstandings about the school's role in fulfilling specific needs (as the teaching staff and some ethnic communities might see them). The Board of Education for the city of Toronto (1975:21-26) discusses two orientations, namely the child-oriented family and the family-oriented child.

- The child-oriented family

The term "child-oriented family" refers to a situation where children are free to pursue their own interests, growth and involvement opportunities and are important decision-makers with regard to their own development.

Children learn through exposure to appropriate "models" rather than training (Board of Education for the city of Toronto, 1975:21). This prompts Western parents to enrol boys in hockey or other sport leagues when these children are still young, as well as to organise elaborate outings, birthday parties and social gatherings for their children. In schools, freedom of choice (multiple options and elective courses) is regarded as important. Children are "freed" to be children and their activities are separated from those of adults. A clear distinction is made between adult and children's activities.

- The family-oriented child

The Board of Education for the city of Toronto (1975:22-26) describes the term "family-oriented child" as denoting that such children are subjected to the will of the family, which generally focuses on the authority of the dominant male. Child constellations are relatively fixed and may remain effective long after children have reached adulthood. This is the family-child orientation that is commonly found in many black cultures. It is obvious then that this orientation can severely limit children's involvement in their own growth and development, and that such an orientation may prevent children from "growing up". Children in some communities are often much more integrated into the adult segment of the family in that there is not much of a tendency to create a child's world.

Given the above differences in orientation, it is not surprising that cultural problems can arise within the school. Black parents in particular communities could view school developmental programmes as unnecessarily indulgent and dangerous to their cultural heritage, as these programmes appear to encourage disrespect for adult authority and status. Such a view would depend on whether the school's programme is viewed as contra-cultural by the specific ethnic population(s) involved. Some parents, for instance, find the existence

of "option sheets" and "elective programmes" baffling, since, in their culture (and to their generation), it is incomprehensible that learners should tell the school what they will study. To quote the Board of Education for the city of Toronto (1975:25), "the more tendency a secondary school exhibits toward the traditional notions of student behaviour, the more acceptable it would be to certain specific ethnic populations". The secondary school in particular walks a tightrope in this regard. Tight regulation of the learner body satisfies ethnic parents, but may displease the learners with regard to learners' rights. Should the discord between learners and parents escalate, the school may be looked upon as the mediator between parents and learners. This issue is particularly delicate when the learner/student is a legal adult, but one who is still accountable and subordinate to the family as the children of ethnic parents are in terms of their cultural heritage.

- Familiasm

This term indicates very close association with one's family to the extent of excluding outsiders such as friends, neighbours and work associates (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:280-281). Landrine and Klonoff (1996:3-4) explain that very traditional minorities rely on family for social support, whereas highly acculturated minorities rely on friends and co-workers for social support. Although familiasm merely indicates an association preference specific to certain cultures, for the purposes of this study, it is important to note that sometimes familiasm is so strong that outsiders may internalise feelings of rejection and isolation upon not receiving an invitation to join a friendly gathering. The danger inherent in this type of misunderstanding is that those who cannot find suitable roles for themselves within a given society may develop a sense of worthlessness.

(b) Gender roles

Most apparent with regard to the subject of gender roles is the issue of traditional versus modern roles of men and women in society with historical traditions of country and culture still influencing encounters with individuals and institutions. The issue most often at stake is that of the position of and regard for women. They are rarely found in positions of authority, high respect and responsibility (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:282). Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:35) refer to the Xhosa *hlonipha* traditions. This tradition involves a

custom of respect; married women are not permitted to use words or sounds that resemble the names of their fathers-in-law or their brothers-in-law. This can be regarded as a reflection of the norms and values of a particular society or as a way in which men dominate women and keep them subservient.

Van Heerden (1992:262) mentions a black woman principal of a primary school with a staff of five men. Her authority was constantly challenged on a subtle level. This the principal ascribed to the fact that black men are not normally subordinate to the authority of a woman within the indigenous traditional context. Van Heerden also, however, refers to research done within a Unisa student group, which indicated that the resistance amongst black men towards the emancipation of black women is not as strong as it was during the 1960's (Van Heerden, 1992:250).

(c)   Sex roles

Sex roles involve the rituals of intimate male and female interactions and relationships. The issue is particularly sensitive, complicated and varies between cultures. It has been likened to the dance of the honeybees (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:281). Misunderstandings can result when cues transmitted regarding intimacy and others' intentions are misinterpreted. This can happen within the same culture, but it is especially likely to happen across cultures. Brislin *et al.* (1986:284) refer to the common occurrence of a misreading of interpersonal cues (verbal and non-verbal – which includes animated conversation, personal talk and touch) during male/female (boy/girl) interaction. It is evident therefore that this area is open to much misunderstanding within the school situation. Brislin *et al.* (1986:281) say that role expectations become apparent in the traditional versus the modern roles of men and women in society. It is therefore not unusual to find individuals who are strongly influenced by the historical traditions of their culture.

3.5.2.5   The importance of the group versus the importance of the individual (10)

Humans are basically social creatures: Brislin *et al.* (1986:286) say: "Regardless of the extent to which the individual seeks autonomy, people cannot talk of individuality without reference to the group." People internalise communal customs to such an extent that it becomes their world. Epstein (1993:18) states that in establishing subjective identities,

individuals draw boundaries and other people are placed outside those boundaries. People make strong emotional commitments to these identities – from their earliest experiences, people are invited to identify themselves in relation to the opposite race and/or gender.

Epstein (1993:18) also explains that the various group categories are seen to be mutually exclusive and often hostile to each other. Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:37) refer to the "them" and "us" syndrome, as placing people in different categories. Epstein (1993:19) emphasises, though, that the construction of "them" and "us" does not come about only by mechanisms such as socialisation. People are in fact "active agents in the making of their own meanings and forming identities, but, in doing so, they can only use the discourses and material conditions available to them, and these will vary across time and place". In other words, disadvantaged individuals, in the process of making meanings and identities, could be hampered by unfavourable material conditions and a limited repertoire of skills. In turn, this could possibly lead to the formation of inferior and superficial meanings and identity formation.

"It is ... important to realise that, because we have investments in our identities, we also have investments in the differences and inequalities by which we are produced and which we ourselves produce" (Epstein, 1993:19). This recognition implies that being part of a particular cultural group in South Africa carries with it specific privileges and benefits or conditions that one may or may not want to (or cannot) escape, thereby strengthening the group cohesion. In the school situation, the unwillingness to give up specific privileges could therefore make it more difficult for one group to "open up" to other cultural groups. This tendency can discourage multicultural harmony at school level.

How deeply entrenched the loyalty to the group is – beyond all reason at times – is particularly evident in Van Niekerk's (1992:29) example of an observation by a black university official of the University of the North who possessed special negotiating skills. This official maintained that every black student appears to be two people, namely the person at home – somebody with good manners, values and respect for older people – and the mass personality – somebody who abandons all values and resists all authority. With the first (the person at home), one can have a rational discussion, but this is impossible with the

second (the mass person). Strong group loyalty can interfere with loyalty to the school. Consequently, the group may make unreasonable demands of the school.

In black cultures, there are various organised activities where group membership guarantees support from the community in times of need and crisis, when there is a need for childcare, or funerals and weddings have to be arranged. Involvement is mostly willing and spontaneous, but an element of obligation is also evident (Van Heerden, 1992:261). The degree of tolerance in terms of conformity versus non-conformity also differs between groups. More group-oriented cultures tend to demand a higher degree of conformity. The specific extent to which co-operation with others is expected, as well as the degree to which individuals feel they should reciprocate a kind gesture, corresponds with the degree of conformity the group expects.

It must be mentioned that whites are generally viewed as oppressors who are anti-social, selfish and only want to further their own interests (Van Niekerk, 1992:94). Robb (1995:16) and Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:20) refer to the communal world view reflected in the response of the Xhosa speaker when greeted who says "we are fine", as opposed to an English speaker's more individualistic "I am fine". This speaker uses the plural form to provide detailed responses regarding the well-being of family members.

The traditional African person is socialised from birth to death into group dimensions, which are based on the concepts of the mother, father, elder siblings, elders, ancestors, gods and God (Peltzer, 1993:15). Within the more traditional black community, the group wields extreme power, and individualism is obliterated by the group. Van Niekerk (1992:29) mentions a student group which rejected the notion that more money should be allocated to needy students than to others, saying: "We reject such individualising. Our way of thinking is: we are one. An injury to one is an injury to all." In another context, the following chant could be heard: "Pass one, pass all. " (Van Niekerk, 1992:29), or "One for all and all for one ..." (Van Niekerk, 1992:36). Students have also refused to have their names mentioned in meetings since they wanted to be treated as a group: "It isn't I who speak, it is the group" (Van Niekerk, 1992:29).

Although a transitional person is no longer so potently ruled by group authority (Peltzer, 1993:15), the general result of the above kind of group orientation is that black individuals

may fear for their lives and the safety of their possessions, should they behave in a manner contradictory to group expectations by putting their own needs first. A few examples illustrate this problem:

- In order to maintain good relationships with the community, it is expected of everybody who lives within a particular neighbourhood to attend the funeral when somebody from the neighbourhood dies (Van Heerden, 1992:255). Attendance is obligatory at the funeral service, the interment and the meal at the home of the deceased's family.

- During a general rental boycott, one student needed light to study by. She paid for her electricity, but lived in fear of being discovered where she studied by electric light in a small back room (Van Heerden, 1992:268).

- By the same token, teachers who wanted to use the available free time during school boycotts to further their own studies were threatened with physical harm to themselves, their children and damage to their property. The rationale was that they were acting solely in their own interests and that "they were not fighting for the cause" (Van Heerden, 1992:267).

- An "economy of affection" also pits the resources of the individual against those of the group. Should somebody own a nice house, garden, car or shop, this may be damaged (Van Niekerk, 1992:46; Van Heerden, 1992:265). According to Van Heerden, the explanation for such destruction would be that the group regards such possessions as a sign that the possessor of such things has received these privileges in return for co-operating with the police.

3.5.2.6 *Rituals, superstition, veneration of the ancestors, witchcraft and traditional practitioners (11)*

(a) Rituals

Brislin *et al.* (1986:289) explain rituals as "same standardized behaviour in which the relationship between the means and the end is not intrinsic". This implies that rituals are not based on facts, but rather on symbolic concepts, which are generally not justified by rational

interpretations and have not been investigated by scientific methods. Rituals bind people's feelings and behaviour into a social togetherness and relate to key areas of human life such as birth, death, illness, sexuality and a sense of community. Rituals can be regarded as "bodily action or participation in relation to symbols" (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:289). The action is essentially social in that it generally involves groups of people who share sets of expectations although the action may be performed in private, like prayer.

The term "rituals" is at times somewhat confusingly applied to the established rules and procedures of a religion (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:289). In Africa, religious leaders, claiming divine guidance, are regarded as prophets wielding power over large groups (Middleton, 1970:190). These leaders may have tremendous power and they can and have exercised significant political influence as anti-government leaders. In certain areas in South Africa, some Christian leaders have emerged as leaders of separatist Christian churches and sects (the Zionist Church, for example). Cushner *et al.* (1992:42) have concluded that all cultures have rituals which help people to meet their needs as they try to cope with life's everyday demands.

(b)   Superstition

Jahoda (1969, quoted in Brislin *et al.*, 1986:290) has found that, from a cross-cultural perspective, superstition is very hard to define, since there is no objective method to distinguish superstitions from other beliefs or actions. He argues that, at best, there can be consensus that a specific act or belief is regarded as superstitious by a particular society or culture at a particular time. Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that it is impossible to categorise phenomena as rational or irrational since rituals vary across cultures and according to the evolution of knowledge within cultures.

(c)   Veneration of the ancestors

Middleton (1970:189) states that in all African religions there appears to be a belief in a Creator God or Spirit. This Being is perceived as remote from humans, omnipotent and timeless and ultimately responsible for all that befalls humankind. Acting as media between this Being and human powers, regulating affairs beyond human control, there are ancestors, ghosts, refractions of divinity, such as nature and water spirits, heroes and other entities. As

a rough generalisation, ancestors are venerated when living men consider themselves able to control their environment and their lives, whilst nature and water spirits are recognised when natural forces appear to take control of human affairs. Peltzer (1993:15) maintains that the ancestors are symbolically the source of power and fertility of their descendants.

Van Heerden (1992:273-275,277) found that veneration of the ancestors still occurs throughout South Africa, although the degree to which the ancestors are recognised and revered differs between individuals.

In order to communicate with ancestral spirits, animals are slaughtered or "talks" are held at the graves of the deceased. Van Heerden (1992:277-278,282) explains that during this communication with the deceased, help, advice or protection with regard to specific occurrences or problems are sought. It is believed that the ancestors can let good and bad things happen to a person – they cannot provide money directly, but they can manoeuvre events so that somebody loses some money and then guide another person there to pick it up. If, in the case of a car accident, only one occupant out of a total of three or four is hurt or killed, the death may be traced back to the dissatisfaction of the ancestral spirits with this particular individual.

Similar interpretations can be given for lost or stolen money, or a number of deaths or illnesses in short succession within one related group. Since the ancestors are not learned, they do not possess the power to assist anyone with their studies. They can, however, allow things to happen that can somehow boost or hinder a student's academic success. Therefore, even in this sphere, their influence is acknowledged and feared.

(d)   Witchcraft

Scotch (1970:248) cites Gluckman (1955), who maintains that the belief in witchcraft (magic/sorcery) not only persists in the face of continuing acculturation, but also expands and changes to adjust to the requirements of new life situations. According to Gluckman, the concepts of science and witchcraft fulfil different functions. Science explains **how** a given process occurs (the course of a disease, for example), whereas traditional healers and witchcraft explain **why** the process occurs at all, as well as why one man and not another contracts this disease. He says: "From the African point of view, modern medicine is

extremely limited in explaining total situations ... The difficulty of destroying beliefs in witchcraft is that they form a system which can absorb and explain many failures and apparently contradictory evidence" (Gluckman, 1955, quoted in Scotch, 1970:248). It would appear that witchcraft is omnipotent in its explanatory powers as perceived by many African people. Van Heerden (1992:91,92,280) also refers to and illustrates the way that members of traditional cultures can vary their behaviour according to what they perceive as the "operating culture" at any given moment.

Of particular interest for this study is Van Heerden's (1992:284) comment that Jahoda (1970) and Elliot (1984) could not prove beyond doubt that indigenous traditional belief in the supernatural has a negative influence on motivation and achievement. Van Heerden (1992:30-31) discusses the Western and African cognitive systems (the open scientific system as opposed to the closed system of traditional thought patterns) as well as traditional and modern value systems and concepts. She concludes that one should beware of stereotyping black people with regard to their life approach based on an unstructured or vaguely structured reality concept, especially in today's rapidly changing situation. One would do well to take note of a comment by Nigerian Anyanwu (1994, quoted in Van Niekerk, 1992:35): "Pure reason is always uncomfortable with contradictions, and nothing is as contradictory as the African beliefs and behaviour." Van Niekerk (1992:35) also quotes Nobel prize winning author Wole Soyinka (1976), who speaks of "a recognisable Western cast of mind, a compartmentalising habit of thought" which opposes "the assimilative wisdom of African metaphysics" that sees no basic difference between scientific and magic techniques, for instance, to utilise the energy of lightning.

(e)   The use of traditional healers

Traditional healers still have a very strong following amongst the general black population. Some people would not consult them for "natural" illnesses, which are treated at home or by Western-trained medical doctors, hospitals or clinics (Van Heerden, 1992:263,279). Should the illness not respond to treatment, however, a traditional healer may be consulted. Quite often, babies are taken to a traditional healer or an old woman for "treatment" of the fontanel. "Muthi" (derived from the Zulu term *umuthi*, which refers to medicine or a remedy or mixture prescribed or used by traditional healers) is rubbed onto the fontanel in

order to prevent evil from entering the child's body via this area (Van Heerden, 1992:53,279-280). Children can also be "strengthened" by rubbing a potion on cuts made on their wrists or other parts of their body (Van Heerden, 1992:210-211). There is also a belief that individuals can be protected against burglaries, the theft of possessions, lightning and evil sorcery by traditional "muthi".

African people have not rejected modern medicine, but they have sustained the basic structure of their traditional beliefs (Scotch, 1970:248). Peltzer (1993:14) explains this phenomenon as follows: the majority of African people in urban areas can be regarded as transitional, which means that these persons are moving from traditional to western culture. Although their minds are mostly western-orientated, they are still psycho-socially anchored in traditional culture. In this process, a person may, in times of crisis, temporarily turn back to traditional culture. Van Heerden (1992:29) cites Jahoda's (1970) use of Barbichon's term "a state of cognitive coexistence" which exists between modern ideas and values on the one hand, and certain traditional African beliefs on the other, and that can be found elsewhere in Africa. Van Heerden's (1992:210) finding that there were parents who were regular churchgoers and who did not have a strong belief in traditional healers, but who nevertheless sometimes consulted one, can be seen against this background.

3.5.2.7   Social hierarchies – class and status (12)

A very important feature of modern African society is the development of social stratification. Traditionally, African societies were characterised by relative equality in terms of standards of living, lack of specialisation and general homogeneity of status. Today, marked differences are to be found in wealth, power, social status and degrees of occupational specialisation. These differences are apparent due to the development of class systems and new elites (Middleton, 1970:255; Frederikse, 1992:66-67,102).

A newly appointed headmaster to a low-density school in Zimbabwe found that at this school the parents questioned many things, whereas at his previous high density (township) school, very few parents challenged the principal's decisions. He attributed this difference to the fact that the majority of the parents in the low-density area had been to school, and therefore wanted to know what was happening to their children at school (Frederikse, 1992:19). He also felt that black learners at low-density schools could be alienated from

their own cultural background by the "white school tradition" that they imitated (Frederikse, 1992:19). This left these black learners feeling superior to their counterparts in high density areas, indicating a distinct sense of class difference. Delpit (1992, referred to by Robb, 1995:16) states that parents are saying to teachers: "My kids know how to be Black – you all teach them how to be successful in the White man's world". Robb (1995:15) refers to a mother's request that her four year old daughter, who is fluent in Xhosa, speak only English at pre-school in order to improve her command of English as well as her "behaviour". The mother hopes that this will improve her daughter's chances of being accepted at a "decent" English-medium primary school. This example implies that parents believe that the way these parents have taught their children is not good enough – somehow indicating feelings of inferiority in status and class.

A social marker distinguished in Zimbabwe is known as the "Nose Brigade". These learners speak "through the nose", while others speak "through the mouth" (Frederikse, 1992:64-67). This trend goes hand in hand with a social background of well-heeled parents who can afford to send their children to low-density schools where they adopt a distinct pronunciation. Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:4-5,28-29,37) maintain that language or class accents could reveal which socio-cultural group or class a person belongs to. Hairstyles and ways of dressing can differ, as does the food people eat. This behaviour can be likened to "cultural alienation" according to some people, or maybe a belief by these learners that their own (black) culture is somehow inferior. Such social class differences are not even regarded as a black-white issue any more. Instead it has to do with hailing from a high- or low-density suburb (Frederikse, 1992: 66-67).

Frederikse (1992:102;85) quotes a Zimbabwean parent who says that private schools are attended by the children of rich black and white parents, whilst the poor whites and blacks put their children into government schools. This societal structure "is integration by economics", that is, economic discrimination has replaced racial discrimination. Another parent said that learners from high-density suburbs are looked down on, not because they are black, but because of their class. Consequently, the issue has changed from a race issue to a class issue. Robb (1995:16) identifies the danger of replacing racism with classism and linguicism. Robb maintains that people have to unlearn the biased attitudes they have acquired. Consequently, a proactive approach is needed at school to tackle the complex

issues of racism and other forms of bias at a personal, interpersonal, institutional and cultural level.

3.5.2.8   *Values (13)*

"Values are core conceptions of the desirable within every individual and society. They serve as standards or criteria to guide not only action but also judgment, choice, attitude, evaluation, argument, exhortation, rationalization and one might add attribution of causality" (Rokeach, 1979:2). Therefore, in determining values, people dictate what is permissible and desirable in their particular society. Values as constructs reflect a culture's view of central issues such as religion, morality, economics, politics, interpersonal relationships, aesthetics and the environment.

Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:36-37) say that the values of a particular society are represented in that group's speech and social interaction. To illustrate: in South Africa, English mother tongue speakers can sometimes refer to their parents by their first names. However, this practice might be regarded as disrespectful and unacceptable in the more conservative rural areas and amongst Xhosa people in particular. Therefore, learners might become confused with regard to the values subscribed to by a particular school and might not understand what is expected of them within the school system and how or why conformity to these values is expected. Van Heerden (1992:216) found that respondents found church-run schools strange and unaccommodating places where they did not understand what was expected of them. Intercultural conflict can therefore result when people committed to different value systems come into contact.

In today's culturally diverse world, it is important to take note that values are dynamic and can change. Brislin *et al.* (1986:300) quote Bohm's (1980) suggestion that what "is needed is an intelligent perception, from moment to moment of what the right values are for the actual situation at the moment. That is to say, we have to be sufficiently free of attachment to past conclusions so that we are able to see each idea, each emotional response, each action, each relationship at its proper value without any persistent tendency toward bias and distortion". In order then to defuse potential cultural flashpoints, even at school level, people should not compartmentalise rigidly the set presuppositions on which they base their

value hierarchy. Brislin *et al.* (1986:300-301) identify flexibility as a keyword in the adaptation of fresh perceptions.

3.5.3 The bases of cultural differences

3.5.3.1 Categorisation (14)

The process of categorisation is universally employed to simplify people's world and organise stimuli and information into categories that make sense. For example, people divide activities into work, play, sports and leisure; food into vegetables, bread, pasta, meat, fruit, confectionery; people into grown-ups, the elderly, adolescents, babies, male/female, family and friends (Cushner *et al*, 1992:52). During the process of socialisation, the various elements constituting the world that confronts a child are organised into categories for the child (Brislin *et al.* 1986:305).

Landrine and Klonoff (1996:37) maintain that to be a member of a culture involves sharing, amongst other aspects, its categorisation schemes, which are culturally and historically relative and based on context. Brislin *et al.* (1986:305) cite Bruner, Goodnow and Austin (1956), who maintain that the set of categories used by adults tends to reflect the culture of which they are members. No rigid boundaries exist between these separate categories, indicating that they can be manipulated to serve one's needs and realise one's goals. For instance, a student with a slightly handicapping condition that he would normally play down, would bring this condition to the fore if he could benefit from it in any way, for example, if he could be granted extra time to complete a paper (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:305; Cushner *et al.*, 1992:52).

Brislin *et al.* (1992:306) quote Detweiler's (1980) statement that individuals who are socialised in the same culture interpret and categorise behaviours and situations in the same manner. Therefore, their expectations are the same. It follows then that at school level conflict could arise during intercultural interaction when there are big differences in the categorisation of the same set of behaviours by learners and teachers.

Cushner *et al.* (1992:52) say that prototype image is another very important concept in the analysis of categories. This refers to one set of attributes which best characterises the

members of a category and is viewed as a summary of the group. The practical implication is that similarities are emphasised and that there is little awareness and/or acknowledgement of the differences between members of the category.

Cushner *et al.* (1992:53) agree with Brislin *et al.* (1996:307) that stereotypes (while normally thought of only as negative) are also categories that refer to generalisations that obscure differences found within a group. Stereotyping enables someone to acquire a significant amount of information in a short period of time, but could easily lead to prejudiced, negative or even hostile behaviour. Also, people could use unfamiliar categories inappropriately, as well as impose categories inherent to their own culture on situations more suitable to their hosts' categories (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:308). For this reason, Cushner *et al.* (1992:53) and Gillborn (1995:159) emphasise the importance of always questioning taken-for-granted assumptions about ethnic minority students as well as their communities. This is especially important in the process of reduction, because in that process only essentials are retained and important internal differences are glossed over.

3.5.3.2 *Differentiation (15)*

Differentiation refers to the distinctions that can be made within a concept. Brislin *et al.* (1986:310-311) explain that the degree of differentiation is closely related to the level of knowledge on a given topic, for example, gardeners know about different types of fertiliser, stamp collectors know the differences in the values of different first-day covers from the 1920's, while school teachers are familiar with several methods of teaching children to read. In order to communicate well on these topics, the use of terms that indicate knowledge of the various distinctions would be required.

The application to cross-cultural experiences is that individuals have to learn how concepts are differentiated in cultures with which they will be interacting. Failure to do this will lead to a cycle of incorrect behaviour according to these assumptions and reinforcement thereof. The inherent danger to cross-cultural interaction is that if the parties concerned fail to make the same distinctions within a given concept, misunderstandings and ill-feeling could result. This, in turn, could lead to a cycle of inappropriate behaviour and a reinforcement of such misunderstandings and ill-feeling.

3.5.3.3   *In-group versus out-group distinctions (16)*

Cushner *et al.* (1992:56) define the in-group as that group of people who are psychologically close, comfortable and trusting of one another and who prefer to spend considerable time together. They support each other generally as well as in time of need, and provide close and warm relationships (Landrine & Klonoff, 1996:3-4; Triandis, 1994:293). Markus and Kitayama (1994a:120) cite Jarymolvich (1987) and Reykowski (1991), who say that when "the group is the primary basis of self-definition, in-group membership takes on particular importance, the interdependent members of the group will evoke positive evaluations and the out-group members, negative evaluations".

Brislin *et al.* (1986:314) state that out-groups consist of those people that are kept at a distance and are actively discouraged from becoming members of one's in-group. Sometimes they are actively discriminated against by being kept from jobs, citizenship and educational opportunities.

Van Heerden (1992:272) found that participants in a research project referred to "our people" and "our culture" when referring to black people (as opposed to white people). Some even placed themselves in certain ethnic categories (for example Venda or Pedi) within the broader South African society. Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:4) mention that variations in Xhosa language (such as the term *amagents*) indicate in-group membership, in that the term shows that the persons referred to as such are knowledgeable about a social pattern followed by trendy youngsters.

Just how important acceptance within a group is, is shown by the fact that students often participate in certain religious rites, for example, venerating the ancestors, not because they necessarily believe in the practice, but because they want to maintain good interpersonal relationships within the group (Van Heerden, 1992:275). Research has also identified a general trend amongst black people not to translocate to suburbia, but to stay where they can be amongst their own people (Van Heerden, 1992:270).

It is easy to understand then that newcomers, having left their in-groups, generally find that they enter areas where new or hosting groups reign. It takes a good deal of time to find one's place or to establish new in-groups. In order to understand this situation, knowledge

about the requirements to be accepted as a member of the in-group is needed. Black learners could find it difficult to join in-groups in traditionally white schools.

3.5.3.4 *Learning styles (17)*

Although schools as institutions display similar characteristics from country to country, socialisation practices in the home and family differ markedly. This in turn may play an important part in the way individuals are taught and also in their eventual choice of learning style. A problem arises when teachers expect learners to employ learning styles different from those they already possess upon entering school. Brislin *et al.* (1986:317) quote Ogbu (1982), who maintains that the problems faced by minorities may be found at this "interface between the culture of the home and the culture of the school".

A chosen learning style can contribute to under-achievement, since, if adolescents do not learn because of the way they are taught, learning becomes difficult, boring, frustrating and tension-provoking. This in turn produces poor scholastic achievement. Therefore, it is all-important to determine and accommodate learners' preferred learning style, and not rely totally on one kind of instruction, for example, verbal instruction. If this accommodation does not occur, it could happen that learners do not fully grasp a concept or technique, but say that they do, because they respect the teacher concerned.

Three learning styles, namely a cognitive, an affective and a physiological style, can be distinguished, according to Cushner *et al.* (1992:108-114) and Kleinfeld and Irvine (quoted in Banks & Banks, 1995:493-494). Research on learning styles targets the following fields:

- Cognitive learning styles research

  This type of research aims to determine learners' preference in receiving and processing information and experience, how they create concepts and retain and retrieve information.

- Affective learning styles research

  The accent here is on variations in interpersonal skills and self-perception, curiosity, attention, motivation, arousal and persistence.

- Physiological learning styles research

This type of research evaluates how gender, circadian rhythms, nutrition and general health influence learning processes.

Another factor to consider would be that differences in learning styles are generally gender bound. Specific gender-bound learning style characteristics are the following (Dunn & Griggs, 1995:6):

(a) Boys

  - tend to develop auditory memory later;

  - tend to develop gross motor co-ordination earlier;

  - require mobility;

  - remain tactual and kinesthetic longer than girls;

  - are more peer-oriented earlier than girls;

  - can tolerate a noisy environment better when learning; and

  - require informal design significantly more than girls do.

b) Girls, on the other hand

  - tend to develop strong auditory memory earlier;

  - tend to develop fine motor co-ordination earlier;

  - can sit passively in conventional seats and desks for a longer period of time;

  - are more authority-oriented;

  - require quiet surroundings when learning; and

  - can cope better with structured design than boys.

There is also a significant difference between high academic achievers and low academic achievers (Dunn & Griggs, 1995:7). The former are auditory or visual learners; self-, parent- or authority-motivated, conforming and not in need of mobility or food while learning. Underachievers tend to be tactual/kinesthetic learners, requiring sound, soft lighting and informal design, intake and mobility, a variety of resources, methods and approaches, displaying boredom with routines. Their motivation appears to be derived from their peer group(s). Alternatively, they appear to be motivated only when they are interested in what they are learning.

Dunn and Griggs (1995:9) and Van Heerden (1992:26) say that different cultures express different attitudes towards teachers, education and what comprises valuable learning. They mention factors such as being on time, looking directly at an adult (which could be considered rude in some cultures), active or passive participation in learning, studying theoretical versus practical matters as well as various other subtle behaviours that vary considerably from one group to another.

Brislin *et al.* (1986:317) note that Western-style schooling requires students to learn in out-of-context situations by first mastering language, acquiring symbol utility and abstract rules and concepts from books and spoken language with a view to possible future application. In many non-Western and less technological societies, especially those that do not have a long history of written language, learning tends to occur in-context. Van Heerden (1992:192-193) describes how in-context learning was accomplished by means of observation, imitation and direct participation. Brislin *et al.* (1986:317) explains that in a hunting and gathering economy, children would learn by active involvement and participation, and the reward was immediate when the required skills were mastered. There was no need to internalise a procedure and reproduce it symbolically, orally or in writing, upon command. Some cultures value learning within a group situation more. It could be especially the case in collective societies where group participation is expected and aimed for.

When youngsters' learning styles were assessed on the California Achievement Test of Basic Skills (CATs), it emerged that most of the children assessed were parent- or teacher-motivated and wanted to please the adults in their lives, but were incapable of achieving this goal while learning conventionally (Dunn & Griggs, 1995:1-3). This finding highlights the

importance of the parents'/teachers' role as motivators, but also indicates the need to accommodate a substantial repertoire of learning styles. In South Africa, moreover, as was mentioned in Section 2.3.1.2, many black parents are poorly educated or even illiterate. Add to this parental absence (see Section 2.3.2.1) or a mother who is "available", but burdened by excessive work loads (see Section 2.3.2) and there are handicapping factors concerning parental involvement and support for many black learners.

Dunn and Griggs (1995:6) maintain that differences in learning styles are not culture bound, since these vary as much within the different cultures as they do between individuals (Brislin *et al.*, 1986:318; Lemmer & Squelch, 1993:58-59). The latter authors advise teachers to refrain from generalisation or labelling, since the task, the school subject, as well as the available teaching materials, determine which learning styles are employed.

Dunn and Griggs (1995:9) say: "A culture's values, the opportunities it provides to individuals, and each student's interests, talents, and learning style contribute to the development, maturation, and expression of intelligence."

One can deduce the complexity and variety of learning styles amongst individuals and across cultures. It would appear that, although the choice of learning style is a highly individual matter, a learner's cultural framework determines certain behavioural patterns, which could influence the choice of learning style.

3.5.3.5   *Attribution (18)*

Another term for this process is ascription. The term refers to the reason for or cause which people attribute to a given incident or event, for example, if a pupil fails to respond to a question because of a hearing problem unknown to the teacher, the teacher may conclude that the learner is "retarded". Attributions are therefore judgements people make about others based on their behaviour.

Human judgement is unfortunately extremely fallible. The phrase "fundamental attribution error" describes people's tendency to approach judgements about themselves differently to the way they approach judgements about others. When people fail at a task, their own explanation would be most likely a situational attribution (the teacher was unfair, the

material was not well explained in class). When others fail, a trait label is put on that individual or group (they failed, because they are not committed, they are lazy or stupid).

These trait labels become stereotypes, which in turn are categories invented by people to simplify their world by describing others. Cushner *et al.* (1992:32-33) claim that an inherent danger in multiculturalism is that the processes of perception, categorisation, attribution and development of ethnocentric attitudes combine to create a potentially harmful situation. Non-verbal (body language), linguistic and verbal practices are open to misattributions within the school system.

Non-verbal communication is particularly sensitive to misattribution and misinterpretation. Maphai (1991, cited in Robb, 1995:16) claims that white teachers might think black learners are greedy for putting out both hands when accepting a gift, whilst the reverse situation could be that white children could appear rude to black adults because they accept a gift with one hand only. When they avoid eye contact, black learners act according to the way they have been socialised to show respect. A teacher in an intercultural setting could very easily judge the learners to be disrespectful or devious, a misunderstanding based on a misattribution (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:20,88; Cushner *et al.*, 1992:33,60,81; Dunn & Griggs, 1995:9).

Other examples of behaviour that is easily stereotyped concerns patterns of speech. Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:20) mention that Xhosa people tend to speak loudly compared to home-language English speakers. The underlying rule of conversation operating here is that, when one speaks softly, black people may think that one may be gossiping. However, in a Western situation, loud talk (which these black people would consider polite), loud talk may be interpreted as misbehaving and being unruly at school. Xhosa speakers, in order to be diplomatic and to avoid being thought rude, may put requests subtly and indirectly, whilst the English culture requires one to be clear and to the point. A teacher unfamiliar with this cultural difference could become impatient and intolerant. Also, in order to avoid embarrassment and therefore to avoid the risk of potential loss of face, Xhosa speakers, for instance, will often avoid asking questions about issues unfamiliar to them or which they do not fully understand. This could leave learners confused with regard to pedagogic content and teachers frustrated.

An awareness of the pitfalls of attribution can encourage effective intercultural interaction. Triandis (1977, cited in Brislin *et al.*, 1986:321) sees the solution in the formation of isomorphic attributions. This indicates attributions about people and/or incidents that are the same and that take cultural differences into account. However, the development of isomorphic attributions presumes understanding of why and how attributions are made. The development of isomorphic attributions should be the ideal. This could indeed encourage the decrease of misunderstandings and conflict, since people from various cultures will understand each other's behaviour.

3. 6   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This chapter has given rise to the following research questions:

- How important is the role of traditional values in the black family?

- Do learners feel that they belong to their school?

- To what extent does racism occur at school?

- What are the learners' feelings about language at school level?

- How do learners feel about the issue of punctuality?

- Can communication based on traditional courtesy cause cultural misunderstanding?

- The extent of personal space is a culturally determined and maintained phenomenon and therefore a matter of cultural preference – can this lead to misunderstandings between cultural groups?

- Do learners ask questions in the class situation?

3. 7   CONCLUSION

The background investigation in this chapter indicates that, in general, urban black learners have been exposed to and influenced by a complicated and integrated cultural, historico-political and socio-economic situatedness that differs to a large extent from that found in the Western industrialised community. Since schools cannot be severed from society, a holistic

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH STRATEGIES AND METHODS

4.1 AIM OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

The birth of the new South Africa brought about several changes, especially regarding education. The new educational dispensation makes it possible for anyone to attend multicultural schools. However, the change did not come without some problems. The general impression is created that black learners' cultural, socio-economic and historico-political orientation, as well as a possible educational backlog, could hinder their adjustment to secondary school, especially if they attend traditionally white suburban schools. This study is aimed at researching the phenomenon of the accommodation of black learners in traditionally white schools.

Chapters 2 and 3 set out the literature review that forms a theoretical base for the empirical study. These chapters focused on the following aspects:

- In Chapter 2, the cultural and home situatedness of black learners are described.

- Chapter 3 sets out a culture-general framework and applies it to the South African situation, describing and highlighting the difficulties black learners might encounter upon entering a traditionally white school, due to their unique and particular cultural orientation(s).

The choice of method used in the empirical research was itself based on a relevant literature study. The aim of the empirical study is to:

Research and describe black learners' life-worlds (especially their experience of the multicultural school environment in a formerly traditionally white school).

The specific aims of the empirical research are to identify the educational and underlying emotional and other needs that could arise from these learners'

- socio-economic situation;

- historico-political background;

- cultural orientation;

- expectations of the self, school and society; and

- possible educational backlog.

4.2 RESEARCH STRATEGY AND METHOD

According to Smith (1993:19), a research strategy indicates a broad methodological approach to a study. The nature of the research strategy employed in the empirical research is that of a **two-phase design,** as illustrated by Creswell (1994:185-186). The quantitative and qualitative research methods respectively were employed in the two phases of this research. Creswell (1994:186) explains the advantages of a two-phase design: "Both phases are of equal stature, and the study has all the advantages of an extensive use of each paradigm of research and the limitation of a clear convergence of the results from both phases of the design". Although Chapters 1 to 3 may suggest that a predominantly quantitative research approach is followed, in fact, the study uses both research approaches. Chapter 4 does not profess to be a detailed account of the research methods used, but reviews the essential components that feature in this research.

Creswell (1994:176) mentions the pragmatist argument that there is a false dichotomy between qualitative and quantitative approaches. The use of a two-phase design means that social phenomena can be understood better, because the two methods are interrelated and support and complement each other to constitute a multifaceted and holistic picture of learners' experiences of and needs in a specific school. The first phase of this study used a quantitative research approach to look at statistical relationships between learners' general life-worlds, focusing on these learners' specific cultural situation and the level of accommodation and feeling of belonging that they experience at school. Following on from this macro-level analysis, the second phase used qualitative research methods to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics and relations between various factors that play a role in the learners' general life-worlds.

The **research results** are presented in two steps, corresponding to the two phases – firstly, the quantitative phase (Chapter 5), followed by the qualitative phase (Chapter 6). In Table 4.1, the application of both these methods in the empirical research done in this study is explained.

Table 4.1:   **Comparison of the criteria of each research method**

The quantitative method	The qualitative method
• Uses objective observation and other techniques that can easily be generalised – structured questionnaires were applied to the learners.	• Uses subjective, empathetic techniques to gather data, namely semi-structured interviews and observation – interviews were conducted with learners and teachers.
• Emphasises the extent and scope of the data collection – a large variety of factors were addressed in the questionnaire.	• Emphasises the depth of the data collection – the interviews aimed to find explanations for and gain better insight into some aspects that the questionnaire touched upon. Unique problems and contexts of particular schools were considered during the interviews with teachers and learners.
• Uses the literature deductively at the beginning of the study.	• Uses the literature inductively towards the end of the study.

Table 4.1 illustrates how the two methods, although different, complement and support each other and allow the researcher to obtain a more integrated, holistic picture of the learners' life-worlds and their experiences within a particular school system. Quantitative research uses theory deductively – theory is placed at the beginning of a study to form a framework for the entire study. Qualitative research, on the other hand, does not begin with the theory about to be verified. Instead, a new theory is developed using an inductive model of thinking or logic, so that the theory emerges toward the end of the study (Creswell,

1994:37,87; Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 1995:5). In this study, the theory is placed at the beginning of the study.

4.3 PERMISSION TO IMPLEMENT THE RESEARCH

In order to implement the empirical research within the specific context under investigation, it was necessary for the researcher to obtain access to schools.

Permission to apply the questionnaires and conduct the interviews was granted by the Gauteng Department of Education as well as by the targeted schools. The procedure followed is set out below.

- Firstly, permission for the research had to be obtained from the Gauteng Department of Education, Directorate: Education Information: Research Unit.

- Secondly, permission had to be obtained to work in the various Districts from the District Directors concerned.

- Thirdly, the principals and the governing bodies of the targeted schools had to give their permission.

- Fourthly, written permission to apply the questionnaire was obtained from the parents of the proposed respondents by means of an explanatory letter with a tear-off slip (see Appendix F).

4.4 CHOICE OF SCHOOLS WHERE THE RESEARCH COULD BE DONE

4.4.1 Target population and random sample

Grade Nine black learners were chosen as the target population, because they could draw on their experiences during their year in Grade Eight. Also, their exposure to secondary school has not been so long as to impress certain ways of behaviour on them.

The target population was defined using the following criteria:

- Only black Grade Nine learners were considered.

- The schools selected had to be traditionally white, multicultural suburban schools.

All the schools run by the Gauteng Department of Education in Northern Districts One to Four that met the above requirements were grouped together. A "grid" was drawn over the population of this area. The aim was to select a sample of schools from the entire target population that would be representative regarding the region, districts and size of the group. Only eighteen schools met the above criterion. These eighteen schools were then stratified according to two further criteria (see Table 4.2), namely:

- location (in Districts One to Four in the Northern region, N1 to N4); and

- size of group (fewer than 20 black Grade Nine learners; between 20 and 40; more than 40).

It was decided (for logistic reasons) to discard the group of fewer than 20 learners. Two schools were then selected from each district – one from the small group (between 20 and 40) and one from the larger group (more than 40). There were some exceptions to these criteria:

- In District N1, two schools could be identified, one with between 20 and 40 learners, one with more than 40 learners.

- However, in District N2, not one school could meet the selection criteria to provide a group of between 20 and 40 black learners. This compelled the researcher to select a group of seven from a school in District N2 (see horizontal arrow in Table 4.2).

- N3 contributed two schools which met the criteria.

- N4 had only one school in the smaller group. Therefore, one more school had to be incorporated from the larger group in N3 (see vertical arrow in Table 4.2).

The sampling method can be described as a multi-stage stratified cluster sample, using judgmental criteria (Steyn, *et al.*, 1996:16-54).

In N1, one of the selected schools decided not to participate in the research survey, because the school felt that the nature of the questionnaire was too sensitive. The school's place was taken by another school in N1 that met the set criteria. Four of the schools were English-medium, two schools were Afrikaans-medium, and two schools were dual-medium schools. N4 had no school in the forty plus group. Therefore another school was selected from District N3's forty plus list which had more than forty learners (see vertical arrow in Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 represents a summary of the final set of eight schools that were selected after consultation with the Gauteng Department of Education, Directorate: Education Information: Research Unit. Permission for the inclusion of a school in the N2 forty plus group could not be granted because the school was already involved in another research project. Therefore this school was excluded from the start. Schools (clusters) are identified by codes as A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, and cluster sizes are given in brackets for each school or cluster.

Table 4.2:   Number of black learners – final sample

Geographical category	Less than 20	20-40	40+
N1		A (39)	B (57)
N2	(C (7)) —→	C (7)	D (50)
N3		E (20)	F (120) (G (75))
N4		H (33)	G (75)

The sample contained 332 learners, which provided fairly good coverage of the total population.

4.5   THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Two research instruments were used, namely:

- a questionnaire; and

- interviews.

In addition, the researcher also informally used the observation method, by keeping a field journal (see Section 4.6.1.1(d) for more details).

Below, firstly the design of the questionnaire is explained. Then, the interviews are discussed.

4.5.1   The questionnaire

4.5.1.1   The aim of the questionnaire

The aim of the questionnaire was to:

- get quantifiable, comparable data;

- obtain a representative sample of Grade Nine learners' opinions and experiences.

The questionnaire was applied to 332 learners, which was regarded as good coverage of the population.

4.5.1.2   Drafting the questionnaire

A suitable research instrument was not available, so it was necessary to design a structured questionnaire that could be considered efficient, culturally relevant and, more importantly, was designed for the appropriate reading level (the questionnaire is included as Appendix A). Various existing questionnaires and scales covering related topics were consulted and incorporated where applicable. An example of such an existing instrument is the modified version of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale – considered a global measure of self-esteem which assesses a child's feelings about him/herself (Rosenberg, 1965:305-307; Belgrave, *et al.*, 1994:149).

During the drafting process, it was borne in mind that a good questionnaire, according to Best and Kahn (1986:175-176) and Krathwohl (1993:379-380), displays the following characteristics:

- consideration for the characteristics of the respondents;

- a neat and attractive appearance;

- clear instructions; and

- unambiguous and objective questions.

The procedure followed in compiling the questionnaire involved four stages, as set out below.

Stage 1: Theoretical research

> Chapters 2 to 3 provide the theoretical base for the questionnaire. In Chapter 2, the home situation of black learners was discussed. In Chapter 3, a standardised culture-general framework identified 18 recurring themes for intercultural interaction, grouped into three broad categories. Possible difficulties that could arise from black learners' unique and particular cultural situation upon entering a multicultural, traditionally white suburban school were grouped under the relevant headings and described and discussed. Possible questions were then formulated. These were used to design a draft questionnaire.

Stage 2: Evaluation of the draft questionnaire

> The draft questionnaire was evaluated by a panel from the Gauteng Department of Education: Directorate: Education Information: Research Unit.

> The panel initially felt that the questionnaire was racially biased and did not respect the dignity of the respondents. The panel wanted the questionnaire to be revised to avoid stereotypical perceptions of these learners. It was necessary to convince the panel otherwise, since the aim was to gauge the learners' feelings about relevant issues. Also, the dignity of the respondents was never compromised. Another

concern raised by the researcher was that these restrictions would result in a measuring instrument that is not as robust and strong psychometrically as it needed to be. Nevertheless, the Gauteng Department of Education panel insisted that some of its requirements be met and a compromise was reached that was scientifically acceptable.

The questionnaire was reviewed and reworked and eventually met with the panel's approval.

Stage 3: Pilot study

In order to evaluate the draft questionnaire, it was applied to a number of learners at an identified school in N3. Learners were requested to indicate which questions were vague and which words they did not understand.

Stage 4: Design of the final questionnaire

The pilot study resulted in a number of changes to the draft questionnaire, which was then finalised. The title of the final questionnaire reads: "School and cultural survey" (the questionnaire is appended as Appendix A).

4.5.1.3 Composition of the questionnaire

The following dimensions are covered in the questionnaire: biographical information, the individual dimension, the family dimension and the school/cultural dimension. Indicators for operationalising the dimensions were identified and questions were based on these indicators. Throughout the questionnaire, questions that could possibly be regarded as sensitive, for example, Q6[1] (attendance frequency of religious or traditional services) and Q13 (nature of medical treatment) were incorporated along with questions "borrowed" from other dimensions (see Appendix A). This was done in order to "neutralise" any potentially disturbing questions by blending them with "ordinary" questions.

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[1] For the sake of uniformity and brevity, throughout the text and in the tables, whenever specific questions or variables are referred to, the symbol Q is used for questions and the symbol V is used for variables.

(a)   Biographical information

In Q2, Q3, Q4 and Q7 learners were asked to provide information regarding the following: their age, their gender, whether it is their first year in Grade Nine and their home language.

(b)   The family dimension

The socio-economic status of the family, and therefore the life-worlds of the learners, is determined mostly by the occupations and the educational qualifications of the parents or primary caregivers (Scheffer, 1972:84-101). Accordingly, Q8 to Q11 investigated aspects of the socio-economic status of the family, namely:

- the father's occupation;

- the father's highest qualification;

- the mother's occupation; and

- the mother's highest qualification.

The results are set out in Tables 5.1 and 5.2.

A lack of educational qualifications or joblessness could signify conditions of poverty such as overcrowded living quarters, inadequate diet and poor medical care. Such conditions could lead to disturbed sleeping patterns, susceptibility to illness and other developmental problems. These factors in turn influence the learners' concentration, motivation and self-concept – all very relevant where learners' adjustment to school is concerned.

The rest of the questions in this dimension (see Table 4.3, overleaf) also aimed to determine learners' perceptions of factors related to their home and family circumstances.

Table 4.3:   **Operationalising the family dimension**

DIMENSION	INDICATOR	QUESTION NUMBER	VARIABLE NUMBER
Facilities	• area – suburb/township	Q18, Q19	V40, V41
	• house size – number of bedrooms	Q16	V35
	• number of inhabitants	Q14	V33
	• availability of: – water – electricity – geyser – fridge	 Q17 Q17 Q17 Q17	 V36 V37 V38 V39
	• availability of informal educational material	Q15	V34
	• household duties	Q32	V69
Quality of care-giving	• circumstances conducive to studying	Q41	V78
	• breakfast before school	Q34	V71
Values	• frequency regarding attendance of religious/traditional services	Q6	V15
	• belief in spirits of forefathers	Q44	V81
	• nature of medical treatment	Q13	V31,V32
Parent-child relationship	• with whom does the learner reside?	Q12	V21-30
	• encouragement to do homework	Q40	V77
	• discuss personal problems (trust)	Q42	V79
	• unnecessary scolding (understanding)	Q39	V76
	• discipline: – manner in which it is applied – gender of disciplinarian	Q35 Q36	V72 V73
	• respect for parents	Q37, Q38, Q43, Q45	V74, V75, V80, V82

(c)   The individual dimension

The individual dimension deals with aspects which have to do with the learners themselves. These aspects were identified and described in Chapters 2 and 3. As with the other dimensions, indicators were established and questions were based on these indicators in order to operationalise this dimension (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4:   Operationalising the individual dimension

DIMENSION	INDICATOR	QUESTION NUMBER	VARIABLE NUMBER
Self-concept	• self-esteem	Q24	V46-55
	• sensitivity to criticism	Q25	V56
Belonging	• extra-mural activities	Q5	V5-14
	• choice of school	Q27	V58
	• happy/unhappy when at school	Q28	V59
	• specify reasons	Q29	V60-V66
	• close friends from another race group	Q26	V57
Aspirations	• highest level of education desired	Q20	V42
	• possibility of realising these ambitions	Q21	V43
	• desired occupation	Q23	V45

(d) The school/cultural dimension

This section deals with learners' perceptions of a number of aspects concerning the school. These aspects are grouped under the following headings:

• school atmosphere;

• the classroom; and

• assessment.

The operationalisation of these aspects is set out in Table 4.5 (overleaf).

Table 4.5:   **Operationalising the school/cultural dimension**

DIMENSION	INDICATOR	QUESTION NUMBER	VARIABLE NUMBER
Scholastic coping ability	• first year in Grade Nine	Q4	V4
	• feeling about school marks	Q31	V68
Language	• preference	Q58	V102
	• comprehensive ability	Q59	V103
	• expressive ability	Q60, Q61	V104, V105
	• reading ability	Q61	V106
	• writing ability	Q61	V107
Culture	• punctuality	Q46	V83
	• loudness	Q47	V84
	• eye contact	Q48	V85
	• personal space	Q49	V86
	• group: – pressure – interest	Q56 Q55, Q62	V96-V100 V95. V108
	• conflict resolution	Q50, Q65, Q67	V87-90, V111, V113
	• questioning	Q54	V94

	• discipline:
	– gender roles
	– reintroduction of corporal
	  punishment
	– manoeuvring/accepting
	  responsibility for actions
		Q66
		
		Q68
		
		Q22, Q64
			V112
			
			V114
			
			V44, V110

	• entitlement	Q30, Q33, Q51, Q57, Q63	V67, V70, V91, V101, V109
Racism	• racial harmony	Q52	V92
	• occurrence of racist insults	Q53	V93

In the questionnaire, Q69 reads as follows: "If you could, what would you change about your school to make you like it more?" This **open-ended question** is aimed at obtaining a realistic picture of learners' **feelings** about being accommodated at their schools.

4.5.2 The interviews

The researcher also used a qualitative research approach which involved conducting interviews, because the research required exploratory, descriptive, in-depth and **holistic** descriptions (Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 1995:5). Triangulation allows data obtained through interviews to be combined with data from the questionnaire, as well as with observations to validate the truth value of the eventual findings. It also provides the researcher with a holistic perspective of the unique way in which each respondent phrases particular problems (Merriam, 1988:86).

Individual interviews consisting of semi-structured questions were conducted with teaching staff and learners in each of the schools concerned.

4.5.2.1 The aim of the interviews

The interviews were conducted to achieve the following aims:

- to gain insight into the experiences, the perceptions and the life-worlds of black Grade Nine learners in multicultural, traditionally white schools; and

- to explore the situation of these learners as experienced, perceived and explained by the teaching staff at the same schools.

4.5.2.2 The interview structure

(a) Convenience sample

A convenience sample was taken from the population – the teaching staff at each selected school was requested to select respondents that would meet the criteria described in Section 4.5.2.2 ((b) below. The researcher assumed that the sample size was sufficient when a repetition in themes appeared in the description of the experience of a specific phenomenon by the respondents. This assumption is in line with recommendations by Parse, Coyne and Smith (1985:18). This repetition or recurrence of themes is also sometimes referred to as data saturation.

(b)   Criteria for the selection of the learners to be interviewed

The following criteria were applied in the selection of learners for the interviews:

- The learners had to be willing to be interviewed.

- They had to be able to communicate in English.

- They had to have completed the questionnaire.

- The gender of the respondents depended on the boy/girl ratio of the particular school involved (the aim was to interview the same number of boys and girls).

- The respondents had to be in touch with the general feelings of their peer groups.

- They had to be unafraid to air their opinions.

It was emphasised that the selected learners did not need to be academic achievers or even well-behaved at school.

(c)   Criteria for the selection of the teachers to be interviewed

Each school had to appoint a spokesperson who knew the Grade Nine learners well enough to be interviewed on issues relating to these learners.

The interviews were semi-structured. This means that neither the exact wording, nor the order of the questions or issues about to be explored, would be predetermined (Merriam, 1988:86).

Semi-structured interviews increase the credibility of the eventual findings by allowing the researcher the freedom to probe for clarification and to change or adjust the questions to suit the knowledge, status and involvement of the specific respondent (Krefting, 1991:218; Merriam, 1988:86). Furthermore, interviews allow the researcher continuous assessment and an evaluation of information, providing opportunities for redirection, probing and summarising (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, quoted in Merriam, 1988:86).

The interviews were conducted according to interview schedules and field notes were kept during the interviews.

4.5.2.3   Data gathering

Each of the individual interviews lasted for an average of one hour and consisted of semi-structured questions that were put to the learners and teaching staff. The interviews were recorded on audiotape, and a verbatim transcription, analysis and interpretation were done afterwards.

The questions put to the learners and teachers are set out below.

(a)   Learners:

- *When you first came to this high school, what were your general expectations of this school?*

- *How do you feel about your school now? Especially regarding:*
  – language;
  – discipline (uniform/ latecoming/ noise);
  – teachers.

- *How do you feel about being with your fellow black learners compared to being with your fellow white learners?*

- *Do you take part in cultural/sporting activities?*

- *Do you feel that you belong in this school?*

- *What would you change about your school and why, to make you like it more?*

(b)   Teachers:

- *When black learners first came to this school, were there any initial adjustment problems?*

- *How are they coping scholastically?*

- *Can they speak to their parents about their personal problems – is there adequate communication between parent(s) and child?*

- *Do you find that the learners from the different cultural groups mix socially?*

- *Do black learners take part in sport and cultural activities at school?*

- *Are there any adjustment problems still evident?*

First, a pilot study was done in order to refine the methodology of the data gathering process. The pilot study also provided the researcher with experience in this method of data gathering (Krefting, 1991:220; Burns & Grove, 1987:57).

4.5.2.4 Data analysis

Although several relevant analytical approaches exist, this data was analysed according to eight steps identified by Tesch (1990) for the analysis of qualitative data (quoted in Creswell, 1994:154-155). This method of data analysis operates in the manner explained below.

First, the researcher read through the complete transcribed interview to obtain some sense of the whole. The transcription was then read again, and individual topics were identified – not by their "substance", but by their underlying meaning. This process was repeated for all the respondents. Similar topics were grouped or clustered together and then organised into major or common topics, unique topics and side issues (leftovers). This selection of topics was coded and then compared to the data to see if new categories and codes emerged.

The most descriptive wording for these topics was then found and they were turned into categories and sub-categories. The abbreviations for the categories were finalised and the codes alphabetised. The data material belonging to each category was assembled in one place, after which the researcher could proceed to a preliminary analysis of the data. The identified categories and sub-categories were then interpreted according to the theoretical framework with its accompanying dimensions as set out in Chapter 3 (see Tables 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5).

In this phase of the research, credibility was ensured by using double coding. A psychiatric nursing specialist with a doctorate and training and experience in qualitative research was appointed to code the data independently. The external coder was given unmarked copies of

the transcripts, as well as the field notes and a work protocol explaining the stages of the analysis and the processing of the data (see Appendices C and G).

The researcher and the external coder had formal discussions in order to determine the results and to which degree there was consensus between the researcher and the independent coder's findings.

4.5.2.5 *Literature control*

A literature control was implemented by comparing the results obtained during the data analysis phase with literature on similar or other relevant research. New perspectives that came to the fore during the data analysis phase as well as aspects that appear in the literature but that were not found in the research, are discussed in Chapter 6.

4.6 THE VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE RESEARCH

The trustworthiness of this research is based on Guba's model, as explained in Lincoln and Guba (1985:289-300) and Krefting (1991:215-222). This model identifies four aspects of trustworthiness, namely truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality. These aspects are relevant to both qualitative and quantitative studies, but the philosophical differences between these two approaches determine different strategies for assessing the criteria in each type of research (Krefting, 1991:215; see also Table 4.6).

Table 4.6:   Different research approaches – comparison of criteria

CRITERION	QUALITATIVE APPROACH	QUANTITATIVE APPROACH
Truth value	Credibility	Internal validity
Applicability	Transferability	External validity
Consistency	Dependability	Reliability
Neutrality	Confirmability	Objectivity

Source: Krefting (1991:217)

Four questions can be posed in order to ensure trustworthiness in research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:290):

- Truth value

  How can one establish whether the research findings reflect the truth about the respondents and the context in which the research was carried out?

- Applicability

  How does one determine the extent to which the particular findings will be applicable to other respondents or contexts?

- Consistency

  How can one determine the findings if an inquiry were to be repeated with the same respondents and in the same context?

- Neutrality

  Is it possible to establish the degree to which research findings are determined by the respondents and conditions of the inquiry, as opposed to the biases, perspectives, motivations and interests of the researcher?

Within the quantitative research approach, the criteria employed in response to these questions are termed **internal validity**, **external validity**, **reliability** and **objectivity**. The qualitative research approach refers to **credibility**, **transferability, dependability** and **confirmability** (see Table 4.6, above).

Measures that are critical to the quality of the research and that were taken to establish the trustworthiness of this research are discussed in Section 4.6.1 below, because they feature in both the quantitative and the qualitative research approaches.

4.6.1 Internal validity (quantitative approach) versus credibility (qualitative approach)

Both approaches are concerned with the question whether the researcher trusts the research findings to reflect the truth.

In quantitative research, **internal validity** pertains to the degree to which the questionnaire measures what it is supposed to measure: "Do the findings capture what is really there? Are investigators observing or measuring what they think they are measuring?" (Merriam, 1988:166). **Construct validity** refers to the relationship between test items and related behaviour or characteristics. Therefore it uses hypotheses (derived from theories) or questions, as in this research, about the nature of the variables about to be measured and the observations of these variables (De Wet *et al.*, 1981:149).

In qualitative research, **credibility** is normally obtained through the study of human experiences as perceived and experienced by respondents (Krefting, 1991:215). Sandelowski (1986, quoted by Krefting, 1991:215-216) suggests that qualitative research is credible when the descriptions or interpretation of human experience are so accurate "that people who also share that experience would immediately recognize the descriptions".

4.6.1.1 Measures taken to heighten the study's credibility and internal validity

(a) Prolonged engagement

There are no rules that regulate how much time is spent on data collection. However, Krefting (1991:218) argues that sufficient time has to be invested to learn the "culture", to test for misinformation introduced either by the self or by the respondents and to build trust. Krefting also refers to Kirk and Miller (1986) who maintain that it is especially useful to detect response sets that indicate which answers are based on what respondents view as socially desirable responses. Lincoln and Guba (1985:301-304) maintain that a variety of experiences in a given field over a considerable period of time can improve the validity of a study.

The occupational position of the researcher as Educational Advisor: Specialised Counselling in the Gauteng Department of Education for a period of eleven years has exposed her to the chosen field of research, since she had regular contact with principals, teaching staff and learners of primary and secondary schools. Due to this work experience and contact, she could to a large extent overcome the obstruction of what Lincoln and Guba (1985:302) term being "a stranger in a strange land". Because she is accepted as a member of the school system, she did not draw undue attention to her presence, thereby avoiding

accompanying overreaction. She therefore had the time needed to orient herself to the situation and to build trust (see also Section 4.6.4.2).

(b)   Persistent observation

This technique helps to identify which characteristics and aspects in a situation are most relevant to the particular issue or problem under investigation and to focus on those (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:304). Regular contact with schools constantly brought the predicament of black learners under the "new" educational dispensation to the attention of the researcher. Also, since 1996, the researcher entered into a number of informal discussions with principals, teachers and learners (black and white) regarding the general adjustment of black learners and intercultural interaction in the region's schools. These discussions played an important role in developing a clearer perception of what the most relevant aspects regarding the research were.

However, Lincoln and Guba (1985:305) warn of the danger of premature closure in persistent observation. They advise researchers that the intention to come to those terms called for by the situation should be surrounded by an aura of scepticism. Paradoxically, the closeness of a relationship between researcher and respondent can threaten credibility (Krefting, 1991:218). To overcome this risk, reflexivity, the keeping of a field journal and triangulation were used as credibility strategies. Their critical role is discussed below.

(c)   Reflexivity

Because qualitative research is value-laden, it is important for a researcher actively to report feelings and biases (Creswell, 1994:6). Familiarity with the school environment prompted the researcher (who is also trained as a teacher) to look for the specific and practical implications of what she observed. As a trained educational psychologist, the researcher wanted to observe the learners' life-worlds only from their own viewpoint, without being influenced by her training as a teacher.

Quantitative research emphasises objectivity, which refers to a "proper distance between researcher and subjects that minimizes bias and is achieved through such procedures as instrumentation and randomization" (Krefting, 1991:217). Krefting explains that to remain

objective, the researcher has to be scientifically distant and not to influence or be influenced by the study. Because qualitative research is dynamic, and the researcher is a participant (as opposed to being merely an observer and by decreasing the distance between researcher and respondents), it was important to be aware of and reflect on influences on the process of data gathering and analysis (Krefting, 1991:218).

(d)   Field notes

Keeping field notes in the form of methodological notes, as suggested by Krefting (1991:218) and Patton (1990:202), served the purpose of documenting the daily schedule and logistics. Observational notes were used to document activities relevant to the research, using observation and listening techniques.

More importantly, though, keeping personal field notes made the researcher aware of her personal experiences (feelings, thoughts, biases and ideas) regarding the research process. Also, although the researcher is familiar with the methodology of qualitative research and the conducting of semi-structured interviews, **the pilot study** emphasised the importance of being less active and listening more; of using appropriate communication techniques and not guiding too strongly or proceeding to therapeutic interventions. Consequently, the personal field notes served the purpose of continuously reminding the researcher to remain an objective observer and competent communicator.

The field notes were discussed with the external coder and decisions were taken as to whether the field notes should be included in the discussion of the results. It was decided to include some field notes where relevant (see Section 6.9).

(e)   Triangulation

The third technique – triangulation – is the combined usage of two or more theories, methods, data sources, researchers or analytical methods in the study of a phenomenon (Creswell, 1994:174; Krefting 1991:219). Creswell (1994:174) cites Jick's (1979) explanation that the concept of triangulation is based on the assumption that if any bias were present in particular data sources, researcher and/or method, these would be

neutralised when the findings are used in conjunction with other data sources and methods and by other researchers.

In this study, triangulation is largely ensured by the mutually supportive research methods of the quantitative and qualitative data collection strategies, namely a survey and in-depth interviews. The literature study also acted as a control.

A theoretical study of the life-worlds of black learners, both at home and at school, was done. Areas that appeared particularly troublesome were identified. These areas were grouped into three broad dimensions, namely the individual, family and school dimensions. By refining these areas, indicators were identified. The resulting theory was operationalised by the formulation of specific questions, which were then incorporated into the questionnaire and interviews. By following these steps, the standards of construct validity were also met, as well as those of theoretical validity, in that the theory was made "measurable".

To further ensure a sound scientific basis, the following was also done:

- Various experts in the field of intercultural research and colleagues of the researcher were consulted with regard to the questionnaire content. Statisticians and experts in question designing were involved in a supervisory capacity in the formulation of the questions.

- Numerous existing questionnaires on related subjects were consulted.

- Multiple methods of data gathering were used, namely a questionnaire, biographical information gathering and participant observation.

- A variety of data sources were used – a variety of persons (teaching staff and learners) were observed and interviewed. Also, by visiting various schools, variety in time and space was ensured.

- Referential adequacy was ensured by including a selection from the material recorded in the research. These measures ensure a criterion against which to judge

the accuracy of the analyses and interpretations of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:314).

- Member checking gave respondents an opportunity to react to the results of the research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:314).

4.6.2 External validity (quantitative approach) versus transferability (qualitative approach)

Applicability refers to the degree to which research findings can be applied to other groups, settings or contexts; the ability to generalise from the research findings to larger populations (Krefting, 1991:216; Lincoln & Guba, 1985:290). In quantitative research this matter resorts under the criterion of external validity. Cook and Campbell (1979, quoted in Lincoln & Guba, 1985:291) define external validity as "the approximate validity with which we infer that the presumed causal relationships can be generalized to and across alternate measures of the cause and effect and across different types of persons, settings, and times".

In this study, external validity was aimed for by giving "every element of the population a known probability (not necessarily equal) [chance] of being included in the sample" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:291).

Qualitative research differs from quantitative research in that it refers to the **transferability** of research and not to the generalisation of research. This is the case because qualitative research views a phenomenon in its unique, natural context. For this reason, one cannot generalise research findings (Krefting, 1991:216).

Transferability can be achieved by providing the maximum information regarding the literature, information about the respondents and the general research context (Krefting, 1991:220). This study aims to provide the maximum information regarding the context of the research. A literature control was undertaken and a complete bibliography is provided.

4.6.3 Reliability (quantitative approach) versus dependability (qualitative approach)

Lincoln and Guba (1985:292) say that reliability is "not prized for its own sake but as a precondition for validity; an unreliable measure cannot be valid". Referring to **reliability** in the quantitative approach, Hannah and Oosthuizen (1984:88) maintain that if the same questionnaire is applied to the same group of learners on two different occasions, and the results correlate to a large degree, it can be said that the questionnaire displays a high degree of reliability. In this study, the researcher did not administer the questionnaire twice to the same group. However, the researcher was of the opinion that the reliability of the results was established by correlating the questionnaire findings with those of the semi-structured focus interviews (see Chapter 6).

The following guidelines were adhered to in order to heighten the reliability of the questionnaire:

- Specific attention was given to setting the questions in a clear and uncomplicated manner. With regard to this aspect, it was imperative to consider the level of the English language skills of the particular learners. When the test was administered, every question was read out loud and standardised explanations were given if there were any queries.

- Easier questions were given first, and the open-ended question came later.

- The length of a questionnaire can influence its reliability. For this reason an attempt was made to keep the questionnaire to a length that was considered neither too short, nor too long (Hannah & Oosthuizen, 1984:89; Lincoln & Guba, 1985:292).

The **dependability** criterion relates to the consistency of findings. According to Krefting (1991:221), Guba (1981) used the term "auditable", which refers to the fact that it is important for researchers to be able clearly to follow the "decision trail" used by the investigator(s) in another study. Techniques that enhanced this study's dependability were the following:

- A dense description of the research methodology:

  The research method was described in such a way that another researcher will be able to follow the research procedure.

- The use of triangulation:

  The principle of triangulation was applied, as discussed in Section 4.6.1.1 (e)).

- The procedure of coding/recoding (Krefting, 1991:221):

  After coding a segment of the data, the researcher waited for at least two weeks and then recoded the same data and compared the results.

4.6.4 Objectivity (quantitative approach) versus confirmability (qualitative approach)

According to Guba (Krefting, 1991:221), audit strategy is viewed as an essential technique to establish **confirmability** (qualitative approach). Accordingly, it requires the involvement of an external auditor to follow and consider the research process and the eventual findings, and to understand why decisions were made.

The confirmability of qualitative research lies in the question whether the characteristics of the data are or are not confirmable.

The trustworthiness of this research has already been discussed above. Consequently, the following can now be considered:

- the authority of the researcher;

- school visits;

- the physical environment; and

- ethical measures.

4.6.4.1 The authority of the researcher

The researcher is a registered educational psychologist who has been in the service of the Gauteng Department of Education for eleven years. She has already been involved in extensive postgraduate research.

4.6.4.2 School visits

The researcher paid a preliminary visit to every school during which the aim of the research, as well as the modus operandi was explained. It was emphasised that the aim of the research was diagnostic and therefore not a critical evaluation of the school, the staff or the learners. This initial contact proved to be invaluable in establishing goodwill in and co-operation by the schools. This in turn improved the validity of the data by creating a relationship of mutual trust between researcher and respondents, ensuring the full co-operation and openness of respondents (Schalekamp, 1995:52).

4.6.4.3 The physical setting

(a) Questionnaires

The choice of venue depended on the number of respondents involved, but the questionnaires were all completed in familiar, comfortable and quiet surroundings (either a school hall or classroom). Seating arrangements were organised and order was established and maintained by a member/members of the teaching staff.

The objective of the questionnaire was explained. Respondents were informed of the fact that no respondent can be identified, since no names appear on the questionnaires.

A registered psychometrist assisted the researcher to administer the questionnaire.

(b) Interviews

It was important to use a quiet, private, comfortable area that was relatively free of disturbances for this purpose. The interviews were conducted individually and no names were mentioned to ensure maximum confidentiality and to establish an atmosphere of openness and trust.

The respondents' own permission was sought to record the interview on audiotape. The respondents were also reassured that only the researcher and one independent fellow coder, who is not in any way connected to the school, would listen to the tapes to analyse and interpret the data. After coding, the recordings were erased.

4.6.4.4 *Ethical measures*

This research took care to address ethical aspects. The following four basic rights of respondents were respected (Wilson, 1989:82; Burns & Grove, 1987:94-101):

- the right not to be injured;

- the right to be informed about the research;

- the right to privacy, anonymity and confidentiality; and

- the right to self-determination.

A letter was sent to the parents concerned, informing them of the purpose and method of the research, and requesting their permission to involve their children in the research. The teachers were also interviewed with their informed consent. The respondents also knew that their participation was voluntary and that they could leave at any stage, should they wish to do so. Also, a summary of the results will be made available to the respondents, should they be interested.

4.7   SYNTHESIS

In this chapter, the research design and implementation of the empirical research are described. In Chapters 5 and 6, the focus is on the analysis and interpretation of the empirical data collected.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

5.1   INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 4, the research strategies and methods regarding black learners' life-worlds, especially their experience of the multicultural school environment in a formerly traditionally white school, were discussed. The stages described in Section 4.5 of the previous chapter provide the structure for this chapter. In this chapter, the questions that guided the research are stated where relevant. In order to determine the nature of their experience the data collected by means of questionnaires are analysed and interpreted. The questionnaire is appended as Appendix A for easy reference to the exact formulation of the questions. Questions and variables are referred to in this chapter by number, for example Q56 (V96). (Data collected by means of interviews are discussed in Chapter 6).

The data analysis was done by means of statistical calculations and is documented in the form of frequency tables and figures. To construct Tables 5.1 to 5.23, one-way frequency analysis was used to investigate possible trends (discussed in Sections 5.2 to 5.4). Thereafter, two-way frequency analysis was used to construct Tables 5.24 to 5.43 (discussed in Section 5.5). The total sample size was N = 332.

First, the biographical data on the learners are discussed as part of the family dimension, followed by details on parents and the parent-child relationship. Next, the individual and school/cultural dimensions are examined, focusing on the various questions that form part of each dimension.

5.2   THE FAMILY DIMENSION

The family dimension concerns biographical information on the learners as well as their experience of their life-world at home. It contains information on some aspects of the family value system, the educational involvement of the parents and their interpersonal

relationships with their children. Some light is also shed on the physical environment in and around the home.

5.2.1 Biographical data on the learners

The following biographical information was collected on the learners:

- What is the learners' age? (Q2, V2 – see Figure 5.1)

- What is the learners' gender? (Q3, V3 – see Table 5.1(a))

- Is it the learners' first year in Grade Nine? (Q4, V4 – see Table 5.1(b))

- What is the language most spoken at home? (Q58, V102 – see Table 5.1(c))

5.2.1.1 Age

Figure 5.1 is a bar-chart drawn to depict the frequency of the respondents' ages.
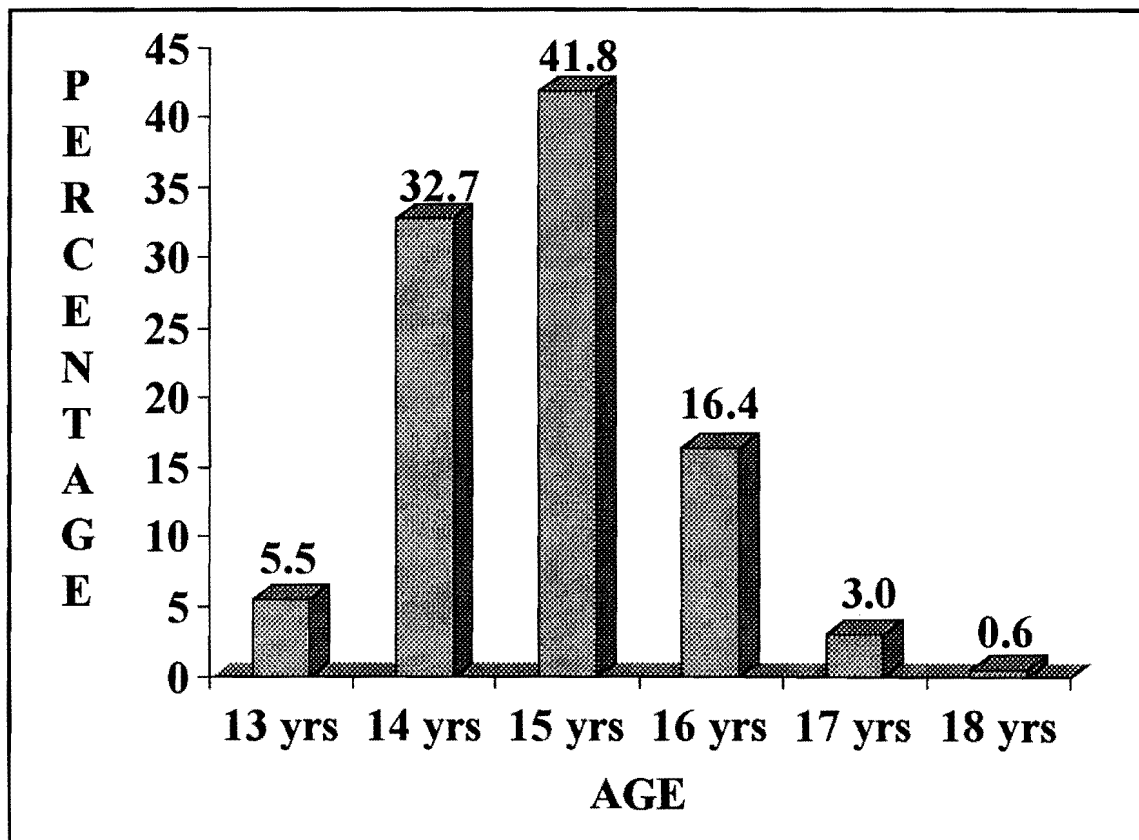
Figure 5.1: **Age of the learners who completed the questionnaire**

INTERPRETATION

It is clear from Figure 5.1 that most of the learners – 138 (41.8%) – are fifteen years old, followed by 108 (32.7%) who are fourteen, and 18 (5.5%) respondents who are thirteen. Therefore the average age of the respondents falls into the early adolescent phase. This corresponds with the age group one would expect to find in Grade Nine. Of the respondents, 66 (20%) were sixteen and older. This means that they represent a later phase of adolescence and suggests that their age could influence their experiences and expectations of their school.

5.2.1.2   Gender

Table 5.1 (a): Gender of learners

Gender Q3 (V3)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Boys	147	44.3
Girls	185	55.7
Total	332	100

INTERPRETATION

Of the respondents, 185 (55.7%) were girls and 147 (44.3%) were boys.

5.2.1.3   One or more years in Grade Nine

Table 5.1 (b): First year in Grade Nine

First year in Grade Nine Q4 (V4)	f	%
Yes	288	86.7
No	44	13.3
Total	332	100

INTERPRETATION

For 288 (86.7%) of the learners, this is their first year in Grade Nine, while 44 (13.3%) are repeating Grade Nine.

5.2.1.4   Language most spoken at home

Table 5.1 (c): Language most spoken at home

Language	f	%
Tswana	147	44.4
Northern Sotho	43	13.0
Southern Sotho	38	11.5
Zulu	29	8.8
Xhosa	21	6.3
Tsonga	18	5.4
Venda	13	3.9
English	11	3.3
Ndebele	6	1.8
Swazi	3	0.9
Other	2	0.6
Total	331*	100

(*There was a missing frequency of 1, which was discarded due to unreliability.)

INTERPRETATION

Tswana is the language most spoken, in 147 (44.4%) of the homes, followed by Northern Sotho in 43 (13.0%) and Southern Sotho in 38 (11.5%) of the homes. English is the language most spoken in only 11 (3.3%) of the homes. These findings are significant, since English is the language that 277 (86.0%) of the learners want as their medium of instruction (see Q58, V102).

5.2.2   Biographical data on the parents

According to Scheffer (1972:84-101), the occupational status and educational level of parents are very important determinants of the lifestyle and living milieu of a family. For that reason, it was imperative to look closely at these two aspects. In Table 5.2 (a), the

educational level of the parents is set out. In Tables 5.2(b) and (c), the occupational status of the parents is presented.

5.2.2.1   The educational level of the parents

Table 5.2 (a): Highest educational level of parents

Qualifications of parents	Father Q9 (V18)		Mother Q11 (V20)	
	f	%	f	%
Grade 7 (standard 5) and lower	2	0.6	5	1.5
Grade 10 (standard 8)	11	3.4	10	3.0
Grade 12 (matric)	29	8.9	29	8.8
Grade 12 (matric) plus diploma	23	7.1	49	14.8
Grade 12 (matric) plus degree	71	21.8	94	28.4
I do not know my father/mother	18	5.5	5	1.5
I do not know	171	52.6	139	42.0
Total	325*	100	331*	100

(*There was a missing frequency of 7 for Q9 (V18) and 1 for Q11 (V20). These frequencies were discarded due to unreliability.
The area surrounded by double lines represents the responses of learners who knew what their parents' qualifications were.)

INTERPRETATION

From those learners who knew details about their parents' educational qualifications (136 cases for fathers, 187 cases for mothers), the following data were gathered:

- It appears that 13 out of 136 (9.6 %) fathers and 15 out of 187 (8.0%) mothers have qualifications up to the Grade 10 level or lower;

- 29 out of 136 (21.3%) fathers and 29 out of 187 (15.5%) mothers have a Grade 12 (matric) qualification;

- 23 out of 136 (16.9%) fathers have a Grade 12 (matric) qualification plus a diploma, whereas 49 out of 187 (26.2%) mothers have a matric plus a diploma; and

• 71 out of 136 (52.2%) fathers and 94 out of 187 (50.3%) mothers have a matric and a degree.

It is of particular importance for this study to note that 171 out of 325 (52.6%) learners did not know what their fathers' qualifications are, and 139 out of 331 (42.0%) learners did not know what their mothers' qualifications are. Also, 18 out of 325 (5.5%) learners did not know their fathers, and 5 out of 331 (1.5%) learners did not know their mothers.

5.2.2.2   *The occupational status of parents*

During the classification process of the occupational status of learners' parents, occupational codes (see list of codes – Appendix E) were assigned to the various occupations of the parents according to a classification scheme developed by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). These codes are incorporated in Tables 5.2 (b) and (c).

Table 5.2(b) overleaf

Table 5.2 (b): Occupational status of father

Code	Occupational status Q8 (V17)	Known only		Known and unknown	
		f	%	f	%
3	Professional or semi-professional occupation	55	25.9		
3	Administrative and managerial worker	44	20.8	99	30.0
2	Clerk and related worker	12	5.7		
2	Salesperson	42	19.8	100	30.3
2	Schooled tradesman	14	6.6		
2	Trained outside occupation	32	15.1		
1	Farmer, gardener	2	0.9		
1	Duty worker (personal and domestic)	2	0.9	7	2.1
1	Operator and semi-skilled worker	1	0.5		
1	Unschooled occupation	2	0.9		
0	Housewife	0	0		
0	Pensioner	3	1.4	6	1.8
0	Jobless	3	1.4		
	Subtotal	212	100		
	I do not know (his occupation)			105	31.8
	I do not know my father			5	1.5
	Father deceased			7	2.1
	Total			330*	100

(*There was a missing frequency of 2, which was discarded due to unreliability.
The area surrounded by double lines represents the responses of learners who knew the occupational status of their fathers.)

INTERPRETATION

The majority of the fathers (199) are classified under Occupational Codes 2 and 3. These codes include occupations such as clerks, salespeople, schooled tradesmen, as well as professional, semi-professional, administrative or managerial occupations.

Table 5.2 (c): Occupational status of mother

Code	Occupational status Q8 (V17)	Known only f	Known only %	Known and unknown f	Known and unknown %
3	Professional or semi-professional occupation	158	58.5	175	53.4
3	Administrative and managerial worker	17	6.3		
2	Clerk and related worker	29	10.7	62	18.9
2	Salesperson	26	9.6		
2	Schooled trades(wo)man	4	1.5		
2	Trained outside occupation	3	1.1		
1	Farmer, gardener	0	0	13	4.0
1	Duty worker (personal and domestic)	2	0.7		
1	Operator and semi-skilled worker	8	3.0		
1	Unschooled occupation	3	1.1		
0	Housewife	11	4.1	20	6.1
0	Pensioner	0	0		
0	Jobless	9	3.3		
	Subtotal	270	100		
	I do not know (her occupation)			54	16.5
	I do not know my mother			1	0.3
	Mother deceased			3	0.9
	Total			328*	100

*There was a missing frequency of 4, which was discarded due to unreliability.
The area surrounded by double lines represents the responses of learners who knew the occupational status of their mothers.)

INTERPRETATION

The majority of mothers (175) are classified under Occupational Code 3. This means that most of the mothers are either professional, semi-professional, administrative or managerial workers. Next comes Code 2 (62 mothers), which includes occupations such as clerks, salespeople, schooled tradeswomen and trained outside occupations.

The fact that in Tables 5.2 (b) and (c) as many as 105 (31.8%) of the fathers' and 54 (16.4%) of the mothers' occupations were unknown to their children is particularly relevant

for this research. It could indicate a lack of adequate communication between these parents and their children.

5.2.3 Facilities available at the homes of black learners

The physical home environment of black learners is important, because inadequate facilities can be regarded as a stumbling block to proper school adjustment. Tables 5.3 (a), (b), (c) and (d) indicate respectively the areas in which learners reside, the number of bedrooms in the home, the number of home occupants, as well as the availability of amenities such as running water, electric lights, a geyser, a fridge and newspapers.

The research questions are the following:

Do black learners experience overcrowded housing, and/or sensory and intellectual deprivation at home? Which basic facilities are available at the homes of black learners?

Table 5.3 (a): Facilities at home: In which area do you live?

In which area do you live? Q18 (V40)	Area	f	%
	Suburb	174	52.9
	Township	141	42.9
	Farm/smallholding	6	1.8
	Other	8	2.4
Total		329*	100

(*There was a missing frequency of 3, which was discarded due to unreliability.)

Table 5.3 (b) overleaf

Table 5.3 (b):   **Number of bedrooms in the home**

Number of bedrooms in the home Q16 (V35)	Number of bedrooms	f	%
	1	4	1.2
	2	39	11.7
	3	144	43.4
	4	69	20.8
	5 or more	76	22.9
Total		332	100

Table 5.3 (c):   **Number of occupants**

Number of occupants Q14 (V33)	Occupants	f	%
	2-4	219	66.2
	5-6	90	27.2
	7 or more	22	6.6
Total		331*	100

(*There was a missing frequency of 1, which was discarded due to unreliability.)

Table 5.3 (d):   **Amenities available**

Availability of: Q17(V36-39)	Available		Unavailable		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Running water (V36)	319	96.1	13	3.9	332	100
Electric lights (V37)	328	98.8	4	1.2	332	100
Geyser (V38)	297	90.3	32	9.7	329*	100
Fridge (V39)	324	97.9	7	2.1	331**	100
Newspapers Q15 (V34)	307	92.7	24	7.3	331***	100

(*Q15 (V38) had a missing frequency of 3.
**Q 15 (V39) had a missing frequency of 1.
***Q15 (V34) also had a missing frequency of 1.
The missing frequencies were discarded due to unreliability.)

INTERPRETATION

In general it appears that a majority of 174 (52.9%) of the learners reside in suburbia. However, a significant number, 141 (42.9%), live in the townships. This means that many of the learners commute daily between two different life-worlds – the one is the township, where the rule of thumb is often that "only the strongest survive", contrasting with the other, the Westernised industrial world, which demands congruency with its own particular ideologies and philosophies.

Demographic factors, such as the distance between the parental home and school also determines the amount of time spent daily on travelling. Miller (1998:5) states that long bus rides could leave children hungry when they arrive at school. This is especially relevant if meals are skipped (see also Section 5.2.4) or lack proper nutritional value. Consequently, learners' general school performance and particularly their cognitive functioning can be detrimentally affected (Fernald, Ani & Grantham-McGregor, 1997:19; Miller, 1998:5). Another particularly South African problem associated with living far from school is that it prevents learners from participating in extra-mural activities that they might wish to take part in. Teachers have identified participation in extra-mural activities as a vital facilitating element in learner accommodation. Therefore, where learners live can influence their experience of meaningful accommodation at school.

From the responses to Q16 (V35), it appears that 87.1% of respondents live in houses with three or more bedrooms and from those to Q14 (V33) it is clear that 93.4% of learners live in houses where there are fewer than six occupants. Liddell *et al.* (1994:57) refer to Loo and Ong's (1984) rating of household size according to international standards. These standards define overcrowding as seven or more members per household. Accordingly, from the responses to Q16 (V35) and Q14 (V33), it appears that generally the accommodation is adequate, since there are enough bedrooms for the number of home occupants. The occupancy rate, excluding the respondent, visitors and domestic servants, is two to four occupants per household for 219 (66.2) respondents, and seven or more occupants per household for only 22 (6.6) respondents. The number of bedrooms was limited for a small percentage of learners: Only 4 (1.2) respondents reported one bedroom and 39 (11.7) reported two bedrooms, which could indicate overcrowding in these instances.

With regard to the availability of facilities (Q17, V36-39), it appears that, generally speaking, the amenities in question are available. It must be mentioned, however, that for some of the respondents, not all the above amenities are available. Of these learners, 13 (3.9%) have no running water, while 32 (9.7%) do not have warm water readily available; 4 (1.2%) do not have electric lights; 7 (2.1%) do not have access to a fridge and in 24 (7.3%) of the homes, newspapers are not read.

Liddell *et al.* (1994:52; 58-59; 63-64) concluded from a South African study that global socio-economic status (SES) predictors, such as household size and ethnicity, although they are of great value for explaining the behaviour of Western children, have only limited predictive value regarding the behaviour of young African children growing up in very different circumstances in South Africa. Liddell *et al.* warn that these are categories invented by "experimenters" and may bear little resemblance to the categories used by South African communities to guide their everyday lives. These authors do concede, however, that variables such as SES and household density were not sufficiently spread in the sample under discussion, since the children studied by Liddell *et al.* all lived in crowded conditions.

For the purposes of this study, it was assumed that inadequate facilities tends to detract from the learners' general quality of life, in that it limits intellectual stimulation at home and complicates the day to day activities of ablution, feeding and studying. It is logical that this could have an impact on these learners' experience of the school environment as accommodating, especially since the schools in question were traditionally white schools embodying standards of living as determined by the industrialised West.

5.2.4 The quality of parental caregiving and support at home

Parental caregiving and support could make the difference as to whether learners can cope physically with the demands of the school or not. Poverty, in particular, can influence the ability of many families to serve as adequate support structures for the nurturance and development of learners (Dawes & Donald, 1994b:5). However, other factors are also influential. American research findings, for instance, indicate that one of the reasons for skipping breakfast is that the hectic work schedules of parents limit their ability to prepare and serve breakfast to their families (Miller, 1998:5). Older children, 12 to 13 year olds,

mentioned not having enough time, and said that they were "not hungry" in the morning. These are issues that require parental involvement and guidance, especially regarding the issues of health and time management.

> **The research question is the following:**
>
> **What is the quality of parental caregiving and support at home?**

Table 5.4:   The quality of parental caregiving and support

Presence of circumstances that could hinder study	Not at all		Sometimes		Usually		Every day		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Q41 (V78)	127	38.3	171	51.5	21	6.3	13	3.9	332	100
Household duties more important than schoolwork	Agree		Uncertain		Disagree		Total			
Q32 (V69)	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
	54	16.3	70	21.1	207	62.5	331*	100		
Breakfast at home					Yes		No		Total	
Q34 (V71)					f	%	f	%	f	%
					204	61.4	128	38.6	332	100

(*Q32 (V69) had a missing frequency of 1, which was discarded due to unreliability.)

INTERPRETATION

Only 127 (38.3%) of the learners do not have any circumstances which may hinder them from studying at home. It appears that 205 (61.7%) of the learners experience some form of obstruction or hindrance on a fairly regular basis when they want to study.

Of the learners, 207 (62.5%) do not agree that it is more important to get household duties done than it is to get their schoolwork done, while 54 (16.3%) agree that household duties are more important than their schoolwork and 70 (21.1%) are uncertain. This leaves 124 (37.4%) learners who could feel in some way pressurised at home to give top priority to the performance of household duties. Also see Table 5.6(b), which shows that 45 (13.6%) of the learners are not actively encouraged to attend to their studies at home.

Regarding the eating of breakfast at home, 204 (61.4%) of the respondents answered in the affirmative, which is positive. It is not clear when the remaining 128 (38.6%) consume breakfast: on the way to school, on arriving at school, or only at first break (which is at about 10h00). If the latter is the case, it means that the learners' diet is "inadequate", in the sense that breakfast is eaten too late in the morning to provide nutrition for many early morning activities.

Findings from American studies on the value of breakfast have shown that children who regularly eat breakfast make fewer errors on standardised achievement tests, are more attentive, vigilant and display reduced tardiness (Miller, 1998:5; Fernald, Ani & Grantham-McGregor, 1997:19-20). In addition, Miller (1998:4) says that children may not be able to compensate for the nutrients normally provided by breakfast by eating other meals during the day, thereby affecting their overall nutrient status and calcium intake in particular. In this regard, there may be a need for a specifically South African study to compare breakfasts, their intake and effects, since American breakfast habits may differ from those in South Africa, and in the townships in particular.

For the purposes of this study, the question remains whether these learners' diet can boost them to perform at maximum levels (both intellectually and physically) during the school day. Factors which should be considered include the nutritional quality of the meal as well as the time of day it is consumed.

It also appears that many of the parents of these respondents need guidance concerning the provision of quality caregiving and support in the home.

5.2.5 The role of traditional values in the black family

Belgrave *et al.* (1994:143-154) refer to Akbar (1979), to Baldwin (1981) and to Nobels (1985) who define an Afri-centric world view as a set of beliefs, philosophical orientations and assumptions that reflect basic African values. One of the dimensions includes spirituality. Belgrave *et al.* (1994:143-154) found in a study that the enhancement of Afri-centric values could be useful in drug prevention programmes.

Cleaver (1994:10) claims that since 1976, black community life has changed, resulting in many traditional values losing their meaning. This in turn has influenced the stability of

black learners' life-worlds. In the light of these changes, in this study, it was considered important to determine to what extent traditional values are still respected.

The research question is the following:
How important is the role of traditional values in the black family?

Table 5.5: **The importance of traditional values**

Attendance of religious services	Regularly		Often		Seldom		Never		Total	
Q6 (V15)	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
	153	46.6	91	27.7	46	14.0	38	11.6	328*	100
Belief in spirits of forefathers					Yes		No		Total	
Q44 (V81)					f	%	f	%	f	%
					99	30.0	231	70.0	330*	100
Treated by medical doctor					Yes		No		Total	
Q (V)					f	%	f	%	f	%
					313	94.3	19	5.7	332	100
Treated by traditional healer					Yes		No		Total	
Q13 (V31 & 32)					f	%	f	%	f	%
					39	12.3	279	87.7	318*	100

(*Q6 (V15), Q44 (V81) and Q13 (V31 and 32) had missing frequencies of 4, 2 and 14 respectively. These frequencies were discarded due to unreliability.)

INTERPRETATION

The data shows that 244 (74.3%) of the respondents attend religious or traditional services regularly or often – indicating that this could be an influential aspect in the family system. The fact that 99 (30%) of learners believe in the spirits of their forefathers, and 39 (12.3%) have been treated by a traditional healer points to strong a Africa-orientation that should be allowed for at school. It is worrying, however, that 19 (5.7%) have never been treated by a medical doctor. One can ask oneself whether these learners might possibly be unaware of medical care received during infancy, or whether they have forgotten about previous medical treatment.

5.2.6 The quality of the parent-child relationship

For the purposes of this research, it is vital to question the quality of the parent-child relationship. The parent-child relationship should be characterised by trust, understanding and obedience to authority (Van Niekerk, 1982:8). By supporting their children emotionally, parents enable children to have confidence in their parents and themselves. This in turn leads to self-actualisation and a trusting relationship between parents and children.

The research question is the following:

What is the quality of the parent-child relationship?

Table 5.6 (a): Parent-child relationship: caregiver

Learner stays with: Q12 (V21-30)	Both parents	Mom	Dad	Mom & step-dad	Dad & stepmom	Siblings	Grand-parents	Rela-tives	Other	Total
f	192	92	7	14	3	11	31	12	3	365*

(*Some respondents selected more than one category of caregiver – hence the total, which is more than 332. Due to the number of additional responses, the frequencies were not expressed as percentages.)

Table 5.6 (b): Parent-child relationship: emotional support

Parents encourage learner to do homework Q 40 (V77)	Yes		No		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
	287	86.4	45	13.6	332	100
Parents - can discuss personal problems Q42 (V79)	Yes		No		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
	109	32.9	222	67.1	331*	100
Parents scold undeservedly Q 39 (V76)	Yes		No		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
	129	39.2	200	60.8	329*	100

(*Q42 (V79) and Q39 (V76) had missing frequencies of 1 and 3 respectively. These frequencies were discarded due to unreliability.)

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Table 5.6 (c): Parent-child relationship: manner of discipline

Manner of discipline Q35(V72)	Talk	Shout	Hit	Other adult	Scold	Ignore	Ground	Never	Other	Total
f	154	112	25	3	11	7	16	3	1	332
%	46.4	33.7	7.5	0.9	3.3	2.1	4.8	0.9	0.3	100

Table 5.6 (d): Parent-child relationship: gender of disciplinarian

Gender of disciplinarian Q36 (V73)	Male	Female	Total
f	99	232	331*
%	29.9	70.1	100

(*Q36 (V73) had a missing frequency of 1, which was discarded due to unreliability.)

Table 5.6 (e): Parent-child relationship: respect

Respect for parents: Know better than parents Q37 (V74)	Yes	No	Total
f	82	250	332
%	24.7	75.3	100

Reason for the above Q38 (V75)	Learners better educated	Learners know more	Learners cleverer	Parents old-fashioned	Other	Total
f	12	18	4	40	4	78*
%	15.4	23.1	5.1	51.3	5.1	100

Respect parents' traditional viewpoint Q45 (V82)	Yes	No	Total
f	287	45	332
%	86.4	13.6	100

(*Q38 (V75) was only to be answered by respondents who had said "no" in Q37 (V74), hence the total of 78.)

Table 5.6 (f): Parent-child relationship: acceptance of parents

Feelings about parents' attending school function Q43 (V80)	Happy	Embarrassed	Do not mind	Unhappy	Total
f	139	36	143	12	331*
%	42.0	10.9	43.2	3.9	100

(*There was a missing frequency of 1, which was discarded due to unreliability.)

INTERPRETATION

The data show that 192 learners come from intact families, while, of the rest, 92 are cared for by their mothers only, compared to 7 cared for by fathers only. This suggests that the mother is usually the parent responsible for child-care and therefore also the parent that carries most responsibility.

It appears that 287 (86.4%) of the parents do encourage their children to attend to their studies, which is a very positive finding.

An alarming 222 (67.1%) of learners indicated that they cannot discuss their personal problems with their parents or caregivers. This probably indicates a lack of communication between parents and learners (this finding was borne out by the interpretation of Tables 5.2 (b) and (c), which indicated that some learners did not know what their parents did for a living). Liddell *et al.* (1994:60) found that interactions and exchange of information between adults and children occurred less in larger black households. Parents are often busy or unavailable. It also appears that matters such as childbirth and sexuality are not discussed, since such discussions embarrass some black parents (Cleaver, 1994:10).

Peltzer (1993:15-16) explains that after weaning, the traditional person transfers the authority and omnipotence of the father and mother to the extended family including siblings and peers: "The 'mother-as-support' is widely extended to many mothers and fathers, in a system of multilateral possibilities of identification, including brothers and sisters, peers, older companions, father and ancestors."

However, from this research, the question arises if these respondents are not more transitional persons (learners) where the influence of the group is not strong any more. Consequently they may be undergoing a process of individuation which could leave them without the full support of the group system. Should parental support also be lacking, these learners may experience themselves as being emotionally very vulnerable, and as being left without guidance regarding the handling of their personal problems and basic life issues.

The data indicated that for 154 (46.4%) of these learners, the mode of discipline they are mostly exposed to, is that of a parent or caregiver who talks to them. The quality of discipline must be questioned in the cases of 112 (33.7%) respondents who say they are mostly shouted at. Negative methods of punishment (being given a hiding, 25 (7.5%); receiving a scolding, 11 (3.3%); and being ignored, 7 (2.1%)) are experienced by a total of 43 (13.0%) respondents. The forms of discipline preferred might be ascribed to the fact that in 232 (70.1%) of cases, the disciplinarian is female (most of the learners have their mothers present in their homes – see Table 5.6(a)). Also, 129 (39.2%) of the learners feel that they are scolded more than they deserve. This response might be interpreted as either an emotional reaction normal for adolescents; or as a sign that there is a lack of understanding on the side of the parents, or merely as an indication that overburdened mothers are trying to fulfil the roles of both provider and disciplinarian.

A further analysis of the parent-child relationship indicates that although there appears to be a lack of openness between parents and children, a majority of 250 (75.3%) of the learners felt they do not know better than their parents. Of the 78 (23.8%) that did feel that they know better than their parents, 40 (51.3%) ascribed their attitude to their parents' being old-fashioned, 18 (23.1%) felt that they as children know more about life and 12 (15.4%) felt that they were better educated than their parents. Parents' traditional viewpoints were respected by 287 (86.4%). The aforementioned data could indicate that authority relationships within the family are still reasonably intact for these respondents.

The above data suggest that a large percentage of learners are exposed to less optimally supportive home environments. Accommodation at school involves identification of and provision for such needs.

5.3   THE INDIVIDUAL DIMENSION

The individual dimension deals with aspects to do with the learners themselves. To a greater or lesser degree, these aspects play a vital part in helping learners to adjust to the school environment. It was felt that aspects such as feelings about the self, sensitivity to criticism, a sense of belonging to the school, personal aspirations and scholastic coping ability could shed light on the individual dimension. The findings on these aspects are discussed below.

5.3.1   The nature of learners' self-esteem

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale determines whether a person has a favourable or an unfavourable attitude toward himself (Rosenberg, 1965:18). It was decided to include this scale in the questionnaire in a modified form. The composite self-esteem score was derived by adding up the scale items and then averaging them, thus arriving at an aggregate value. The learners' responses to the scale items in Q24 (V46-55) are set out in Table 5.7(a).

> **The research question is the following:**
>
> **What is the nature of the learners' self-esteem?**

Table 5.7 (a)   Feelings about the self

		Yes		Uncertain		No		Total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
a	In general I am happy with myself	258	78.9	40	12.2	29	8.9	327	100
b	At times I think that I am no good at all	89	27.2	134	41.0	104	31.8	327	100
c	I feel that I have some good in me	278	84.2	35	10.6	17	5.2	330	100
d	I am able to do things as well as any other young person	229	70.2	65	19.9	32	9.8	326	100
e	I feel I do not have much to be proud of	76	23.2	71	21.6	181	55.2	328	100
f	Sometimes I feel useless	86	26.4	96	29.4	144	44.2	326	100
g	I am just as valuable as any other young person	233	71.7	55	16.9	37	11.4	325	100
h	I wish I could like myself more	238	72.6	42	12.8	48	14.6	328	100
i	On the whole I think I am a failure	21	6.4	73	22.4	232	71.2	326	100
j	I feel good about myself	267	81.2	46	14.0	16	4.9	329	100

(There were missing frequencies (varying between 1 and 7) for the respective scale items. These frequencies were discarded due to unreliability.)

Q25 examined how learners react to criticism, and therefore provided additional insight into the learners' level of self-esteem (see Table 5.7(b)).

Table 5.7 (b): Sensitivity to criticism

How upset are you when you are criticised? Q25 (V56)		Very upset	A little upset	Not at all upset	Total
	f	128	142	60	330*
	%	38.8	43.0	18.2	100

(*There was a missing frequency of 2, which was discarded due to unreliability.)

INTERPRETATION

It looks as if the respondents generally feel positive about themselves (Q24). However, 72.6% indicated that they wished they could like themselves more (Item h).

This phenomenon is not easy to explain. Pacheco (1996:259) found in a study on black learners that a significant percentage would have liked 'to be someone else. Foster (1994:236-237) argues that out-group preference is often evident among minority-group children, while ethnocentrism and prejudice can be found to a larger degree amongst dominant-group children. Foster explains that additional methodological and conceptual criticism leave these findings "...less clear cut, less powerful and altogether more shaky but nevertheless naggingly still present. We believe that the earlier interpretations in terms of 'self-hatred' and psychopathology are exaggerated. Out-group preference need not necessarily imply self-rejection. Self-esteem among minority groups seems to remain surprisingly unscathed as the result of a host of protective and buffering processes. To interpret the meaning of these patterns we have to turn to moral and political considerations. The question of 'damage' cannot be answered in psychological terms alone. The question of values, in moral and political terms, stands at the core of the whole issue." Foster concludes that racism is still in place and he strongly advocates the eradication thereof. Accordingly, he singles out racism as the generator of, if not all, then certainly a substantial degree of negative self-responses. In line with Foster (1994:237), this study strongly advocates the eradication of racism (especially at school level), since racism can engender negative feelings towards the school as an institution of accommodation.

The learners' responses to the item aimed at examining sensitivity to criticism (Q25) showed that 81.8% (38.8% plus 43.0%) of learners are at least a little upset when others laugh at them when they have done something wrong. It could indicate that although learners generally have good self-esteem, their self-esteem can be shaken easily by inconsiderate actions. Consequently, it appears to be imperative that teachers should possess good interpersonal skills to negotiate tricky situations that might arise in the classroom or on the playground.

5.3.2 Belonging

Tables 5.8(a) to (e) set out a breakdown of responses to different aspects of the feeling of belonging to their school that learners experience, namely their participation in extra-mural activities, having close friends of another race group, their choice of school, feeling happy or unhappy at school, plus their reasons for feeling that way. The need to belong can be described as a need displayed by people, as inherently social beings, to belong to groups, thereby sharing in certain similarities and experiencing certain benefits (Cushner *et al.* 1992:58). According to these authors, at the centre of all affiliative behaviour lies the "need for the self-confirmation, attention, emotional release, esteem, and security that help to provide structure, meaning, and stability in people's lives".

The research question is the following:

Do learners feel that they belong to their school?

Table 5.8 (a): Friends in another race group

Close friends in another race group Q26 (V57)		None	One	Two	More than two	Total
	f	102	40	30	159	331*
	%	30.8	12.1	9.1	48.1	100

(*There was a missing frequency of 1, which was discarded due to unreliability.)

Table 5.8 (b): Participation: feeling of belonging

Extra-mural activities Q5 (V5-14)	f
Sport	196
Hiking	36
Religious organisations	27
Choir	22
Drama	14
Debating	7
Chess	7
Service organisation	6
Other	6
None	67
Total	388*

(*This section was optional. Respondents could select more than one option, hence the total of 388. Because of the higher total number of responses, frequencies were not expressed as percentages.)

Table 5.8 (c): Choice of school

Choice of school composition		Only black learners	50-50% black-other	More black	Races equal	Total
Q27 (V58)	f	9	53	12	257	331*
	%	2.7	16.0	3.6	77.6	100

(*There was a missing frequency of 1, which was discarded due to unreliability.)

Table 5.8 (d): Feeling happy/unhappy when at school

Feeling happy/unhappy at school		Happy	Unhappy	Total
Q28 (V58)	f	252	80	332
	%	75.9	24.1	100

Table 5.8 (e): Reasons for unhappiness

Specify reasons for answering the Question 28 (above) in the affirmative Q29 (V60-66)	f
Teachers	37
Social factors	31
Schoolwork	17
Too much discipline	14
Too little discipline	12
Lack of facilities	4
Other	9
Total	124*

(*This question was optional and respondents could select more than one option, hence the total of 124. Because of the higher number of responses, the frequencies were not expressed as percentages.)

INTERPRETATION

Sport can be singled out as the extra-mural activity within the school that most respondents participate in (196 respondents). Of the learners, 67 said that they do not participate in any extra-mural activities, which can possibly have a negative influence on their sense of belonging. According to the data, 69.2% of these learners are close friends with members of another race group, while 30.8% indicated that they did not have any friends from another race group.

When given a choice of schools, 77.6% would choose a school where all race groups are equally represented and 16% would prefer a school where black learners constitute 50% of the school population, while only 2.7% would prefer an all black school population. This indicates a wish to belong to and be accepted in the schools these learners are attending at present. Only 24.1% are unhappy at school, as opposed to 75.9% who are happy. The reasons specified for unhappiness are mainly teachers (37%) and social factors (31%). It is important to note that these factors centre around interpersonal relationships.

5.3.3 Aspirations

Aspirations are motivating factors, but when expectations are not met, learners may be disappointed. It was therefore decided to ascertain what learners' aspirations were, and to determine how these respondents feel about their scholastic achievement.

The research question is the following:

Do learners have unrealistic expectations and aspirations?

Table 5.9 (a): Aspirations

Educational level you would like to reach Q20 (V42)	f	%
Grade 9	3	0.9
Grade 10	3	0.9
Grade 11	2	0.6
Grade 12	14	4.2
Diploma / certificate	16	4.8
Degree	52	15.7
Degree + diploma / certificate	242	72.9
Total	332	100

In answer to Q21 (V43), whether learners thought they could reach the educational level they had indicated in Q20 (V42) (see Table 5.9 (a) above), 88.3% answered "yes", while 11.7% said "no".

Table 5.9 (b) overleaf

Table 5.9 (b): Desired occupation

Desired occupation Q23 (V45)	f	%
Doctor	67	20.2
Chartered accountant	45	13.6
Lawyer	38	11.5
Engineer	28	8.5
Self-employed	20	6.0
Professional sportsman	11	3.3
Unsure	10	3.0
Other	112	33.8
Total	331*	100

(*There was a missing frequency of 1, which was excluded due to unreliability.)

It appears from Q4(V4) (see also Table 5.1 (b)) that for 86.7% of the learners, this is their first time in Grade Nine, while 13.3% are repeating.

Table 5.9 (c): Feelings about schoolmarks

Schoolmarks Q31 (V68)		Very happy	Satisfied	Disappointed	Unconcerned	Total
	f	34	157	131	10	332
	%	10.2	47.3	39.5	3.0	100

INTERPRETATION

Of the respondents, 72.9 % aspire to a degree plus a diploma or certificate. Only 15.7% would be satisfied with a degree. As many as 88.3% believe that they will be able to realise their ambitions. The preferred occupations are those in the higher status professions – doctor (20.2%), chartered accountant (13.6%), lawyer (11.5%) and engineer (8.5%).

As only 13.3% of the respondents are repeating Grade Nine (see Table 5.1(b)) it can be assumed that most of the respondents have at least a fair scholastic coping ability. Regarding their feelings about their schoolmarks, 42.5% indicated that they were

disappointed with or unconcerned about their marks, while 47.3% were merely satisfied with their marks. Since only 10.2% were very happy with their marks, one can safely presume that they felt their scholastic achievement was lacking.

Learners generally have very high and sometimes unrealistic expectations of themselves and the school (this finding was also borne out by the interviews). It appears that they view the school as a means of becoming upwardly mobile.

5.4 THE SCHOOL/CULTURAL DIMENSION

Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:1,27) regard language as a social or cultural phenomenon, which is part of society. These authors maintain that language is partly shared by society and in some instances itself shapes society. As communication across cultures is very necessary in South Africa today, it not only calls for an awareness of differences between languages, but also for a tolerance between cultural groups when confronted by a variety of views and values (as expressed in language). For this reason it was necessary to gauge the learners' feelings regarding various aspects of language usage at school and at home.

5.4.1 Language

Language preferences were examined in this section.

The research question is the following:

What are the learners' feelings about language at school level?

Table 5.10 sets out data on different aspects of language usage, namely language preference; comprehensive ability; expressive ability and how easy it is to speak, read and write in English. Language preference refers to which language learners would prefer to be taught in. Comprehensive ability refers to the learners' ability to understand a language (what is often referred to as comprehension). Expressive ability refers to how learners experience their ability to speak, read or write in a language (in this case, English). Lemmer (1993:151-152) claims that many black learners display a Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Although their Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) – a term which refers to aspects such as basic vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation – are sometimes

adequate to allow basic communication, they are not sufficiently developed to ensure academic success. In fact, Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) pertains to the proficiency level required to grasp academic concepts and to achieve well in school. For this reason, the learners were required to assess themselves.

Table 5.10: Language preference

Language preference Q58 (V102)	f	%
English	277	86.0
Tswana	18	5.6
North Sotho	7	2.2
Afrikaans	5	1.6
Zulu	5	1.6
Venda	2	0.6
French	2	0.6
Any other	6	1.8
Total	322	100
Comprehensive ability Q59 (V103)	f	%
Yes	123	37.0
No	209	63.0
Total	332	100
Expressive ability Q60 (V104)	f	%
Yes	265	80.3
No	65	19.7
Total	330	100

How easy is it to Q61 (V105-107)	Very easy		Easy		Difficult		Very difficult		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
● speak	162	48.8	159	47.9	9	2.7	2	0.6	332	100
● read	158	47.6	156	47.0	16	4.8	2	0.6	332	100
● write	141	42.5	160	48.2	28	8.4	3	0.9	332	100

INTERPRETATION

Most learners (86%) prefer to be taught using English as the medium of instruction. Although the learners tend to experience the speaking, reading and writing of English as "very easy" or "easy" (more than 90% in each case), the indirect questions to gauge their expressive and comprehensive abilities (Q59 and Q60) indicate a lesser level of competence. Also, during the interviews, many grammar mistakes were made, which suggested that a fairly high level of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) was reasonably common.

5.4.2   Cultural factors

To get an idea of the behavioural dynamics in the school and classroom environment and how this could possibly be influenced by the culture of the learners, a number of questions concerning some cultural aspects were asked. These cultural factors were discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

5.4.2.1 Punctuality

Kearney (1984:95,103) maintains that there are various perceptions regarding time. While industrialised societies are future-oriented and value punctuality, non-industrialised societies concentrate more on the present, are more task-oriented and are by implication less concerned with punctuality.

The research question is the following:
How do learners feel about the issue of punctuality?

Table 5.11:   Punctuality: Arriving late for school is acceptable

Condone latecoming Q46 (V83)	Yes	No	Total
f	82	250	332
%	24.7	75.3	100

INTERPRETATION

Although 250 (75.3%) respondents were against coming to school late, as many as 82 (24.7%) respondents condoned getting to school late.

5.4.2.2   Communication

Factors such as the audibility level of language, as well as whether or not to establish eye contact during conversation and the physical distance between conversationalists, are culturally determined. These factors influence the style of communication. Because these factors differ between cultures, they are prone to misunderstanding.

The research question is the following:
Can communication based on traditional courtesy cause cultural misunderstanding?

Table 5.12:   Traditional courtesy

Loud talk Q47 (V84)	f	%
Indicates bad manners	135	40.8
Is a sign of openness	61	18.4
Prevents gossiping	33	10.0
Is to be expected	77	23.3
Signals an ill-disciplined school	25	7.6
Total	**331***	**100**
It is a sign of respect not to make eye contact Q48 (V85)	f	%
Agree	92	27.7
Uncertain	86	25.9
Disagree	154	46.4
Total	**332**	**100**

(*For Q47(V84) there was a missing frequency of 1, which was discarded due to unreliability.)

INTERPRETATION

With regard to the meaning of loud talking in school corridors, 51.7% of the respondents chose the options of openness, of gossiping, or of something to be expected. This implies that they condone loud talk in the corridors between classes. It is highly probable that they approach loud talk from their own cultural mindset. Of the respondents, 27.7% felt that it is respectful not to look the teacher in the eye; 25.9% were uncertain. It appears that loud talking and not making eye contact is heavily influenced by cultural determinants.

5.4.2.3   Personal space

Personal space is a culturally determined phenomenon (Brislin *et al*. 1986:273). Indications are that the black culture has little regard for Western notions of personal space (Coutts 1992:85). Most Westerners prefer at least an arm's length between themselves and others in normal social situations.

The research question is the following:

The extent of personal space is a culturally determined and maintained phenomenon and therefore a matter of cultural preference – can this lead to misunderstandings amongst cultural groups?

Table 5.13:   Personal space

When talking, standing very close to the person is acceptable Q49 (V86)	Yes	No	Total
f	133	199	**332**
%	40.1	59.9	100

INTERPRETATION

With regard to personal space, the responses of 40.1% of the learners indicate that they prefer to stand closer than an arm's length to somebody when communicating. Of the respondents, 59.9% indicated otherwise. These different body space requirements may lead to cultural misunderstanding if the phenomenon is not understood by both groups.

5.4.2.4   Interests of the group versus interests of the individual

One of the dimensions of an Afri-centric world-view is an interpersonal collective orientation (Belgrave *et al.* 1994:145). Accordingly, matters regarding the group are generally given top priority and individual concerns are regarded as less important.

> **The research question is the following:**
>
> **How important is group interest as opposed to individual interest to these learners?**

Table 5.14:   Group interest versus individual interest

When I do well, I tell Q56 (V96-100)	f	%*
Parents	273	
Friends	127	
Relatives	42	–
Caregivers	24	
Keep quiet	33	
Total	499*	
I am happy sharing a desk (Q55 (V95)	f	%
Yes	154	46.4
No	178	53.6
Total	332	100

(*More than one response was possible per respondent for Q56, hence the total of 499. Because N>332, the frequencies were not expressed as percentages.)

INTERPRETATION

It appears that only 127 learners would tell their friends about it when they do well at school, whereas the majority would tell their parents. A much smaller group would tell caregivers or relatives. The choice not to tell friends about achievements at school might indicate conforming to peer group pressure, because individual achievements are not sanctioned by the group. The data show that 46.4% of these learners are prepared to share desks even if it is inconvenient. This indicates that 46.4% of learners are willing to sacrifice their own comfort to accommodate another member of the group of learners. Consequently,

for a large percentage of learners, the interests of other group members rank very high and should be reckoned with in the school situation.

5.4.2.5   Conflict resolution

The research question is the following:
In what manner are conflicts mostly resolved?

Table 5.15:   Conflict resolution

Way to resolve conflict Q50 (V87-90)	f	%
Discuss	257	
Protest action	78	
Stay away	24	–
Other	14	
Total	**373***	
It is OK to hit a person Q65 (V111)	**f**	**%**
Agree	76	22.9
Uncertain	92	27.7
Disagree	164	49.4
Total	**332**	**100**
How to solve arguments Q67 (V113)	**f**	**%**
Physical force	19	5.7
Argue	29	8.7
Talk	254	77.4
Turn back and leave	13	3.9
Give up	17	5.1
Total	**332**	**100**

(*More than one response per respondent was possible for Q50, hence the total of 373.
Because N>332, the frequencies were not expressed as percentages.)

INTERPRETATION

The preferred way of conflict resolution appears to be discussion, according to 257 of the respondents. However, 116 prefer more drastic measures. Although 77.4% would regard talking as the best way to solve an argument, it is noticeable that 22.9% condone hitting a person that makes them "cross", while 27.7% feel uncertain about whether it is acceptable to hit a person (and thus might consider doing so).

According to the literature, black children have for long been exposed to political violence, a situation which has been compounded by domestic and criminal violence (Dawes & Donald, 1994b:5). Although exposure to violence does not necessarily warp children psychologically (Rudenberg, Jansen & Fridjhon, 1998:112), it could be argued that such exposure suggests violent methods to be an effective way of dealing with problematic and frustrating situations. Non-violent resolution of conflict should be promoted at school in order to accommodate all learners in a safe school environment.

5.4.2.6   Approach to asking questions in class

Within black cultures, the asking of questions is not often encouraged.

The research question is the following:

Do learners ask questions in the class situation?

Table 5.16:   Asking questions in class

Asking questions in class Q54 (V94)	f	%
Never ask questions	4	1.2
Ask when work is not understood	199	60.3
Only answer when asked	37	11.2
Ask whenever you feel like it	90	27.3
Total	330*	100

(*There was a missing frequency of 2, which was discarded due to unreliability)

INTERPRETATION

The data indicated that only 27.3% of these learners will ask questions spontaneously, while 60.3% will only ask if work is not understood. The spontaneous asking of questions should be encouraged by creating an accommodating atmosphere in the school in general and in the classroom in particular.

5.4.2.7   Discipline

Given the fact that most black cultures are patriarchal (Mokwena, 1992:43-45), it is to be expected that females as disciplinarians are not regarded with the same respect as male disciplinarians in black cultures.

The research question is the following:
How do learners feel about females as disciplinarians?

Table 5.17:   Female disciplinarians

Females cannot discipline as well as males Q66 (V112)	f	%
Agree	119	35.8
Uncertain	85	25.6
Disagree	128	38.6
Total	332	100

INTERPRETATION

As many as 35.8% of these learners regard female teachers as inferior disciplinarians and 25.6% are unsure about the issue. A narrow majority of 38.6% believe without doubt that women can administer discipline as well as men can. Given that many teachers are female, any belief that women cannot administer discipline as effectively as men could be problematic for the effective application of discipline in schools.

5.4.2.8 *Personal responsibility*

Ramphele (1992:24-25) discusses the issue of a culture of entitlement as well as the inhibiting and debilitating factors hindering black people from creating transformation. It was therefore deemed important to determine whether black learners accept personal responsibility for what happens in their lives, or whether they have an attitude of entitlement.

> **The research question is the following:**
>
> **Are learners willing to accept personal responsibility for what happens in their lives?**

Table 5.18: Personal responsibility

Who/what will mostly be to blame if you do not reach the level of education that you would like to reach? Q22 (V44)	f	%
Myself	243	73.4
Lack of money	47	14.2
Close family	12	3.6
Teachers	11	3.3
Department of Education	9	2.7
Society	5	1.5
Lack of School facilities	3	0.9
Classmates	1	0.3
Total	331*	100
If a learner does something wrong and gets into trouble at school with the teachers, he/she should... Q64 (V110)	f	%
Admit it and apologise	298	89.8
Deny he had anything to do with it	22	6.6
Admit it but blame somebody else	12	3.6
Total	332	100

(*Q22(V110) has a missing frequency of 1, which was discarded due to unreliability.)

INTERPRETATION

According to the data, 73.4% of learners will accept blame if they cannot complete their studies, with 14.2% blaming either lack of money, family (3.6%) or the Department of Education (2.7%). When they get into trouble at school, 89.8% choose to admit and apologise when they did something wrong. This finding may link up to Peltzer's (1993:16) comment that the further black people have progressed in the transitional phase, the more they accept responsibility for their own destiny. However, 6.6% of these respondents will deny doing something wrong, and 3.6% will admit to it, but eventually place the blame elsewhere.

5.4.2.9   Honesty

As various cultural views are attached to the various aspects of honesty (and the whole concept of honesty is a sensitive and emotive issue), it is important to determine what the learners' point of view is with regard to this issue. This matter is vital especially where the school also has very specific views on the issue.

The research question is the following:

Regarding the aspect of honesty - how will learners react?

Table 5.19:   Aspects of honesty

Keep item for yourself Q30 (V67)	f	%
Agree	67	20.2
Uncertain	66	19.9
Disagree	198	59.8
Total	331*	100
Cribbing - classmates should provide answers Q62 (V108)	f	%
Yes	68	20.6
No	261	79.4
Total	330*	100

Table 5.19 is continued overleaf

Table 5.19 (continued)

Borrowing without asking Q51 (V91)	f	%
Yes	37	11.1
No	295	88.9
Total	**332**	**100**

(*Q30 and Q62 had missing frequencies of 1 and 2 respectively. These frequencies were discarded due to unreliability.)

INTERPRETATION

Most learners (59.8%) feel that they cannot keep whatever they pick up. However, 40.1% of the learners will either keep such an object or are uncertain whether they should do so. Van Heerden (1992:277) has found in a local study that some black university students believed that the spirits of the forefathers can arrange that somebody drops money and then guides somebody else to the spot to pick up the money. This is therefore an area where Western values can come into conflict with those of black cultures, where what is picked up, could be regarded as "heaven sent" and an approach of "finders keepers" could apply.

Although 79.4% will not help classmates to crib during exams, it is alarming that 20.6% would be willing to do so.

Most learners (88.9%) will ask first before borrowing from others, but 11.1% indicated that permission is not necessary.

5.4.2.10   Personal input

Personal input could be influenced by an attitude of entitlement (Ramphele, 1992:24-25) and as such warrants an investigation of learners' attitudes regarding their personal input.

> **The research question is the following:**
>
> **How do learners feel regarding personal input?**

Table 5.20: Personal input

Time spent on schoolwork Q33 (V70)	f	%
No time	18	5.4
1 hour	126	38.0
2 hours	80	24.1
3 hours	51	15.4
More than 3 hours	57	17.2
Total	332	100
One has to work hard at a disliked subject Q57 (V101)	f	%
Agree	224	67.7
Uncertain	69	20.8
Disagree	38	11.5
Total	331*	100
Should learners write exams? Q63 (V109)	f	%
Yes	169	51.1
No	162	48.9
Total	331*	100

(*Q57 and Q63 had missing frequencies of 1. These frequencies were discarded due to unreliability.)

INTERPRETATION

In the light of these learners' high academic and occupational aspirations, it is noticeable that 5.4% spent no time on schoolwork, with 38.0% spending one hour and 24.1% spending two hours. Only 67.7% of learners were prepared to work hard at a subject they disliked.

Of these learners, 48.9% preferred not to be examined to determine who should pass or fail.

5.4.2.11   *Corporal punishment*

Corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure has been abused in the past in both black and white education. It is at present illegal to administer corporal punishment, but it remains important to determine learners' views regarding the use of corporal punishment to effect discipline.

The research question is the following:
Are the learners in favour of corporal punishment?

Table 5.21:   Desirability of corporal punishment

Corporal punishment should be reintroduced in schools Q 68 (V114)	f	%
Agree	70	21.1
Uncertain	42	12.7
Disagree	220	66.3
Total	332	100

INTERPRETATION

There appears to be a strong feeling against corporal punishment (66.3%), but more or less a fifth of the respondents (21.1%) would be in favour of its reintroduction in schools.

5.4.3   Racism

Racism can shape learners' lives by influencing their experiences and opportunities. It is therefore very important to determine the extent of racism found at school.

The research question is the following:
To what extent does racism occur at school?

Table 5.22 :   Extent of racism

Racism Q52 (V92)	f	%
Put up with one another	147	44.3
Co-operate but do not mix	132	39.8
Are hostile to one another	22	6.6
Remain cross/unfriendly	31	9.3
Total	332	100
Racist insults Q53 (V93)	f	%
Never	18	5.4
Sometimes	173	52.1
Very often	141	42.5
Total	332	100

INTERPRETATION

While 39.8% of learners co-operate at school, 44.3% say they only put up with one another, and 15.9% experience relations as hostile or at least remain cross. Racist insults also occur "very often" (42.5%) or "sometimes" (52.1%). These results emphasise that this is a contentious issue.

5.4.3.1   What would learners change about their school?

In order to establish what learners really viewed as stumbling blocks in their accommodation in and adjustment to the school environment, the questionnaire concluded with an open question about what learners would like to change about their school.

Table 5.23 overleaf

Table 5.23:   Changes desired at school

What would you change? Q69 (V115-118)	f	%
School rules	65	19.6
Racism	61	18.4
Language	57	17.2
Teachers	54	16.3
Discipline	29	8.7
Activities	22	6.6
Facilities	19	5.7
No change	25	7.5
Total	332	100

INTERPRETATION

Learners would mostly like to change school rules (19.6%); racism (18.4%); language (17.2%) and teachers (16.3%).

5.5   RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN VARIABLES

In the previous sections the focus was on discussions of a single factor at a time. This brought some important points to the fore, but in a study of this kind it is even more important to investigate possible relationships between two or more variables. Therefore, the chi-square test was used in two-way frequency tables to investigate possible significant dependence between two variables at a time (Steyn *et al.*, 1996:559-562).

In addition, the log-linear model was used to do a more in-depth analysis of significant relationships found between two variables (Steyn *et al.*, 1996:564-576).

5.5.1   Relationship between the frequency of racist insults (V93) and other variables

The approach of this research is to assess the needs of learners in the complex multicultural context of the school. Racial interaction forms an integral part of a multicultural school

context. The literature study indicated that racist-inspired personal insults occur in schools (Dawes & Donald, 1994b:5). Because much racial tension and unhappiness at school can result from such practices, it was imperative to assess the context and effect of such behaviour.

It was decided to investigate the relationship between the frequency of racist insults and the following variables:

- gender (V3);

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92);

- the language medium of the school attended (Afrikaans or English); and

- the type of school a learner would prefer (V58).

The data are presented in the form of two-way tables. The frequency of the experience of racist insults is categorised along the rows and the variable with which the frequency of racist insults are compared in the columns.

5.5.1.1   Relationship between the frequency of racist insults (V93) and gender (V3)

The findings are summarised in Table 5.24. A chi-square test was done to compare the frequencies with which boys and girls experienced racist insults. Of the 147 boys in the sample, only 9 (6.1%) never experienced racist insults.

Table 5.24   Comparison between the frequency of racist insults and gender

	Gender					
	Male		Female		Total	
Frequency of racist insults	f	%	f	%	f	%
Never	9	6.1	9	4.9	18	5.4
Sometimes	72	49.0	101	54.6	173	52.1
Very often	66	44.9	75	40.5	141	42.5
Total	147	100	185	100	332	100

INTERPRETATION

The p-value of the chi-square test was 0.577, which implies that there is no statistically significant difference between the experience of the male and female learners of racist insults. The implication is that racist insults at school level do not differentiate between genders, but rather that it is aimed at whoever represents the "unacceptable" race group.

5.5.1.2   Relationship between the frequency of racist insults (V93) and the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

The data is summarised in Table 5.25. A chi-square test was done to compare the relationship between the frequency of racist insults and the nature of intercultural relations at school.

Table 5.25   Comparison between the frequency of racist insults and the nature of intercultural relations at school

Frequency of racist insults		The nature of intercultural relations at school				
		Put up with one another	Co-operate but do not mix	Hostile to one another	Remain cross or unfriendly	Total
Never	f	12	3	2	1	18
	%	8.2	2.3	9.1	3.2	5.4
Sometimes	f	85	75	6	7	173
	%	57.8	56.8	27.3	22.6	52.1
Very often	f	50	54	14	23	141
	%	34.0	40.9	63.6	74.2	42.5
Total	f	147	132	22	31	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100

INTERPRETATION

It was concluded that the frequency of racist insults and the relation between cultural groups are associated (dependent), that is, that there is a significant relationship between racist insults and how cultural groups get on. A log-linear analysis found the following: There is a statistically significant indication that of the learners who experienced the relationship between the different cultural groups as "putting up with one another", few never experienced racist insults or name-calling. Of those learners who chose to describe the relationship between the different cultural groups as one where people "co-operate but do not mix", a statistically significant number chose the "sometimes" option with regard to how frequently they experience insults.

Similar analyses were done to determine the relationship between the frequency of racist insults and the following:

- the language medium of the school attended (Afrikaans or English) – see Appendix D, Table D1

- the type of school preferred (V58) – see Appendix D, Table D2

From a chi-square analysis, the following was concluded for these comparisons:

(a)   Experience of the frequency of racist insults (V93) versus the language medium of the school

It was found that there is a significant difference between English-medium and Afrikaans-medium schools regarding the frequency with which racist insults are experienced by learners. A log-linear analysis found that significantly many black learners in English-medium schools "sometimes" experienced racist insults, while significantly few black learners in Afrikaans-medium schools only experienced racist insults "sometimes". There is some indication that many black learners in Afrikaans-medium schools "very often" experience racist insults, and relatively fewer black learners in English-medium schools experience racist insults "very often". The frequency of racist insults is therefore higher in Afrikaans-medium schools than in English-medium schools.

(b)   Experience of the frequency of racist insults (V93) versus the type of school a learner would prefer (V58)

There is a statistically significant difference between the frequencies with which racist insults were experienced in the different types of school learners would prefer, since the chi-square test p-value was below 0.01. It therefore appears that the frequency of racist insults and choice of school type are related. This relationship was investigated in more depth by means of a log-linear analysis, but no single row-column combination (of the two factors) contributed statistically significantly to the dependency. Therefore, the log-linear analysis could not find any specific significant row-column interaction. However, there is an indication that learners who preferred a school with only/mainly black learners tended to experience racist remarks far more often, while those that chose schools where all races are equally represented showed a greater tendency never to experience such remarks.

5.5.2   Relationship between keeping picked-up goods (V67) and other variables

The question arose as to whether any relationship existed between a number of variables and the attitude displayed towards goods picked up on the school grounds. It was therefore decided to explore the relationship between the attitude displayed towards picked-up goods and the following variables:

- the location of the home (V40)

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

- working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

5.5.2.1   Relationship between keeping picked-up goods (V67) and the location of the home (V40)

The findings are set out in Table 5.26. A chi-square test was done to study the relationship between learners' view about keeping something valuable that they have picked up, and the location of their home.

Table 5.26:   Comparison between keeping picked-up goods and the location of the home

	Location of the home							
	Suburb		Township		Other		Total	
Keeping picked-up goods	**f**	**%**	**f**	**%**	**f**	**%**	**f**	**%**
Agree	40	23.1	24	17.0	3	21.4	67	20.4
Uncertain	30	17.3	34	24.1	2	14.3	66	20.1
Disagree	103	59.5	83	58.9	9	64.3	195	59.5
Total	173	100	141	100	14	100	328	100

INTERPRETATION

The p-value exceeded 0.01, which means that there is no relationship between keeping picked-up goods and the location of the home.

Similar analyses were done to determine the relationship between keeping picked-up goods (V67) and:

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

- working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

(The tables containing the data are given as Tables D3 to D8 in Appendix D.)

A chi-square analysis showed that there is no significant relationship between keeping picked-up goods and any of the abovementioned variables.

5.5.3 Relationship between condoning latecoming for school (V83) and other variables

As arriving late for school is recognised as a recurrent disciplinary and attitudinal problem, it was deemed important to determine influencing factors.

The relationship between arriving late for school and the following variables was researched:

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

- the location of the home (V40)

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

5.5.3.1   Relationship between condoning latecoming for school (V83) and the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

The findings are set out in Table 5.27. A chi-square test was done to compare the relationship between condoning latecoming for school and the nature of intercultural relations at school.

Table 5.27 overleaf

Table 5.27: **Comparison between condoning latecoming for school and the nature of intercultural relations at school**

Condoning latecoming	The nature of intercultural relations at school									
	Put up with one another		Co-operate but do not mix		Hostile		Remain cross/ unfriendly		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Yes	32	21.8	36	27.3	5	22.8	9	29.0	82	24.7
No	115	78.2	96	72.7	17	77.3	22	71.0	250	75.3
Total	147	100	132	100	22	100	31	100	332	100

INTERPRETATION

There is no statistically significant relationship between condoning arriving late for school and the nature of intercultural relations at school, since the p-value exceeds 0.01. This implies that the reason for condoning latecoming is not particularly influenced by the nature of intercultural relations at school and vice versa.

5.5.3.2   *Relationship between condoning latecoming for school (V83) and time spent on schoolwork (V70)*

A summary of the information can be found in Table 5.28. A chi-square test was done to compare the relationship between condoning latecoming for school and time spent on schoolwork.

Table 5.28 overleaf

Table 5.28: Comparison between condoning latecoming for school and time spent on schoolwork

		Time spent on schoolwork					
		None	One hour	Two hours	Three hours	More than three hours	Total
Condoning latecoming							
Yes	f	12	35	16	9	10	82
	%	66.7	27.8	20.0	17.7	17.5	24.7
No	f	6	91	64	42	47	250
	%	33.3	72.2	80.0	82.4	82.5	75.3
Total	f	18	126	80	51	57	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

INTERPRETATION

There is a statistically significant relationship between the time spent on schoolwork and condoning latecoming for school, since the p-value was less than 0.01. It therefore appears that time spent on schoolwork and condoning latecoming for school are related. It could mean that condoning latecoming for school also implies a *laissez-faire* attitude toward the time (and therefore effort) that is spent on schoolwork or the other way round. This relationship was investigated further by means of a log-linear analysis. Through the log-linear analysis it was found that statistically significantly many of the learners who condoned latecoming spent no time on schoolwork. Also there were statistically significantly few learners who did not condone latecoming who spent "no time" on schoolwork.

Similar analyses were done to determine the relationship between condoning latecoming (V83) and:

- the location of the home (V40)

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

(The data are set out in Tables D9 to D13 in Appendix D.)

From the chi-square analyses, the following was concluded: There is no significant relationship between condoning latecoming and any of the abovementioned variables.

5.5.4 Relationship between condoning loud talk (V84) and other variables

Loud talk features very prominently in previous research as well as literature on the black cultures as a problem area in intercultural communication styles. For this reason, it was deemed necessary to pay attention to this aspect and look for possible influences.

The relationship between condoning loud talk and the following variables was explored:

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- the location of the home (V40)

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

- working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

5.5.4.1   Relationship between condoning loud talk (V84) and feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

The information is presented in Table 5.29. A chi-square test was done to compare the relationship between condoning loud talk in the corridors between classes and whether learners feel happy/unhappy when at school.

Table 5.29: **Comparison between condoning loud talk and feeling happy/unhappy when at school**

	Feeling happy/unhappy when at school					
	Happy		Unhappy		Total	
Condoning loud talk	f	%	f	%	f	%
Bad-mannered/ ill-disciplined school	126	50.2	34	42.5	160	48.3
Cultural factors	125	49.8	46	57.5	171	51.7
Total	251	100	80	100	331	100

INTERPRETATION

The p-value exceeded 0.01, which means that there is no significant relationship between condoning talking loudly in the corridors and feeling happy/unhappy when at school.

Chi-square analyses were done to determine the relationship between condoning loud talk in the corridors (V84) and the following:

- the location of the home (V40)

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

- working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

(The tables containing the data are Tables D14 to D19 in Appendix D.)

There is no significant relationship between condoning loud talk and any of the other variables that were considered.

5.5.5   **Relationship between regarding eye contact as disrespectful (V85) and other variables**

Some black cultures (especially the Xhosa culture) avoid making eye contact when speaking as a sign of respect (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:88). For this reason it was important to research aspects that could possibly affect this behaviour. The following variables were considered:

- the location of the home (V40)

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

- working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

5.5.5.1   Relationship between regarding eye contact as disrespectful (V85) and the location of the home (V40)

The information was summarised in Table 5.30. A chi-square test was done to compare the relationship between regarding eye contact as disrespectful and the location of the home.

Table 5.30   Comparison between regarding eye contact as disrespectful and the location of the home

Eye contact is disrespectful	Location of the home							
	Suburb		Township		Other		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Agree	44	25.3	43	30.5	5	35.7	92	28.0
Uncertain	54	31.0	31	9.4	1	0.3	86	26.1
Disagree	76	43.7	67	47.5	8	57.1	151	45.9
Total	174	100	141	100	14	100	329	100

INTERPRETATION

The p-value exceeded 0.01 which means that there is no statistically significant relationship between where learners stay and what they believe about eye contact.

Similar analyses were done to determine the relationship between attitudes to eye contact (V85) and:

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

- working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

(The tables containing the data are included as Tables D20 to D25 in Appendix D.)

Chi-square analyses showed that there is no statistically significant relationship between attitudes to eye contact and any of the abovementioned variables.

5.5.6 Relationship between standing distance when talking to someone (V86) and other variables

Black learners often tend to stand too close to others (in Western terms) when they talk to them, since doing so is accepted as a natural phenomenon in many black cultures. This aspect required more attention.

The relationship between the standing distance and the following variables was explored:

- the location of the home (V40)

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

- working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

5.5.6.1 *Relationship between standing distance (V86) and feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)*

The information is contained in Table 5.31. A chi-square test was done to study the relationship between standing distance and feeling happy/unhappy when at school.

Table 5.31 **Comparison between standing distance and feeling happy/unhappy when at school**

| | Feeling happy/unhappy when at school | | | | | |
| | Happy | | Unhappy | | Total | |
Standing distance	f	%	f	%	f	%
Yes	96	38.1	37	46.3	133	40.1
No	156	62.0	43	53.8	199	59.9
Total	252	100	80	100	332	100

INTERPRETATION

There is no statistically significant relationship between standing distance and feeling happy/unhappy when at school, since the p-value exceeded 0.01.

Similar analyses were done to determine the relationship between the standing distance when talking to someone (V86) and:

- the location of the home (V40)

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

- working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

(The tables containing the data are included as Tables D26 to D31 in Appendix D.)

In the chi-square analyses, it was found that there is no significant relationship between the standing distance when talking and any of the abovementioned variables.

5.5.7 Relationship between borrowing without permission (V91) and other variables

Borrowing and taking others' belongings without permission has caused much tension in schools. Therefore this aspect warrants more attention.

The relationship between borrowing without permission and the following factors was researched:

- working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (101)

- the location of the home (V40)

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

5.5.7.1 Relationship between borrowing without permission (V91) and working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

The information is contained in Table 5.32. A chi-square test was done to compare the relationship between borrowing without permission and working hard at a disliked subject.

Table 5.32 overleaf

Table 5.32: **Comparison between borrowing without permission and working hard at a subject the learner dislikes**

| | Working hard at a subject the learner dislikes | | | | | | | |
| | Agree | | Uncertain | | Disagree | | Total | |
Borrowing without permission	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Yes	24	10.7	6	1.8	7	18.4	37	11.2
No	200	89.3	63	91.3	31	81.6	294	88.8
Total	224	100	69	100	38	100	331	100

INTERPRETATION

There is no statistically significant relationship between borrowing without permission and working hard at a disliked subject, since the p-value exceeds 0.01.

Similar analyses were done to determine the relationship between borrowing without permission (V91) and:

- the location of the home (V40)

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

(The tables containing the data are included as Tables D32 to D37 in Appendix D.)

In the chi-square analyses, it was found that there is no significant relationship between borrowing without permission and any of the abovementioned variables.

5.5.8 Relationship between approving of the writing of exams to pass (V109) and other variables

Learners often regard the writing of exams as unnecessary. The relationship between approving of writing exams and the following variables was therefore researched:

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

- the location of the home (V40)

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

5.5.8.1   *Relationship between approving of the writing of exams to pass (V109) and time spent on schoolwork (V70)*

The data is set out in Table 5.33. A chi-square test was done to investigate the relationship between approving of writing exams and the time learners spend doing schoolwork.

Table 5.33 overleaf

Table 5.33: Relationship between approving of the writing of exams to pass and time spent on schoolwork

		Time spent on homework					
		None	One hour	Two hours	Three hours	More than three hours	Total
Writing exams							
Yes	f	7	71	33	32	26	169
	%	38.9	56.4	41.3	62.8	46.4	51.1
No	f	11	55	47	19	30	162
	%	61.1	43.7	58.8	37.3	53.6	48.9
Total	f	18	126	80	51	56	331
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

INTERPRETATION

The p-value exceeded 0.01, which indicates that there is no statistically significant relationship between approving of writing exams and the time spent on schoolwork.

Similar analyses were done to determine the relationship between approving of the writing of exams to pass (V109) and:

- the location of the home (V40)

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

(The tables containing the data are Tables D38 to D43 in Appendix D.)

According to the chi-square analyses, there is no significant relationship between approving of the writing of exams to pass and any of the abovementioned variables.

5.5.9 Relationship between the handling of trouble at school (V110) and other variables

It is important to know which factors could influence learners' behaviour when they land themselves in trouble at school with teachers. The relationship between the way trouble with the teachers is handled and the following variables was researched:

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

- the location of the home (V40)

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

5.5.9.1   Relationship between the manner of handling of trouble at school (V110) and the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

The data is contained in Table 5.34. A chi-square test was done to investigate the relationship between the manner of handling trouble at school and the nature of intercultural relations at school.

Table 5.34 overleaf

Table 5.34: Relationship between manner of handling trouble at school and the nature of intercultural relations at school

		The nature of intercultural relations at school				
		Put up with one another	Co-operate but do not mix	Hostile	Remain cross/ unfriendly	Total
Manner of handling trouble						
Admit it	f	137	117	18	26	298
	%	46.0	39.3	6.0	8.7	89.8
Deny /blame	f	10	15	4	5	34
	%	29.4	44.1	11.8	14.7	10.2
Total	f	147	132	22	31	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100

INTERPRETATION

There is no statistically significant relationship between the manner in which trouble is handled at school and the nature of intercultural relations at school, since the p-value exceeded 0.01.

5.5.9.2   Relationship between the handling of trouble at school (V110) and working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101).

A summary of the information can be found in Table 5.35. A chi-square test was done to compare the relationship between the ways of handling trouble at school and working hard at a subject the learner dislikes.

Table 5.35   Relationship between the handling of trouble at school and working hard at a subject the learner dislikes

Manner of handling trouble	Working hard at a subject the learner dislikes							
	Agree		Uncertain		Disagree		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Admit it	209	70.4	59	19.9	29	9.8	297	89.7
Deny it	15	44.1	10	29.4	9	26.5	34	10.3
Total	224	100	69	100	38	100	331	100

INTERPRETATION

There is a statistically significant relationship between the manner in which trouble is handled at school and working harder at a disliked subject, since the p-value was less than 0.01. It therefore appears that these two aspects could have an influence on each other. This relationship was investigated further through a log-linear analysis. It was found that a statistically significant large number of learners who would admit and apologise, agree about the need for working harder at a subject they dislike in order to obtain good marks. Statistically few who would deny/blame somebody else agree about the need for working harder at a subject they dislike.

Similar analyses were done to determine the relationship between the manner of handling trouble at school (V110) and the following:

- the location of the home (V40)

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- job aspirations (V45)

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

(The tables containing the data are Tables D44 to D48 in Appendix D.)

From the chi-square analyses, the following was concluded for these comparisons:

No statistically significant relationship has been found between the ways in which trouble is handled and any of the abovementioned variables.

5.5.10 Relationship between the number of close friends from another race group (V57) and feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59).

It is important to establish whether the number of close friends from other race groups has an effect on whether learners feel happy/unhappy when at school.

Table 5.36   Relationship between number of close friends from other race groups and feeling happy/unhappy when at school

| | Feeling happy/ unhappy when at school | | | | | |
| | Happy | | Unhappy | | Total | |
Close friends from another race group	f	%	f	%	f	%
None	69	27.4	33	41.8	102	30.8
One	30	12.0	10	12.7	40	12.1
Two	27	10.7	3	3.8	30	9.1
More than two	126	50.0	33	41.8	159	48.0
Total	252	100	79	100	331	100

INTERPRETATION

There is no statistically significant relationship between having close friends from another race group and feeling happy/unhappy at school , since the p-value exceeded 0.01.

5.5.11 Relationship between the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92) and other variables

The nature of intercultural relations at school determines whether learners experience the school environment as accommodating. Therefore the relationship between the nature of intercultural relations at school and the following variables was researched:

- condoning hitting somebody (V111)

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- close friends in another race group (V57)

- type of school preferred (V58)

- keeping picked-up goods (V67)

- borrowing without permission (V91)

- way to solve an argument (V113)

5.5.11.1   *Relationship between the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92) and condoning hitting somebody (V111)*

The information is presented in Table 5.37. A chi-square test was done to compare the relationship between intercultural relations and condoning hitting somebody.

Table 5.37:   Comparison between the nature of intercultural relations at school and condoning hitting someone

The nature of intercultural relations at school	Condoning hitting a person							
	Agree		Uncertain		Disagree		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Put up with one another	28	19.1	39	26.5	80	54.4	147	44.3
Co-operate but do not mix	30	22.7	43	32.6	59	44.7	132	39.8
Hostile	10	45.5	4	18.2	8	36.4	22	6.6
Remain cross/unfriendly	8	25.8	6	19.4	17	54.8	31	9.3
Total	76	100	92	100	164	100	332	100

INTERPRETATION

The p-value exceeded 0.01, which means that there is no statistically significant relationship between the nature of intercultural relations at school and condoning hitting a person.

Similar analyses were done to determine the relationship between the nature of intercultural relations at school and the following:

- feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

- having close friends from another race group (V57)

- type of school preferred (V58)

- keeping picked-up goods (V67)

- condoning borrowing without permission (V91)

- way to solve an argument (V113)

(The tables containing the information are Tables D49 to D54 in Appendix D.)

The chi-square analyses showed that there is no significant relationship between the nature of intercultural relations at school and any of the abovementioned variables.

5.5.12 Relationship between self-esteem (V46-55) and other variables

The literature suggests that self-esteem and black identity are significantly correlated (Belgrave *et al.*, 1994:152-153). Therefore, learners who feel good about themselves should display healthy self-acceptance, which in turn bodes well for their accommodation in the school. Consequently it was decided to determine the nature of the relationship between self-esteem and the following variables:

- the location of the home (V40)

- the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

- time spent on schoolwork (V70)

- the desired educational level (V42)

- encouragement received from parents to do homework (V77)

- ability to discuss personal problems with parents (V79)

The data is presented in the form of a summary of main features. The aspects of self are categorised along the rows and group size, mean and standard deviation were set out in the columns.

5.5.12.1   *Relationship between self-esteem (V46-55) and the location of the home (V40)*

The information is presented in Table 5.38. A comparison was done to see whether a difference in the location of the home influences the learners' self-esteem.

Table 5.38:   Relationship between self-esteem and the location of the home

Location of the home	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Suburb	174	1.569	0.341
Township	141	1.623	0.355
Farm	6	1.733	0.547

INTERPRETATION

The location of the home does not seem to have a dramatic effect on the learners' experience of self-esteem, although it appears that learners who live on farms have the highest count on the self-esteem scale, which means they have the lowest self-esteem.

5.5.12.2   *Relationship between self-esteem (V46-55) and the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)*

The information is presented in Table 5.39. A comparison was done to compare the relationship between self-esteem and the nature of intercultural relations at school.

Table 5.39:   Relationship between self-esteem and the nature of intercultural relations at school

The nature of intercultural relations at school	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Put up with one another	147	1.588	0.326
Co-operate but do not mix	132	1.564	0.351
Hostile	22	1.536	0.386
Remain cross/unfriendly	31	1.755	0.401

INTERPRETATION

It seems that learners who experience intercultural relations as "cross" or "unfriendly", score the highest on the self-esteem scale, indicating that they have the lowest self-esteem. Constant exposure to an unaccommodating atmosphere in the form of insults and strained intercultural relations can lead to negative feelings about the self, resulting in low self-esteem.

5.5.12.3   *Relationship between self-esteem (V46-55) and time spent on schoolwork (V70)*

The information is presented in Table 5.40. A comparison was done to establish the relationship between self-esteem and the time spent on schoolwork.

Table 5.40:   Relationship between self-esteem and time spent on schoolwork

Time spent on schoolwork	N	Mean	Standard deviation
No time	18	1.756	0.426
One hour	126	1.582	0.373
Two hours	80	1.564	0.320
Three hours	51	1.596	0.352
More than three hours	57	1.588	0.307

INTERPRETATION

Learners who spend no time on schoolwork have the larger count on the self-esteem scale, which indicates that they have the lowest self-esteem. These factors could have a reciprocal influence on each other. Low self-esteem could result in a capitulation regarding the doing of schoolwork. Alternatively, not doing schoolwork could result in low self-esteem, since learners will constantly be scolded. Also, these learners could feel that they cannot, for some reason, cope with the work.

5.5.12.4   *Relationship between self-esteem (V46-55) and the desired educational level (V42)*

The information is presented in Table 5.41. A comparison was done to determine the relationship between self-esteem and the desired educational level.

Table 5.41:   Relationship between self-esteem and the desired educational level

Desired educational level	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Grade 9	3	1.9333	0.321
Grade 10	3	1.667	0.153
Grade 11	2	1.550	0.212
Grade 12	14	1.679	0.383
Diploma/certificate	16	1.806	0.328
Degree	52	1.628	0.296
Degree + diploma/certificate	242	1.558	0.357

INTERPRETATION

It appears that learners whose desired level of education is Grade Nine score the highest on the self-esteem scale, which indicates that they have the lowest self-esteem. To struggle scholastically could be accompanied by feelings of low self-esteem. Such learners would probably not be motivated to obtain higher academic qualifications.

5.5.12.5   Relationship between self-esteem (46-55) and encouragement from parents to do homework (V77).

The information is presented in Table 5.42. A comparison was done to determine the relationship between self-esteem and the encouragement received from parents to do homework.

Table 5.42 overleaf

Table 5.42: **Relationship between self-esteem and encouragement from parents to do homework**

Encouragement to do homework	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Yes	287	1.578	0.343
No	45	1.668	0.386

INTERPRETATION

The encouragement from parents to do homework does not seem to have a substantial effect on the learners' experience of self-esteem. However, those who do receive encouragement from their parents have the lowest rating on the self-esteem scale. This means that they have the highest self-esteem. Supportive parents do contribute to a stabilising atmosphere in the parental home. To know that one is important enough to be cared about boosts self-esteem.

5.5.12.6 Relationship between self-esteem (V46-55) and the ability to discuss personal problems with the parents (V79)

The information is presented in Table 5.43. A comparison was done to determine the relationship between self-esteem and the ability to discuss personal problems with the parents.

Table 5.43: **Relationship between self-esteem and the ability to discuss personal problems with parents**

Ability to discuss personal problems	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Yes	109	1.535	0.328
No	222	1.620	0.357

focus interviews. In Chapter 7, the summary, the conclusions and recommendations of the study are outlined.

INTERPRETATION

The ability to discuss personal problems with parents does not have a dramatic effect on the learners' experience of self-esteem. However, those who can confide in their parents score the lowest on the self-esteem scale. This indicates that they have the highest self-esteem. Learners who can discuss personal problems with parents know that they can rely on a supportive family system. Also, they receive appropriate guidance concerning the handling of their personal problems. This could enhance their self-esteem.

5.6   SYNTHESIS

In this chapter, empirical data was analysed and interpreted and several significant relationships that exist between variables were discussed. The educational and underlying needs that could arise from the learners' socio-economic, historico-political and cultural background, as well as their expectations of the self, school and society and possible educational backlog, were investigated. Chapter 6 examines data gained from individual focus interviews. In Chapter 7, the summary, the conclusions and recommendations of the study are outlined.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH:
INTERVIEWS WITH LEARNERS AND TEACHING STAFF

"Ask.

Listen and record.

Ask.

Listen and record.

It is a grave responsibility to ask.

It is a privilege to listen."

Halcolm, quoted in Patton (1990:358-359)

6.1   INTRODUCTION

Individual focus interviews consisting of semi-structured questions were conducted with sixteen respondents until the data was saturated, as demonstrated by a repetition of themes. Each of the eight participating schools was represented by one black Grade Nine learner (four boys and four girls) as well as one member of the teaching staff. The aim of the interviews was to gain a better understanding of the experiences, the perceptions and the life-worlds of these learners in a multicultural, traditionally white school. The sanctioning of the free expression of thoughts, feelings and criticism gave these learners "voices" – a form of expression that was actively discouraged in the past.

The data were then analysed by means of the eight steps described in Tesch's (1990) method of data analysis (discussed in Creswell, 1994:154-155) – see Section 4.5.2.4 for a more detailed account. Thereafter, the identified categories and sub-categories were placed in a theoretical framework (see also Tables 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5) which provided a structure for the identification and discussion of dimensions relevant to this study. In accordance with this framework, the life-worlds of the black learners in this study were divided into the family, the individual and the school/cultural dimensions. Interaction between these dimensions largely determines the quality of the learners' life-worlds.

The family dimension refers to factors related to learners' home and family circumstances (see also Table 4.3).

The individual dimension (see Table 4.4) focuses on aspects related to the learners themselves.

The school/cultural dimension refers to a number of aspects regarding the school (see Table 4.5).

The findings are discussed in two phases. First, the findings of the interviews with learners are explored. Then the findings of interviews with the teachers are examined.

6.2   INTERVIEWS: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS OF LEARNER INTERVIEWS

The learners' experiences of the identified dimensions are discussed in the order set out in Table 6.1. The discussion focuses on a collection of learners' experiences. It features excerpts from the most data-rich interviews. The stumbling blocks that inhibit meaningful and adequate accommodation in a traditionally white multicultural school are dealt with first. Then facilitating elements that encourage multicultural school accommodation are discussed.

In discussing all the themes in the various dimensions, a literature control was added, comparing the results with the findings set out in other literature on the subject. This control contributed to the richness of the study. Also, whenever relevant, the discussion of the findings refers to the findings of the questionnaire in order to triangulate results or to demonstrate convergence in the findings. Moreover, the mixing of methods is in line with Creswell's (1994:189) suggestion and served "to find contradictions and new perspectives, and to add scope and breadth" to the study. New perspectives resulting from the research are mentioned. Aspects found in the literature but which do not appear in the research findings of this study are noted. Field notes taken to validate the results were incorporated where relevant.

Although the rhetoric or language of research for qualitative texts may adopt a personal and informal style (Creswell, 1994:6-7;159-160), this chapter is written in a predominantly

impersonal and formal style. However, grammatical and idiomatic errors in the interviews have not been corrected in the excerpts. Any names that appeared in the transcriptions have been changed to ensure the anonymity of both the respondents and anyone they referred to.

In the discussion of the experiences of learners who enter a traditionally white school, both elements that provide stumbling blocks (in the form of hindrances that prevent an experience of accommodation), and facilitating elements (that promote a sense of accommodation) are presented. The order in which the findings of the learner interviews are presented is summarised in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: **Stumbling blocks and facilitating elements that contribute to the accommodation of black Grade Nine learners, from the learners' point of view**

STUMBLING BLOCKS (inhibit multicultural school accommodation):
THE FAMILY DIMENSION
Expectations and pressure:
• Roles within the family
• Choice of schools
The parent-child relationship
THE INDIVIDUAL DIMENSION
Individual aspirations
Freedom of choice:
• Physical appearance/hairstyles
• Music
Self-esteem
Sense of belonging
THE SCHOOL/CULTURAL DIMENSION
Language
Racism
Culture:
• Intercultural issues
• Intracultural issues

Table 6.1 (continued)

FACILITATING ELEMENTS (promote multicultural school accommodation):
The ability to perform in the scholastic sphere
Discipline and rules
Uniforms
Shared/collective activities (culture, sport)
Teachers perceived as supportive
Mutual acceptance

The main hindrances to learners' experience(s) of an accommodating school atmosphere, as well as the facilitating elements, as set out in Table 6.1, are discussed below.

6.3 STUMBLING BLOCKS: THE LEARNERS' POINT OF VIEW

6.3.1 The family dimension

This dimension refers to learners' home life. The home plays a very important role in creating a secure and nurturing base which frees learners to explore and handle life in general, including school-related matters. If this dimension is lacking in any way, it will most probably have a negative influence on the way learners behave and perform at and deal with school.

6.3.1.1 *Expectations emanating from the family*

It is important to know what the expectations and aspirations of learners' families are for the learners. These hopes and dreams are usually related to the family's reputation in the community. If the family fears losing face, learners could feel extremely pressurised to perform against all odds. Two facets of the aspect of family expectations, namely roles within the family and choice of schools emerged as factors which affect learners' happiness at school. These two facets are considered below.

- Roles within the family

It appears that girls are expected to do household chores (see Section 3.5.2.4 for more details). In some instances, girls must cope with running the household and must answer personally for the safety and care of siblings. Two of the four girls interviewed said the following:

> *"We, I mean every black girl got chores. You gotto learn how to clean, you gotto learn how to cook, you gotto learn how to wash your little sister. It's part of being responsible – that's the black culture ... You gotta learn how to cook for your husband when you're grown up, you gotto learn how to wash your little sister, so you can wash your child when she grows up. You gotto learn to clean the house, to clean your house when you're married ... It's part of being responsible when you're grown up ... it does, it does interfere, 'cause sometimes, like me, I've got many chores to do at home. I gotto watch my little sister, I mean my sister and my little brother ... I gotto clean, I gotto wash the kitchen, I gotto wash the washing and that sometimes interferes with my study. It does interfere with the study, 'cause sometime my parents come home late, and I have to cook, I have to make sure they, they bath after they eat, I have to make sure they brush their teeth ... that does interfere."*

> *"For a moment you forgot all the troubles that you had at home – washing up the dishes and all that, and you just enjoy yourself for the moment and you know, just become a child actually, because your parents aren't there."*

Literature on the subject confirms that there is a tendency to rely heavily on children for help in running the house. Research by Liddell *et al.* (1994:62) has shown that urban children were involved in more chores than their rural counterparts – a phenomenon they could not explain. Dawes and Donald (1994b:4) refer to Reynolds' (1989) observation that teenage girls may be withdrawn from school in order to care for their younger siblings while their parents work. Swart-Kruger (1994:223) refers to circumstances that oblige parents to make arrangements that burden their children with heavy responsibilities.

The research findings indicate that an inordinate amount of responsibility regarding child-care and housework could frustrate learners' efforts to comply with the demands of school. This is particularly relevant where the standard of schooling demands dedicated study hours. Also, it catapults these learners prematurely into an adult role with adult responsibilities.

- **Choice of schools**

Three respondents said that they had been placed in schools chosen by their parents. They indicated that, although they generally struggled scholastically, they specifically battled to cope with the medium of Afrikaans.

> *"I expect a good education, and I know I'm going to get a good education in here, but the difficultest thing is about the language in Afrikaans ... It was difficult ... for me to learn the language ... It was a big problem for me ... in our place there in* [name of township] *the education is not higher than here ... So my father and my mother ... they told me there's a school somewhere in* [name of suburb], *but it's in Afrikaans. They ask me that can I go there and then maybe ... I will get a good education there ... So ... I told my mother, my parents, that I want to go out because I cannot take geographies and histories ... So I decided to go out, but my father told me maybe I can stay here ... I wanted to go out, because of all the subjects."*

> *"When I came to this school, my general expension* [impression mispronounced] *except I can learn very hard, and I can pass, get some points, like last year, when I was in Standard Six, ... and I told the school was going to be in English, so when I come it was Afrikaans. So I accept it in Afrikaans, with my mother asking me to do and he told me that he'd help me. I must learn Afrikaans"*

It appears that black parents place an extremely high premium on providing the very best education they can obtain for their children. Bot (1990:79,91,93) states that even in very low income families, parents are willing to pay substantial contributions, especially towards their children's secondary education, in order to offer their children a better education (see also Section 6.7.3.3).

It appears that the two learners above were given little say in the choice of school. Cleaver (1994:10) explains that if children do not follow the path chosen by the parents or are not successful at school, the parents could experience themselves as inadequate and unsuccessful providers. In this respect, the child is an extension of the parent, which implies that if the extended self carries out the parent's wishes, the parent experiences pride. Should this not happen, the parent experiences a sense of failure.

It follows then that the learners feel pressurised to perform well in an educational situation that is not necessarily to their advantage, and have to cope with an unfamiliar medium of instruction. Frustration resulting from an inability to cope with the demands of schoolwork

in such a situation could pose a stumbling block to learners' adjustment and happiness within a multicultural school.

6.3.1.2   The parent-child relationship

According to four of the respondents interviewed, the parent-child relationship lacks the elements of trust and/or understanding. This leads to a breakdown in communication, resulting in a dysfunctional family system which could severely impede the development of the child and consequently prevent the achievement of optimal self-actualisation.

> *"No! ... I can't do that, no!"*
> *"Who would you trust to talk to then?"*
> *"My mate ... Not my parents ... I can't open up to my parents ... Ja, I do trust them, but ... not my personal life."*
>
> *"Most of my friends do have problems with their parents ... "*

One learner felt especially misunderstood regarding the issues of interest in the opposite sex and dating:

> *"Uhh, it's very difficult for black parents to talk to their children, like sit down with them – OK – talk about ... having a boyfriend, uhhh ... doing whatever. It, it's actually in our culture, the only time you must have a boyfriend is when you're twenty one ...* **Then** *you start dating ... And when you have to talk to your parents, and then they get angry, and ... it starts being an argument, now. It's not a talk anymore. So it's very difficult to cope with that situation ... they were taught differently than us ... We were taught OK if you ... becoming a teenager, then your hormones start acting ... you know, they don't see it that way. The only time you should have a boyfriend, is when you're twenty one, and that's final ... But it's difficult to talk to your parents, especially for our black kids. It's difficult to talk to your parents about boyfriends and girlfriends and stuff like that. They think now you're* **young***, I mean, you're* **seventeen***, you're young, you're not suppose to have a boyfriend! And it works the other way round. We, we think OK, now fifteen, now I can start dating, you know!"*

Van Niekerk (1982:153) maintains that the educational relationship between parent and child should be characterised by mutual trust, understanding and sympathetic, authoritative guidance. The educational climate that the adult has the responsibility to create should provide stimulating opportunities such as a stable home and proper physical care, but above all adequate affective, social and religious guidance. For this to materialise, the presence of a caring, competent adult is a prerequisite. Often black families are unable to provide

adequate support structures for the nurturance and development of children (Dawes & Donald, 1994b:5). To cope with the prolonged absences or general unavailability of black parents or caregivers, children have developed alternative coping mechanisms. Liddell *et al.* (1994:60) point out that, in the absence of available adults in the larger households, children rely more on other children for interaction and information (see also Section 2.3.2).

Cleaver (1994:10-11) explains the above research findings as follows: the peer group can encourage learners to become involved in behaviour that may be deemed undesirable by parents. It appears that parents are not aware and show little understanding of the changing norms that constitute their children's life-world. She also mentions that communication about childbirth and sexuality is still extremely difficult and embarrassing for many black parents, while children today demand to be informed on these matters. Aggleton, Homans and Warwick (1989:34) refer to a British survey according to which parents do not see themselves as good sex educators. As a result, parents are ignorant about how to adapt to and handle present day changes. Consequently, there could be a tendency for communication between parents and children to deteriorate rather than improve.

6.3.2   The individual dimension

This dimension focuses on learners' individual feelings, experiences and hopes. The following aspects (see also Table 6.1) are discussed: individual aspirations, freedom of choice with regard to physical appearance (hairstyles) and music, self-esteem and a sense of belonging.

6.3.2.1   *Individual aspirations*

It appeared that most of the learners had high individual aspirations, both academically and socially. They seemed to view the school as an institution that will ensure upward mobility in their futures, as is suggested by the following three excerpts:

> *"I expect to get the highest education qualifications so that, I ... achieve what I always wanted to achieve ... I actually want to be a Doctor ... I do not want to die as a Mr or Mrs, but as a Doctor."*

> *" ... I expected uhh expected high school to be uhh great and have all the friends, both black and white – yes – and I really thought I would enjoy with the teachers ... and friends yeah."*

" ... I want to get somewhere in life, and make friends with people in the schools and get along with the teachers."

6.3.2.2   Freedom of choice

The following excerpt from one of the interviews reflects the feelings of most of the respondents that they generally feel controlled at school and that they require more freedom of choice regarding a code of conduct concerning matters that are important to them:

> *"No, it's not really our school. And sometimes you know we don't get the freedom, the freedom uhhh, what we, what we would usually **do** here, if you do it that mean trouble."*

Weis (1989:133) points out that white American students also resent the control that institutional authorities have over their lives, regarding the use of time, space and dress.

According to the interviews, two of the areas in which learners would like more freedom of choice are their hairstyles and music. Both these issues are considered below.

- Physical appearance/hairstyles

It appears that learners seek more freedom regarding the choice of hairstyles:

> *" ... .some of them want Afros and we are not allowed to have them ... and dreadlocks ... "*

> *"Ja, but they told this other girl to take out her braids" ... "The other teacher told this other girl to take them out, and they were very neat. She had to take them out."*

> *"Yes, in a way I would also like dreadlocks, but we are not allowed to have them, so I've got to stick to the rules."*

Bowing to group pressure concerning certain fashionable hairstyles is penalised at school (see also Section 6.7.2.2):

> *" ... well mostly our black kids like dying their hair ... that's not allowed. And the boys, they like making dreads - if you like twist your hair, and that's not allowed. So we've got problems with that, yes ... mostly. We've got problems with that, 'cause boys like doing that, I mean it's in fashion now. If you don't do it then it's like you're not in the group, and when you dye your hair, then you, you, you get uhhh, you get penalised in the school."*

Some problems concern hairstructure and individualised hairstyles:

> *" ... 'cause they don't allow gels in hair for us blacks ... they don't like them talking about gels ... They don't like gel ... I mean they don't want us to pour gel in our hair. Then if the teachers told them they mustn't pour gel in their hair they don't allow, they don't agree with the teachers."*
> *"Ja, so they, they want gel?"*
> *"Yes."*
> *"To be put in their hair?"*
> *"Yes."*
> *"Why do you think that is?"*
> [The respondent cracks his knuckles] *"Because our blacks' hair, when you don't put gel, you get dried up and then sometimes it breaks."*
>
> *"The hairstyles that we make are different, blacks hair and white hair. So our styles, maybe sometimes we look very funny, see some of them just cut here through and make a way through, things like that."*

The literature emphasises the importance of physical appearance to adolescents. Monyemorathwe (1992:29) cites Couvaras (1972) as saying that for adolescents, the body becomes a symbol of self. How adolescents view their physical self may determine the kind of self-esteem they feel.

Gillborn (1995:157-8) argues that adhering to certain elements of a specific dress code, though it appears overtly non-racial, has the potential to disadvantage people of specific backgrounds. Regarding hairstyles, he says that it might be important for certain blacks in the community to shave patterns in their hair, since that is the only way they can really change their hair. Consequently, when permission to exhibit these hairstyles is refused, it could be likened to discrimination.

For learners who already feel marginalised and discriminated against, this might add to the feeling of not being part of the school.

- Music

The learners were generally very positive towards social events at school – in fact, they sometimes ask for more. However, five of the eight respondents have very definite feelings regarding the music played at these functions. Music forms an integral part of such social functions, which normally involve dancing, and are therefore regarded as extremely important by the learners.

"No it is not my kind of music, ... no I, I don't like their [whites'] *music, but I came to enjoy myself ... But I don't like the music."*

"... there are some people who do attend them [socials] *... Most of the time there are more black people there, because we use to have funk ... If you don't like the music you just stand aside until your kind of music comes up and then you dance."*

"First white people's music, and then it was ours, and then it was white people's and then it was ours."

" ... they tell us that we must come with our cassettes, 'cause we [they] *don't have the cassette for us blacks."*

"And then the other thing is we should host more functions, 'cause like now there was a show that was supposed to come on and hardly anybody got their tickets ... So now I think they should actually ask the pupils what they would like to hear, not what the school is organising for us ... We've got different tastes of things, so I mean ... I know a lot of us, especially the black pupils would have liked something else, because we knew we could have brought our friends from somewhere else, and we know what kind of music they like."

A local study showed that there is a difference between the dance music preferred by black and that preferred by white learners (Van der Merwe, 1997:192). Learners do, however, display a willingness to accommodate one another across cultures in this realm.

From the above excerpts, it appears that respondents have very definite, culturally linked, music preferences. They appear to be fully aware that this difference exists, and experience themselves as "different" regarding this matter. They would also like to be granted more autonomy regarding the choice of music at future socials. Correct handling of this stumbling block can influence the degree of accommodation these learners experience at school.

6.3.2.3   Self-esteem

The findings indicated that the self-esteem of **all** the respondents was intermittently under attack, which could leave them feeling devalued and as if they are not respected. Attacks on learners' self-esteem can take many guises and appear to have a racist undertone, as the following excerpts indicate.

"Stop this racism ... Calling names ... on the school grounds ... I think talking to them is good ... because they must feel how we feel when they do that to you."

" ... *when we're in toesig, I mean they think we can't understand Afrikaans ... they say: 'Ah Meneer, sien jy die kaffer is hier?' and* [the teacher] *say: 'Ja ek sien' and they start talking to them and it's like they are on their side ... "*

"Uhh, we only mix sometimes when we go to the pavilion, when we sit there. But we don't mix like we **mix***! No, we sit that way* [the respondent demonstrates that backs are turned to one another] *and they sit there. And you find that enormous space there! Once you go and you sit there, then they all start moving. Yes then the 'skuif, skuif' and they start 'skuifing' to the other side! ... sometimes they stand and they go ... Sometimes, you know ... the prefects, they force them to sit and then they sit and then they look the other way ... yes, and they look the other way ... So it's like classes, classes."*

"I must say, we ... black students, I don't think they listen to the teachers. They take it as if the white teachers don't see us as nothing ... So we blacks ... think that the teachers don't like us, but I don't know if it is true, it is true or what."

Some would like the freedom to just be themselves:

"No we want to ... talk as we usually talk ... Laugh as we usually laugh, 'cause sometimes ... this girl made a joke and we started laughing and then we got in trouble for that. Mr. X, he personally came to us and told us: 'You girls are laughing so loud, we can hear you by the office. Please keep it down.' So it's situations like that, that you know, we don't feel OK talking when we have to talk, like 'Oh they're going to start telling us we're making a noise', ja, and stuff like that."

Some experience devaluation and disrespect when they are falsely accused without being able to defend themselves:

"... when we fight with the white kids ... Then it's like you're the one who hit him, or you're the one who gets ... in the problem. Then you're the one who's guilty, even if it's the other way around ... "

"Positive **self** feelings are the basis of all good feeling" and signal that a separate self or identity has been forged, which will in addition "function as an indicator of the adequacy and integrity of the self" (Markus & Kitayama, 1994a:109). The latter also quote Epstein (1973) as well as Harter and Marold (1991) as saying that self-esteem is "typically operationalized as the total amount of good feelings directed toward the self".

As the above excerpts all refer to racist undertones, it is imperative to note that racism often has indirect and subtle consequences, such as an impaired self-concept, a distorted identity and reduced self-esteem (Foster, 1994:221).

Positive "mirroring" or feedback about the general self is important to the formation of a good self-concept during the adolescent phase. However, in the life-worlds of black adolescents there are bound to be occurrences at school, as is demonstrated by the above excerpts, that can steadily erode any positive feelings of self-worth (see also Section 1.2.4).

6.3.2.4   *A sense of belonging*

Belonging can be defined as the need people have to be affiliated to or accepted by a group, thereby sharing in the similarities of and the benefits the particular group provides (Cushner *et al.*, 1992:58). Markus and Kitayama (1994a:121) point out that to perceive others as part of a group and to share the same qualities could be experienced as very positive and could create positive emotions (see also Sections 3.5.1.3 and 6.7.2.2).

When specifically questioned on the issue of whether they felt that they belonged to their schools, six learners answered in the affirmative. However, when the criterion of group acceptance across cultural groups was applied, a feeling of marginalisation was evident amongst seven of the respondents. They expressed it as follows:

> "*Because ... the whites, they have their own friends. Maybe I think, maybe I can go to them and stay with them. Maybe they will say ... why she came here? Why or what does she want or what? Something like that, so I just stay with my friends.*"

> " *... the white kids, no we've got a problem with the white kids. Yes, ... they're not friendly ... they mostly start all the fights. They ... don't socialise, they're always in their group, and we're always in our group, so it's like that.*"

> " *... I've got white friends especially in my class ... And even other blacks, they have friends ... but mostly the blacks won't be about like as best friend. They'll just be friends ... Yes, mostly the blacks are there alone, mostly the whites are playing alone.*"

> "*I must say, they're not my friends. I just know them ... but mostly I sit with my friends ... My black friends.*"

> "*No. No I don't, I don't ...* [belong]. *The school where I use to go to ... we use to play soccer together, with the whites and the blacks ... we didn't have racial issues and things like that, but we get here and it's all different ... *".

It appears that the respondents experienced problems typically experienced by newcomers to areas where "unfamiliar" or hosting groups reign – namely to establish new in-groups. This could lead to feelings of marginalisation which could counteract the experience of the

school as accommodating. Markus and Kitayama (1994a:112) say that "... for those with interdependent selves, feeling good requires a connection to others, and a connection to others produces good feelings". They explain that for those with interdependent selves "... good feelings may be a function of good social relationships (i.e., fitting-in, belonging, maintaining harmony in one's relations, occupying one's proper place, engaging in appropriate action)" (Markus & Kitayama, 1994a:106).

In order then to fulfil this need for feeling good and belonging, learners could develop their own in-groups with "exclusive" membership (see also Section 3.5.2.5). Markus and Kitayama (1994a:120) refer to Jarymolvich (1987) and Reykowski's (1991) opinions that when "the group is the primary basis of self-definition, in-group membership takes on particular importance, the interdependent members of the group will evoke positive evaluations and the out-group members, negative evaluations". Consequently, should group membership be decided along racial lines, it could promote racism. This in turn could destroy any sense learners might have had of belonging to and being accommodated at school. A vicious cycle starts, threatening peaceful co-existence within multicultural schools. In such a cycle lies the danger.

6.3.3 The school/cultural dimension

This dimension refers to a number of aspects regarding the school, namely language, racism, culture (intercultural issues and intracultural issues).

6.3.3.1 Language

All the respondents (either they or their peers) had a problem with Afrikaans at school (see also Section 6.7.3). Even everyday occurrences – like sharing a joke – become a considerable obstacle without the necessary linguistic competence and could cause those who cannot follow the language to feel left out:

> *"We don't sometimes get what they say, you know, it's very bad, 'cause sometimes they go out there, they make a joke in Afrikaans and the other kids are laughing and we're just staring like ... what was the joke?"*

Some regard English as the most important language, especially for those who desire upward mobility (see also Section 3.5.2.3). Afrikaans is viewed as limited in its usage, both locally and internationally.

> *"I think we should have ... more opportunities to learn the other language that we want to learn. Not to be forced to learn only English and Afrikaans, because all of us are unhappy about the situation at the moment, but still we are coping with it ... we are making the best out of it ..."*

> *"Some African language and some international language like French or Portuguese or something like that ... at the moment wherever you go you speak English. It's not quite often that you get people communicating in Afrikaans. You go everywhere and they all know English. Quite rare to find them knowing Afrikaans. I'll say you must keep them English medium and keep on being taught that must be our first language, 'cause then we'll be able to cope other places."*

> *" ... I mean like now, I'm used to thinking English, because I use to play with all the white kids and stuff, and if I speak English now with my black friends, then they start saying: 'Ah wena you think you're white', you know, and stuff like that ... "*

Some were quite outspoken about Afrikaans being undesirable:

> *"Some of them say they don't want it and they want the black languages in this school."*

> *"They don't like Afrikaans. They want to speak Sotho. They don't like Afrikaans."*

In some cases, the respondents appear to have a genuine problem with coping in Afrikaans. They were really trying to be accommodating towards the language and its users, although understanding and communicating in Afrikaans still presents a scholastic problem:

> *"We're taught in English, so there is no problem with our language at the moment, but sometimes you get teachers that talk to us in Afrikaans, and it is very difficult for us to cope. Sometimes they don't know the words in English, and they speak it in Afrikaans and we don't quite get the word ... the teachers really try. They want to, it's just that they're not use to the English. We don't blame them, because they've been teaching Afrikaans ... 'cause sometimes they don't know the words, then they have to look it up, but sometimes we help them ... We ... know they've been teaching Afrikaans all along, so."*

> *"As long as we blacks don't understand Afrikaans, so as long as they make it easy to speak English, it's fine for me."*

> *"I would prefer school to be in English. I like it to learn in English 'cause I was from English school, then I came to Afrikaans school, so now I can't catch up quickly. But I can talk Afrikaans, but I can't catch up quickly ... The things how*

they done in English and how they done it in Afrikaans, I find it a little bit difficult for me ... "

The above responses echo the literature on feelings about the position of the Afrikaans language in KwaZulu-Natal, as documented in a study by Finchilescu and Nyawose (1998:57). Their study reported that Afrikaans was seen as undesirable and unimportant, with limited local and global usage and that the general feeling was one of negativism towards the usage of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. Afrikaans was also associated with discrimination and stigmatised as the language of the oppressor in the minds of many black people in South Africa, while English has, to a large extent, escaped the antagonism usually directed towards ex-colonial languages elsewhere in Africa (Chick, 1992:275-276) These respondents' responses could also partly be ascribed to this stigmatisation of Afrikaans.

6.3.3.2 Racism

With regard to the issue of racism, from this research, it appears that the respondents generally experienced marginalisation through some form of racial discrimination or victimisation at school (see also Section 6.7.1.5). Only one respondent did not feel that there was some example worth mentioning.

One respondent, who said that there was a lot of racial tension at school, mentioned that outside intervention might remedy the unhappy situation:

> *"Sometimes ... they* [the teaching staff] *call us to the hall. They talk to us there. Then they divide the ... kids ... but I don't think that's helping. I think the more they do that, it's the more the problem become, 'cause some of the white kids, they just listen to them. We try and we change. We try, but they just start all the problems ... we would like that* [outside intervention], *'cause that will make this school a better place, 'cause now we're in a situation where we don't understand it ourselves."*

A double standard regarding the application of discipline and general rules is pointed out as unacceptable. It appears to cause internal conflict, since the learners cannot see why the various cultures should be treated differently. The respondents ascribe these unfair occurrences to racism:

> *"We should get the same punishment. If we were fighting ... if the other one is hurt* ***more*** *... We should get the same punishment like being expelled ... Finished. They shouldn't say: 'Oh he's hurt more, so you're expelled' ...* ***No, no****, I don't think that'll*

*be good, because now we'll start saying: 'Oh, they're on the **white** people's side', 'cause mostly you get that situation."*

" ... yesterday I was going to give somebody, a girl in my class ... her pens ... So I stood up, I walked to her desk and then, when I were there, the teacher said no I mustn't stand up without her permission. And then like two minutes later I see somebody else, a white girl, X, she was walking around. And the teacher did not say anything about it ... that does bug me. Why let somebody else walk around and then tell the other one to sit down?"

"And we get a situation ... where the white girls ... they start smoking ... so they don't get that punishment that will suit them, you know. They get like -50 in possession of drugs, alcohol and stuff. But I mean if ... if it was more on our side, we will get expulsion, and no doubts about it."

*" ... on the school grounds ... it's a rule – don't combine with white. At the tuckshop ... there is no black that works in the tuckshop, so ... mostly they start serving all the white kids first ... we always come at the back. When everything is finished, then we come and buy. So when we get **there** most of the stuff are finished, and on the playgrounds we're always like that."*

In some cases it appears that political beliefs inhibit intercultural harmony and social integration. There appears to be a general need for equality and respect:

"Socially I do mix with some of them [white learners]. *Not all of them ... there are some of them who are still caught up with the apartheid thing. They still think they should be top priority and we should take the back seat, which is quite unfair ... I just think they should realise ... that everybody's equal ... they must not expect things to be done for them and to be done by us for them. They should actually do the things themselves, because we all need each other eventually at the end."*

"Most of the teachers I like a lot, but there are some other teachers ... Every now and then they put something racially towards you, you know or they call you some ... they have some racial thing, just like they still have this apartheid thing going on – they have a thing against black people. Which I think is very unfair. You should leave it at home. If you've got a racial thing, you should leave it at home, because it's your place to teach us, not to tell us about what you feel."

In one instance, there was also evidence of capitulation in the form of accepting the racial divide as inevitable:

"You ask me about if they are saying something, because I'm black? ... Ja, some of the kids, they are saying that, but I don't have a problem with that, because uhm, we are not the same, and we can't be the same. Your ... , my mind and their mind are not the same, because they ... maybe they are making jokes ... but, ... I won't be angry with them. I just leave them alone."

In some instances, there appears to be a greater incidence of racism in the ugly form of belittlement and devaluation, either through physical or verbal abuse.

> *"In the first year here, there were some boys ... they use to ... say something that is not right and things ... to take the stone and ... throw to us."*

> *"Actually, to tell you the truth, there some students who don't like blacks ... And there's some blacks who don't like whites ... Sometimes they hurt each other. Maybe there's a boy coming through the ... big door ... And I'm coming through ... the first. Then he push you. Then the time you say: 'Excuse me, why did you push me?' then he tell you: 'Why you asking me that?' Then he hit you."*

> *"Maybe sometimes when we pass, they playing hand tennis. Then they just throw you with the ball."*

> *"It was nice when I came to school last year, but this year the guys* [white] *started to pull me ... I don't know* [why] *... they just hate us ..."*

> *"This is the problem, 'cause sometimes ... when they see a black boy with a white girl then they go: 'Hey wat doen jy met 'n wit meisie uuh?' and stuff like that and they start being aggressive ... "*

The practice of racism creates a vicious cycle and stereotyping is perpetuated by the various generations (parents and learners) – both black and white. One respondent explained the origin and application of a "rule" at school that discourages intercultural socialisation as follows:

> *"It's, it's the kids, 'cause one time there was this, this boy, he was in our class – he was white. He use to hang around with the black boys in our class – so they used to call him a name. They call him a 'wit kaffer'."*

Another respondent felt that the fact that the school was an Afrikaans-medium school could have contributed to the perpetuation of the learners' intolerance to other cultures and race groups:

> *" ... ehh I think it's five or six years now that the blacks have been here, and I don't think it's really ... I mean I know it doesn't take overnight to uhh get associated with both cultures, but it's long, I mean six years ... I mean that's long and they still don't adjust to the fact that OK we're here. 'Cause the new ... the standard sixes – the white kids – they come here – and the big ones teach them, this is how it goes in the school – you don't mix with the blacks, the blacks don't mix with the whites. So then ... it's starting again, so I don't think it will ever change."*

One respondent described hatred for blacks amongst white Afrikaans learners as stemming from an effort by these white learners to fit in with their group and suggested a solution to the problem:

> *"It's like they're trying to fit in with the rest. They're not all like that. They're* **not.** *They're just trying to because: 'Oh now my friend hates blacks. Now I'm also going to hate blacks.' It's ... like that. They try to fit in ... I think it's from our history. The background of the parents. Ja, I think it's 'cause the parents grew up like that so they teach their children to ... become like that. So if the parents stop telling the kids the negative things, then it will be OK"*

Another respondent said racist remarks will only occur if one treats others horribly first:

> *"No, I don't get that* [racist remarks]. *Only my friends* [do]. *Depends – if you're horrible to them then they're also horrible to you."*

When asked whether she has good friends amongst the white learners, one respondent's reaction indicated that white girls display a more relaxed attitude towards interracial mixing than is the case with white boys:

> *"Ja I do, I do. They're nice. But they're girls, but they sometimes tell me: 'Oh, but my boyfriend doesn't want to see me with you and stuff like that'. "*

> *" ... we like socialise sometimes to the girls, but the boys - no - no."*

There was one incident of identity confusion, where the respondent appeared unsure about which group she belonged to:

> *"I don't fit in better with the, with the blacks, 'cause they, they call me a coconut, see ... It means like uhhm, I act white inside and black outside, I'm black outside ... Ja, I don't really like it"* [sounds and looks sad].

Some respondents favoured socialising with the out-group (white learners) rather than the own-group (black learners):

> *"I prefer sitting with the white kids then, because they're not that aggressive and they're nice ... "*

This study confirms a consistent pattern mentioned by Foster (1994:226) that emerged over about sixty years of South African research on racial attitudes. According to that research, whites show strong own-group preference, and negative attitudes towards black people, and this is more pronounced amongst Afrikaans-speakers. While blacks generally show

own-group preference, there is also evidence of positive attitudes towards white English-speakers. Afrikaans-speakers are regarded with a more negative attitude.

Foster (1994:228-229) also discusses South African research by Aarons (1991), who found that white children displayed a stronger degree of own-group preference and out-group rejection than did black children. This difference decreased with age and differences by the age of 11 to 12 years were minimal. Afrikaans-speaking children, however, remained more prejudiced and ethnocentric than English-speaking children of all ages.

This study confirms Aaron's findings in that it does appear that black learners in Afrikaans-medium schools were confronted by racist attitudes more often. However, there are indications of an awareness among the respondents that a considerable number of Afrikaans learners do not subscribe to racism. It appears that some of the respondents in Afrikaans-medium schools distance themselves from racism and ascribe the origins of racism to the politics of the apartheid era, rather than ethnic or physical differences.

A summary of three South African doll preference studies shows that in two samples of black children and one sample of coloured children in the Western Cape, preference for the white doll was more prominent than identification with the white doll (Foster, 1994:227-228). This agrees with the findings in the current study. Black learners do not necessarily want to be white, but, should the opportunity arise, a large number would prefer to associate with white learners rather than with black learners.

Anderson and Herr (1994:65) relate an incident where racial harassment at an American school compelled a learner to react violently. Only after much discussion did it come to light that the learner was routinely racially harassed, which created a very frustrating situation for him over a long period. This finally led to unacceptable acting-out behaviour. There is little doubt then that racism indeed "prevents the full flowering of human potentiality, is a form of structural violence and certainly inflicts damage on those at the receiving end" (Foster, 1994:236). Some of the indirect consequences are impaired self-concept, reduced self-esteem, distorted identity and possibly viewing own-group (in-group) members as inferior and lacking in some way, while members of other groups (out-group members) are considered superior (Foster, 1994:221.)

6.3.3.3   Culture

The findings on this aspect are discussed under the headings inter- and intracultural issues. Intercultural findings deal with issues **between** cultures, while intracultural findings concentrate on conflicts **within** cultures. The nature of the conflicts mostly involves learners versus learners, while conflict between learners and teachers appears less frequently.

The following excerpt from one of the interviews states clearly that, regarding certain aspects, there are considerable differences between African and Western traditions. At the same time, the respondent highlights the need for more understanding and empathy within the cultural context:

> *"So I'm quite happy with the disciplinary procedures at the moment ... Most of the time yes ... but in the other times when they* [teachers] *should actually consider the child's story ... they should try being in the shoes of the pupil ... because you know the African traditions and the Western ones, they're quite different. So when you usually tell a teacher this – in Africa it's quite OK to say that, but then they know that it's quite OK for you, and they say that you be rude or something like that, which is quite unfair."*

Walter Goodenough, a well-known anthropologist, defined the culture of a society as consisting of the specific knowledge and beliefs that community members have which will also enable them to operate in a manner acceptable to the group, and also in any role that the group finds acceptable (Wardaugh, 1986, cited in Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:15). The above respondent understands the demands of culture. This learner speaks for many when she airs the frustration of having to "learn the kind of constant translating of cultural rules that means survival for them" (Anderson & Herr, 1994:66).

- Intercultural issues

The key issues identified are noisiness, latecoming, conflict resolution and substance abuse.

(a)   Noisiness

Two respondents felt very strongly about being stereotyped when their culturally-correct communicative behaviour was misinterpreted, and indicated a need for more cultural awareness and sensitivity:

> " ... we actually have a problem with that ... us black people, if you speak softly, then we think you're gossiping about someone. We actually have to speak loud, so everyone can hear what you're saying, so that there'll be no corruption. That's what we're scared of. If you gossip about someone, they'll come and get you ... So ... in the classes we can't speak, because that same rule applies – you have to speak so everyone can hear you ... So ... in the classes we keep quiet. In the corridors when we start speaking ... it's problems, because we're making a noise, and it's affecting all the school things and ... we get problems with that ... it's very difficult to cope with the situation ... they should just let us talk as we talk on the outside. I mean in the classes we don't talk. We understand in the classes we have to keep quiet ... That's why we have a lot to say at break ... No, we want to talk at break. Talk as we usually talk ... Laugh as we usually laugh."

> "I won't say that it's a must to, you know, as black people to always scream out ... but then there are times, ... you're just used to it so much not that you do it at home ... but you're just used to it. So the teachers don't seem to understand that, you know, we're just used to expressing ourselves in a clear manner. So I think that's one of the problems now."

The literature refers to cultural differences in communication (see also Section 3.5.3.5). Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:88) quote Carbaugh (1990): "There are many sources of cultural differences in communication. These become especially important in intercultural contacts for they can lead to misinterpretation of intent, misunderstandings generally ... negative stereotyping and so on." The audible levels of language use differ between cultures. A Xhosa speaker may be regarded as gossiping when he/she speaks softly, whereas an English speaker could be more concerned with matters of privacy or not wanting to disturb others (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:20). Such cultural misunderstandings can counteract a sense of belonging to the school because learners may experience themselves as being out of place.

(b)   Latecoming

The townships are geographically isolated from the suburban schools. This leads to many problems with regard to being late for school. Four respondents felt that special

arrangements could be made to accommodate latecomers and that they should not be punished.

> " ... *a lot of black children are late, they're very late, 'cause some of them live in B [township]. And they've only got one bus ... Yes, but if you miss that bus, then it's over. It's either you don't come to school or you try other means of transport, 'cause in* [name of township] *mostly the taxis that come by* [name of particular area] *are very few. Yes so you sometimes they take the train, but the train is late. They come, OK they stand here, they're ohh, there's big problems ... But I'm, I'm like OK, if they miss the bus, I mean they are* **here***, it's not like they were absent, for like no reason. At least they try some means of transport and they* **did** *come, but we got many complaints from the principal about that* [gestures, rolls eyes]. "

Van Heerden (1992:242-243,216) found that the attitude toward latecomers amongst black learners is that one should be grateful that an individual has turned up at all, since that shows the person tried his/her best. It appears that there is some realisation that it is important to be on time for an appointment, since coming late can disrupt the other person's activities. However, it appears that is of greater importance not to hurt someone's feelings, since when a promise is made, it must be kept. Therefore, the main concern is the person that could be harmed rather than the time issue as such. Those who uphold such opinions cannot make any sense of punishment for coming late (see also Sections 3.5.2.2(a) and 6.7.3.2).

When asked about the discipline at school, the following respondent used the victim image and verbal manoeuvres to absolve herself for being late:

> "*No, it's OK* [discipline], *but I don't like the part when you, when you're late ... it's not my fault if I'm late. Could be my sister's or something ... Ja, so I don't like the part where you come late to school and you have to stay after school ...*"

Ramphele (1992:22) argues that to plead victimisation and to demand special treatment is counterproductive in that it reinforces a culture of entitlement. Such individuals expect society to be the agent of change, rather than to look at their own share in effecting change. Within schools this can negatively influence learners' orientation towards their own scholastic input.

It seems that there could be a growing acceptance of the rules controlling latecoming – the next two respondents do not regard themselves as latecomers, and they criticise their peers for coming late:

"Maybe the school come at 7.30. If you come after 25 to 8 you are late and they take your diary and they're going to give you inscriptions ... They tell you, if you stay far away, get a bus early, wake up early and get a bus. Ja, I think also they are right ... 'cause others, they come in their own time ... They take their time on the ... they won't even like, like to come to school. When they come to school, they just walk slowly, they just go somewhere ..."

"I don't think maybe they will agree with me, but the way I feel, I think if you come late, it's your own problem"

Two respondents revealed a future-oriented time perspective:

"Yes, 'cause I mean life is all about time. You can't just sit around for an hour doing nothing. In that hour you could actually have been doing something else."

"Latecoming? ... I think that's not good, because if you are late now, you'll be late in future for your job."

A future-oriented time perspective is indicative of a gradual shift toward the acceptance and implementation of an industrialised time perspective (Van Heerden, 1992:244), and should contribute positively to these learners' scholastic achievement.

(c)   Conflict resolution

One respondent was particularly outspoken about the tendency amongst black adolescents to resolve conflict through physical force:

" ... Blacks tend to become more aggressive ... You just have to sort it out the rough way ... they mostly use physical, physical. You have to be man enough to handle the situation, so the only way you can find out whether you're man or you're really strong, and what, it's the only way by fighting it through ... you know, they tell you: 'Ah, wena, you can't do that!' because they think now you're scared of that person if you like resolve it like: 'OK ja, I forgive you'. No that doesn't work in our community. They're gonna say: 'Oh, you're scared of each other now!' ... And you have to really, even if you don't want to do it, but you just have to do it, because then they gonna start thinking negative things and saying negative things about you. So it's really like that ... Even the girls! ... OK then you get all these support groups ... You know, like: 'Yeah girl, you go and show her!'

It also appears that the media, along with group pressure, could promote anti-social behaviour (also see Sections 2.2.2, 2.3.1.1 and 6.7.4.3). One respondent pointed out the negative influence of television and said that, because learners are expected to prove their point, they could engage in unacceptable physical behaviour just for the fun of it.

"No, these days, ... they're getting influenced from TV, from States, from overseas. OK, the States handles the situation like this, so now we want to handle it like this. Now they take it from there, and then they bring it here and it becomes wider and wider until it becomes out of control. "

(d)   Substance abuse

Two learners commented on substance abuse in the form of drinking and smoking tobacco and dagga.

"Drugs and smoking is uncool, but drinking, yes, drinking is in. 'If you don't drink, then you don't live', ... that's the slogan they put together ... I mean they don't find any harm in drinking. They don't know about the harm you can find in drinking, so they drink. "

"They drink a lot. When they go to parties, they drink ... I wouldn't know about drugs ... But I know about dagga ... They always smoke dagga. "

Weis (1989:133) commented that, with regard to the aspect of substance abuse, white American students' also resent the control institutional authorities have over their lives, and that this resentment is expressed most forcefully with regard to smoking. Stevens and Lockhat (1997:253) refer to the shift among black South African adolescents from political activism to the "Coca-Cola" culture, which means that they embrace American individualism, individualist aspirations, competition and the general American world view. These authors refer to Ntabazalila (1997) as well as Thiel (1997), who maintain that black adolescents' attempts to redefine themselves collectively or to deal with the double-bind of the "new" South Africa, may result in a proliferation of gangsterism, substance abuse and anti-social behaviour, and the emergence of ethnic separatism (see also Section 2.3.1.1). In this regard, an accommodating school environment can play a very definite supportive and instructive role to help learners to negotiate their identity-formation successfully.

• Intracultural issues

Intracultural conflict consists largely of own culture groups putting pressure on learners to behave in certain ways, allowing little freedom to individuals to do as they like.

"I don't fit in better with the, with the blacks, 'cause they, they call me a coconut, see ... It means like uhhm, I act white inside and black outside, I'm black outside ... Ja, I don't really like it [sounds and looks sad] ... *It's not, it's not saying white and*

then I'm black ... We're just the same ... Ja, it's not the colour. It's just what's inside.

*" ... 'cause blacks tend to become more aggressive, 'cause like you said something wrong, there is no forgiveness. You just have to sort it out the rough way ... you really have to watch what you're saying. Don't say this when this person is here, and say that when this person is here, and stuff like that. But with white kids ... you say sorry and it's **over**. But in the black community, you say something and it's gonna stay there, or when you do something embarrassing they're always gonna remind you for the rest of your life what you did ... But ... in the white kids ... it's just for that day and it's over ... But ... the blacks - it's never over, you know. You did **this**, it was **wrong** and they're gonna keep reminding you what you did and that's not nice ... I prefer sitting with the white kids then, because they're not that aggressive and they're nice ... "*

The above excerpts confirm that, in post-apartheid South Africa, black adolescents are faced, on the one hand, with Western ideologies, new role models and economic structures – accompanied by a shift from collectivism to individualism. On the other hand, they are confronted by the extreme power of the group within the black community, with its very specific role and behaviour prescriptions (see also Section 1.2.4). Adolescents have to develop an identity which will allow them to cope with existing social realities. Unfortunately, many of them are caught in a double-bind situation of confusing and contradictory role prescriptions (Stevens & Lockhat, 1997:253).

It appears that white learners also experience intracultural pressure concerning their intercultural relationships. The empathy shown by a black respondent for white fellow learners who are exposed to similar group pressures appears to be unique to this research. When asked if she had good friends amongst the white learners, one respondent said:

"Ja, I do, I do. They're nice. But they're girls, but they sometimes tell me: 'Oh, but my boyfriend doesn't want to see me with you' and stuff like that."

According to Weis (1989:162), racism is affirmed more by males but is less central to females. The implications for this study could be that female learners (both black and white) are attempting to break the bonds of group dictates regarding social interaction whenever a chance arises (see also Section 6.7.1.6). Also, it could indicate that black girls, in particular, are trying to construct an alternative identity, as opposed to a collective identity. Female learners could thus show the greatest promise in challenging racism at school level, possibly

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due to the fact that, as Weis (1989:162) suggests, female culture is "less fractured along a variety of dimensions".

Another problem regarding group pressure is the issue of excellence and wealth. One learner mentioned that scholastic excellence and wealth are frowned upon by the group.

> "... they're jealous. I mean, they're **very** jealous. They'll start gossiping about you, ... If you get high marks, and the teacher comments on you, they like look at you. OK, she got high marks, we'll see what she does next time! And next time if you get low marks, they say: 'Ha, she thought she was clever!' ... so if you get high marks, you gotta make sure you **stay** there! ... So you gotta study hard and make sure you stay on top, because once you go down [bitter laugh], that's when they gonna step on you ... They're gonna say: 'Ah, she thought she was clever. Did you see what she got for maths?' and stuff like that, yeah, it's like that ... If you do well, you keep quiet [bitter laugh]. It's just you and the teacher that knows. If you do well, you just say, if they ask you: 'How did you write?' You say: 'Oh it was good!' ... That's all you have to say ... You don't go say: 'I did the best, you know I got this and this!' ... You just nod your head and carry on with life ... and when you are commented by the teacher – oh, that's hard! We don't want teachers commenting, because once she makes this comment about you, then you've gotto make sure that comment sticks to you, yes. If she says: 'Oh, she's well behaved in her class', then you gotta make sure you behave every **day**, ' cause ... if you, then if you do something **wrong**, they'll say ... 'Oh I thought ... she was the most behaving girl in the class!' ... Yes, you have to do what **they** do, what **they** like ... And like **they** do ... if they say, OK tomorrow we're not coming to school, tomorrow you **don't** come to school! ... If you come to school then that means OK you don't agree with them, so you're not in the group any more."

> "... if someone is wealthy, then you don't ... talk about your wealthiness. You don't ... So when you're wealthy, you just have to keep it quiet and just, you know, bond with them and say whatever they say ... 'Oh, you know ... at home we haven't got money.' So, if you're wealthy, you just have to go: 'Oh, I know that situation!'"

In the literature, there are indications that the concept of excellence is in disrepute and that pressure is applied to those who excel, since they seem "out of line" (Ramphele, 1992:24-25), (see also Section 6.7.2.1). This prompts some students to conceal their (good) test results in order to avoid censure.

Van Niekerk (1992:46) refers to a discussion with a black friend who informed him that showing signs of wealth in the form of nice gardens and homes is unacceptable to the group. This attitude could result in the destruction of possessions that are regarded as a sign of wealth.

The negative repercussions of such beliefs and pressure on learners' ambitions and subsequent scholastic performance are self-evident (see also Section 3.5.2.5).

6.4 FACILITATING ELEMENTS: THE LEARNERS' POINT OF VIEW

The general feeling amongst all the respondents can be summed up in the words of one respondent:

"I feel proud of my school. Actually I enjoy being here."

This implies that despite many stumbling blocks hindering the accommodation of black Grade Nine learners in a multicultural school environment, facilitating elements are obviously also present. Some of these have been identified and are discussed below.

6.4.1 The ability to perform in the scholastic sphere

Most of the learners have high individual aspirations and expectations, both scholastically and socially. The following excerpt indicates that the respondent, despite initially low expectations, was motivated by the external factor of good scholastic performance. The respondent was then selected to the Students' Representative Council. In this way the respondent "developed a voice", which in turn could promote educational reform movements by advocating a better understanding of the needs of black learners. The following respondent put it this way:

> *"Well, I never expected much really until ... as time went by and then I got ... I expected a lot of things like being in the SRC which I am on at the moment and those kind of things ... My academic achievement I would say that also made me happy."*

> *"I expect to get the highest education qualifications so that, I don't know ... be a much better person, you know, achieve what I always wanted to achieve ... I actually want to be a Doctor. I want to die as Doctor X or something like that ... I do not want to die as a Mr or Mrs, but as a Doctor."*

The value of experiencing a considerable amount of control over one's life is particularly important as a facilitating element, given De Charms's (1968, discussed in Biggs & Telfer, 1987:121) emphasis on the connection between intrinsic motivation and the self-concept. He came to the conclusion that if learners believe that they are controlled by others, this

would lessen their motivation to achieve. If, however, they realise that they are in control, they will be more intrinsically motivated. Anderson and Herr (1994:67) point out that student empowerment through the sanctioning of minority student "voices" and criticism may reduce the alienation of minorities from other cultures within the school situation.

The following respondent mentioned no other aspirations apart from obtaining a good education.

> *"I expect a good education, and I know I'm going to get a good education in here."*

Others mentioned sport along with scholastic, social and future expectations:

> *"I expected it to be a very nice school, 'cause I'm used to going to school with my fellow white kids and I uhh expected high school to be uhh great and have all the friends, both black and white – yes – and I really thought I would enjoy with the teachers ... and friends, yeah."*

> *" ... to do well in my sports, academic-wise, I want to get somewhere in life, and make friends with people in the schools and get along with the teachers."*

The general feeling amongst respondents was one of goodwill towards other learners and staff. They generally wanted upward social mobility, and hoped to attain this by securing a good education at a good school. It appears that achievement in any aspect within the scholastic sphere empowers and inspires the learners and encourages a positive feeling towards the school.

6.4.2   Discipline

Except for one respondent who felt indifferent with regard to this issue, it appeared that all the learners experienced a need for externally imposed order and discipline. (Externally imposed discipline refers here to the disciplinary measures as prescribed to by the school's disciplinary system.) The locus of control is therefore situated outside the learner. Discipline was generally viewed as providing structure and a context for learning. The only prerequisite was that the discipline had to be consistent and fair. It appeared that the need for discipline was not only quite well understood, but was also fairly successfully applied in the various schools. Therefore, although there was occasional resentment of institutional authority concerning dress code and detention, discipline was mentioned as an important factor in maintaining order in the school.

"I think it's quite good you know. Everybody should be disciplined ... so I'm quite happy with the disciplinary procedures at the moment."

"I've got no problem with discipline ... They treat us well."

"The one who come late to school, you must send the letters to the parent, but why your children came to school so late?"

"It's OK. They're taking the right procedures."

While one respondent's friends did not favour discipline, he alleged that the school's discipline had brought about changes in some of them:

"I like the uniform, the way they teach, the way they strict ... Most of my friends ... they are bad né? But the rules of the school, they are very good for them, and so they can't be bad just like that only. It's changing some of others like, some of my friends you can talk to them, talk to them or things ... And some of them, they listen to me, and some of them they say this school is not nice, because of the rules. Then I say to them, you don't want the rules. That means you like, you want to do what you want to do. So that's not the right thing, just follow the rules and you will learn properly. Then they say the teachers, they don't like them, things like that. The teachers, they talk to us nicely, they've been nice to us, I think they didn't treat like black or white, they just carry on like they [all learners] *are the same. But if you don't work, she will be nasty, because she's giving you work, and you don't do that* [the work, it] *means* [that] *you think she is stupid."*

Another respondent implied that, although discipline is not liked, it is a "necessary evil".

"No, it's OK if it's there. But it's just that I don't like it. Like everybody doesn't like discipline."

For disciplinary measures to be successful, certain conditions should be adhered to. It was generally felt, for instance, that the application of discipline should be devoid of racial bias, and that there should be feedback or some form of reward for good behaviour.

Oh, OK, I think they're fine [disciplinary measures] *to suit the school, but we've got a problem with it ... we've got a system where we get debit forms and credit forms – if you do badly you get a debit, if you do good you get a credit. But we feel that ... we've been like cheated, 'cause you do something a little bit bad and you get a minus ten ... It doesn't actually balance ... That's very unfair, 'cause in one class the teacher there ... I mean she would look for the rule in her diary, just to connect you to the situation that you had to get minus."*

"... some of the teachers ... they start talking to them and it's like they are on their side [white pupils] *... so actually try to change the teachers ... to start helping –*

dealing with the situation. Not being against, but start helping ... we must get the same punishment."

"OK, civvies, ja, I would say maybe they should let us wear civvies every last Friday of the month ... depending on your behaviour. And then if you don't behave well, well then you don't get to wear civvies. Then that will improve the behaviour of the children definitely."

The success of the educational relationship depends on the elements of mutual trust, understanding and obedience to authority (Van Niekerk, 1982:8). Discipline is therefore essential for the realisation of education. From the literature study, it appears that, in South Africa, there is a very wide range of approaches on discipline. Approaches vary from the severely authoritarian, to the *laissez-faire* to the completely lax. Often the latter approach is favoured by learners, resulting in a decline of behavioural standards and academic achievement (Coutts, 1992:63).

With regard to discipline in multicultural schools, Coutts (1992:61,62) discusses the need for simple, clear and easily understood disciplinary measures based on consistency and fairness. A study by Van der Merwe (1997:175-176,181) mentions that the teachers were of the opinion that most of the learners regarded discipline positively. His study also indicated that it was important for respondents that the school rules should be acceptable to all the culture groups in the school. Pacheco (1996:237) showed that, although learners voiced a need for discipline and order, in practice, there was a total lack of discipline in some of the black schools included in her study.

6.4.3   Uniforms

Uniforms create a sense of pride, belonging and connectedness. Changes that were suggested by the learners interviewed were minor and were mostly aimed at greater comfort.

"The uniform is OK. We look very nice and neat ... Yes even when you wear this uniform, you can even see, when I'm in the street you can see there is a school child ... Not like there in the location ... 'cause when you walking around ... maybe the principal of other school, she see the child of [name] school ... And even other parents if she want to put her child in [name] school, then she will firstly look at the children, how they look and how they respect it. If they ... not respect it, also that parent she wouldn't like his children to learn very wrong things. She want them to go in a straight way, because that's why they normally bring their children here."

"Uniform, no, it's nice. We think our uniform is the best!"

"Ja, I love this uniform."

6.4.4 Shared/collective activities (social gatherings)

Most learners appeared to enjoy the social activities that the school has to offer, to the point of asking for more social functions (see also Section 6.8.2.3).

"We like that a lot, so we're still deciding ... [about asking for] *more socials."*

Although the actual participation in sport is fairly poor, sporting activities show great promise for effecting good intercultural relations:

"We use to play soccer together ... the whites and the blacks. I mean, it was combined ... we didn't have racial issues and things like that."

6.4.5 Teachers perceived as supportive

Generally the teachers were perceived as approachable and supportive.

"Most of the teachers I like a lot ... "

"It's OK. The teacher helps me a lot [with Afrikaans]."

"When you come out of school ... other teachers, they just teach extra classes. Most of us blacks we tell the teachers, can I please come before after half past one, before I go home, I just want to come here and learn what, what we were doing early in the class. Then the teacher come here. The teachers doesn't mind, you just have to come."

"They're also good, they're also good, because they ask you if I do not understand, and they explain everything, until I understand that's what you mean."

"They are nice and polite."

" ... I think the teachers stopped them, because the class was so racist. Then the teachers called them together and spoke to them."

"Firstly I never got along with my Afrikaans teacher, but now we're getting along. We respect each other and everything ... Actually, I don't have a problem with the teachers."

" ... we get along well with the teachers ... the teachers really try ... They want to [speak English]. *It's just that they're not use to English."*

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"I find them very, very nice. When they teach, they make sure that you understand, and they almost asking us black children: 'Do you really understand?'

"You should always be at school. It is a good place to be ... I love my teachers ... I understand my teachers, they also understand me."

6.4.6 Mutual acceptance

It appears that mutual acceptance can be regarded as a powerful facilitating element. Respondents said the following about feeling at home with fellow white learners:

"Ja sure ... Depending. It depends who your friends are ... What is important is the person that you are ... It is about who you are. Not about what colour you are or that ... "

""It's not saying white and then I'm black. It's just like that. We're just the same ... Ja, it's not the colour. It's just what's inside."

Foster (1994:232) says: "A uni-dimensional and bipolar conception of identity ignores the well-grounded distinctions between personal and social identity as well as the notion that we possess multiple identifications such as gender, class, nation and so forth." Also, such a bipolar view of identity can obscure the possibility of other identity dimensions such as ambivalence, contradiction or the sensitive balance between positive and negative identifications. Consequently, the concept of identity cannot be simplistic – either positive or negative.

In the striving towards genuine non-racialism one scenario proposes a desire to fuse identities in a way that would move both black and white toward each other and help them to forge new identities. Another scenario suggests different identities as a moral good, provided that there would be a high degree of **mutual acceptance** between the races. Accordingly both scenarios accept "outgroup favourability as morally and psychologically sound in contrast to the present equation that [only] ingroup identification is psychologically healthy and morally desirable". From the interviews it appears that learners do not want to be typecast. They only want to be accepted at school for the individuals they are.

6.5 SYNTHESIS OF THE RESULTS OF THE LEARNER INTERVIEWS

The following are the findings of the learner interviews:

6.5.1 The family dimension

- Black families generally rely too heavily on their children, especially the girls, to do housework tasks and care for siblings. This frustrates learners' efforts to comply with the demands of schoolwork.

- Learners were given little say in the choice of their schools. They feel pressurised by parents to perform well in an educational situation that is not necessarily to their advantage, mainly due to having to cope with an unfamiliar language as the medium of instruction.

- Learners cannot talk to parents about personal matters. They feel particularly misunderstood regarding matters that concern dating and relations with the opposite sex.

6.5.2 The individual dimension

- Learners have very high expectations regarding upward social mobility and academic qualifications.

- Learners resent institutional control over their lives and require more freedom of choice in matters such as hairstyles and music.

- The self-esteem of learners are under intermittent attack. These attacks take many guises and appear to have racist undertones. Such attacks frustrate the learners' demand for the freedom just to be themselves.

- Learners responded in the affirmative to the question as to whether or not they belonged to their school. However, when the criterion of group acceptance across cultural groups was applied, it was clear that they felt marginalised.

6.5.3 The school/cultural dimension

- Learners experienced particular problems with Afrikaans, in the sense that the language is seen as being of limited use and undesirable. Some learners had a genuine problem coping with the language.

- Regarding racism, learners felt marginalised.

- Double standards regarding the application of discipline and general rules were pointed out as unacceptable and as the cause of internal conflict.

- There is a need for racial equality and respect for every individual.

- Political beliefs could inhibit intercultural harmony and social interaction.

- There was some evidence that the racial divide could be accepted as inevitable. A few learners capitulate in the sense that they remain quiet about disturbing matters.

- There are signs of racism in the form of belittlement and devaluation, either through verbal or physical abuse.

- The practice of racism creates a vicious cycle and stereotyping is perpetuated by the various generations.

- It appeared that racism could be more pronounced at Afrikaans-medium schools, although there is a growing awareness that not all Afrikaans-speaking learners subscribe to racism. Some learners ascribe racism to the politics of the apartheid era, rather than to physical characteristics.

- Racist remarks occur more often if one provokes others by treating them horribly first.

- White girls display a more relaxed attitude to interracial interaction than do white boys.

- There was some incidence of identity confusion.

- Some respondents favoured socialising with the out-group (white learners) instead of with their own group (black learners).

(a)   *Intercultural issues*

- More understanding and empathy, as well as cultural awareness and sensitivity, is required within the intercultural context.

- There is some realisation that there are considerable differences between African and Western traditions.

- Learners felt stereotyped when their culturally-correct communicative behaviour (in an African context) concerning loud talk and laughter, was misinterpreted (in the Western-oriented school context).

- Latecoming was perceived as a definite problem, and responses varied from a demand for special treatment by using the victim image, to a feeling that schools must be grateful learners turn up at all, to a growing acceptance of the rules controlling latecoming. Criticism was also levelled at peers who came late. Some respondents revealed a future-oriented time perspective.

- Black adolescents tend to resolve conflict through physical force. The media, along with group pressure, appear to promote anti-social behaviour amongst learners.

- Alcohol, tobacco and dagga appear to be the most frequently abused substances amongst learners.

(b)   *Intracultural issues*

- Intracultural issues centre around intracultural group pressure which allows little freedom to individuals to do as they like.

- Some white learners (especially the girls) are also exposed to intracultural pressure concerning their intercultural relationships. Their situation elicits an empathetic response from some black learners.

- Wealth and scholastic excellence are frowned upon by the group.

6.5.4 Facilitating elements

- There is a general feeling of goodwill towards other learners and staff.

- Learners generally feel proud of their school.

- The ability to perform in any aspect within the scholastic sphere appears to be an important incentive to achieve at school and it inspires a positive feeling towards the school.

- To establish good intercultural social relationships is considered important.

- The need for discipline is quite well understood.

- Learners experience a definite need for externally imposed order and discipline. However, it is a prerequisite that such discipline must be consistent and fair, devoid of racial bias. Feedback or some form of reward for good behaviour is important.

- Uniforms create a sense of pride in and belonging to the school.

- Teachers are generally considered to be approachable and supportive.

- Mutual acceptance based on individual characteristics and not on group characteristics can be regarded as a powerful facilitating element.

It is clear from these findings that while several problems exist, learners also recognise facilitating elements, and these elements should be developed to facilitate these learners' accommodation at school.

The eight learners interviewed provided a realistic insight into their worlds.

These interviews were supplemented by the interviews with the teachers, as discussed in the rest of Chapter 6.

6.6 INTERVIEWS: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS OF TEACHER INTERVIEWS

The findings of the teacher interviews are discussed in the order set out in Table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2: **Stumbling blocks and facilitating elements that contribute to the accommodation of black Grade Nine learners, as viewed by the teachers**

STUMBLING BLOCKS (inhibit multicultural school accommodation):
INTERCULTURAL DIFFERENCES Overcompensation Colour blindness School ethos Noise level Racism Social interaction **INTRACULTURAL DIFFERENCES** Scholastic pressure Social interaction **HIGH PERCENTAGE OF FAILURE** Language difficulties Latecoming/Absenteeism: • Transport • Cultural aspects • Distance Educational background: Home/family situation: • Parental expectations • Housework • Parental discipline • Emotional support Educational background: School/formal situation **INCREASE IN DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR** Substance abuse Theft Violence **DIFFERENT AND DIVERSE SOCIAL VALUES** **INABILITY TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTIONS**
FACILITATING ELEMENTS (promote multicultural school accommodation):
DISCIPLINARY PROCESS **SENSE OF BELONGING** Cultural activities Sport Social activities **SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE** **UNIFORM**

All the main hindrances to the meaningful accommodation of black Grade Nine learners as identified by the eight teacher respondents during the interviews were considered to be "stumbling blocks". Those elements that promote multicultural accommodation are discussed under the heading of "facilitating elements". Some of the teachers preferred to answer in Afrikaans. Excerpts from these interviews have been translated into English. The original Afrikaans excerpts are included in square brackets below the translations.

6.7   STUMBLING BLOCKS: THE TEACHERS' POINT OF VIEW

6.7.1   Intercultural differences

In this section those elements that have the potential to cause misunderstanding and conflict between cultures and can therefore be considered to be flashpoints are discussed.

6.7.1.1   Overcompensation

In an attempt to side-step the stereotyping of learners and the harbouring of preconceived ideas, some teaching staff have overcompensated in their efforts to accommodate black learners. Overcompensation can be regarded as patronising and condescending, which could in turn elicit feelings of inferiority. Therefore, overcompensation can counteract a sense of true acceptance and belonging to the school.

> *"... I would say by and large it has been an adjustment – taught us tolerance between the different cultures ... And ... initially I would say people went out of their way to make them feel at home and to accept them ... I think people's whole approach was ... to make the transition, to make the adjustment ..."*

> *"From my way as a teacher, it's very strange, it's like so different. Every time you looked at them, you saw colour ... uhm, I suppose we ... I certainly would say that I ... I ... I tried very hard. You almost overcompensated for the fact that they ... are black. You expected them to be, maybe, weaker academically. You expected them to react quite different to what you're accustomed to, but I certainly think we were prepared to make a lot of concessions."*

Crozier (1989:78) refers to Sharp and Green's (1975) observation about a patronising attitude: "If black people have been ridiculed, debased and hidden from history, as they have, then it is patronizing and trite to simply assert that somehow they now matter." It appears

that the dividing line between rendering aid to somebody and patronising is not easily discernible and, if handled incorrectly, could become a cultural flashpoint.

6.7.1.2   Colour blindness

One respondent refused to acknowledge any cultural and racial difference. Such a policy of denial can harm good cultural interaction in the school.

> *"I don't want to talk about racial problems in the school, because for me a child is a child ... With regard to culture they are equal to the white children. There is really no difference between black or white."*

The term used in the literature for the above phenomenon is "colour blindness" (Klein, 1993:128; Anderson & Herr, 1994:66; Atmore, 1994:162-163). Teachers who pride themselves on being "colour blind", and therefore treat all learners the same without acknowledging that some learners have entered a "foreign" environment do these learners a great disservice (Anderson & Herr, 1994:66; Atmore, 1994:163). According to Anderson and Herr (1994:66-67), when teachers acknowledge that they live in an imperfect, stratified society and are prepared to listen, they can empower learners to develop "voices" which can be heard. Kelly (1994:71) argues that denial of issues surrounding sexism and racism can lock "pupils and staff into a situation of *ad hoc* responses which breeds distrust and injustice". Klein (1993:114) says that some schools use the attitude that they experience no problem and that the children are all happy as a defence. According to Epstein (1993:100), maintaining a neutral stance within the context of race relations is impossible and could lead learners to experience teachers as dishonest rather than as neutral. Furthermore, by assuming that racism is simply a matter of prejudice and ignorance, the institutional aspects of racism and the processes which produce and reproduce it are ignored.

6.7.1.3   School ethos

The ethos of a school can be described as the "particular atmosphere of the individual school, which resides in values and attributes that are implicit in the behaviour and interactions that are characteristic within the school. 'Ethos' is the code by which pupils and staff operate in schools" (Cooper, 1993:163).

One teacher appeared particularly concerned about how the ethos of the school would be affected in the long run:

> *"It's almost as if our ethos is still hanging in there, because we're about 30% black. If we were 50% black, I think we would somehow, things would change – the discipline, the noise level ... they almost don't have much time for ... a woman ... discipline with women ... we want children to be neat, we want children to be polite, we want children to be punctual, we want children to have manners. At the moment we're **just** hanging in there ... I'm worried about ... if we are 50-50 or a 60-40 ratio, I don't know how well-mannered and polite and whatever else we can think of, we'll be."*

In line with the above teacher's feelings, a black Zimbabwean learner interviewed by Frederikse (1992:8-9) in another study mentioned being unhappy, because, as more black learners entered the school, he "felt the system was dying". The learner admitted to ambivalent feelings, as he had gone through the system and did not want to miss out on the privileges normally afforded the senior learners. In fact, he was looking forward to being respected by the juniors, since, as a senior he would have as much say as anybody whether the juniors were white or black. Consequently, when the white learners started to leave, he felt bitter about it, because he had gone through "something" with them.

Klein (1993:129) refers to the subtle differential attitudes that underlie the way many teachers perceive and treat their pupils according to the "like me" and "other than me" principle. He points out that attitudes are extremely resistant to change, and that, even when change does come, the process is slow. Schools have to find a way to accommodate all the stakeholders in their ethos. This must be done in such a way that nobody feels threatened or loses privileges.

The following remark should be seen in the light of the above: the transitional period is difficult. Some ways of doing things were experienced as very difficult and hard to accept.

> *"Initially there were possible adjustment problems to the school rules ... they may not have beards or moustaches ... and very few of them like to shave. They do not like to wear socks ... and they are regularly reprimanded since they have shoes on without socks. The whole adjustment to westernised school rules presented ... problems. In the beginning ... they did not know where to change for sport practices. If the change rooms were full, they would just change on the stoep. While the longer they were part of the school, the more they conformed to the way in which we do things and I would say gradually the adjustment became easier. Especially ... where they've attended ... other city primary schools."*

["Aanvanklik was daar tog moontlike aanpassingsprobleme by die skoolreëls ... hulle mag nie baarde of snorre hê nie ... en baie min van hulle skeer graag. So ... dra hulle nie graag sokkies nie en ... word hulle ... gereeld aangespreek omdat hulle skoene aanhet sonder kouse. Die hele aanpassing by westerse skoolreëls het ... probleme gelewer. En aan die begin ... het hulle nie ... geweet waar om ... vir sportoefeninge aan te trek nie. As die kleedkamers vol is dan trek hulle maar sommer op die stoep aan. Terwyl hoe langer hulle deel geword het van die skool, hoe meer het hulle gekonformeer met die manier waarop ons dinge doen en geleidelik sou ek sê het die inskakeling al hoe makliker geword. Veral ... waar hulle alreeds in ander stedelike laerskole was ... "]

Klein (1993:112,114) says that a school's ethos is difficult to alter, but that the performance of learners and the handling of issues of equality depend on such a change. She claims that an attitude of openness on the part of school managers can help to foster a good ethos. Kelly (1994:64) concludes that, in multicultural situations, learners develop their ethos, their responses to conflicts and their hierarchies on the playground, since this is the only place where they can encounter such a cross-section of society. It is also during this process that they learn how the hierarchies of prestige, status and authority operate.

6.7.1.4   Noise level

All the teachers found the noise level hard to accept.

" ... they are tremendously noisy during change of classes, also when they enter a classroom ... when he as an individual talks to you, he will noticeably talk very much softer."

[" ... is dat hulle geweldig raserig is tydens wisseling van klasse, ook met die inkom in 'n klas ... wanneer hy as 'n indiwidu met jou praat, dan praat hy weer opmerklik baie sagter."]

"The noise level to me at my age is the biggest thing to control, to cope with. It's an incredibly noisy bunch of kids. The laughter - unnecessarily we may think - but maybe I'm not reading it correctly ... the amount of noise generated when the class changes can be phenomenal."

"They are very noisy as a group, but that is part of their culture."

Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:20) say that the audible levels of language use differ between cultures. Usually Xhosa speakers, for example, tend to speak loudly, while mother-tongue English speakers tend to speak more softly (see also Section 6.3.3.3(a)).

6.7.1.5   Racism

Racism in the form of name-calling and verbal abuse featured quite prominently as a problem mentioned in the interviews (see also Section 6.3.3.2). Some incidents involving harassment also featured. One teacher put it this way:

> *"I think other adjustment problems are the decent children, the socio-economically stronger children that ... suffer under negative white children that call them names and push them over on the stoep, that will trip a girl when she passes and then it is a nice child. And then it is a child that is in the academic team. Then I am immediately furious with that boy that said that to her or did that, since she is far ahead of him."*

> *["Ander aanpassingsprobleme dink ek is maar die ordentlike kinders, die sosio-ekonomiese sterker kinders wat ... swaarkry onder negatiewe blanke kinders wat hulle name noem en omstamp op die stoepe, wat die meisie sal pootjie as sy sou verbykom en dan is dit 'n oulike kind. En dan is dit 'n kind wat in die akademiese span is. Dan is ek onmiddellik woedend vir daai seun wat dit vir haar gesê of dit gedoen het, want sy is vir hom ver voor."]*

> *"There was conflict between the white and the black children ... Derogatory comments to one another. Some of the white children got up and sat down somewhere else as soon as a black learner came to sit down next to them, so racism was displayed."*

> *["Daar was konflik gewees tussen die wit kinders en die swart kinders ... Beledigende aanmerkings teenoor mekaar. Van die wit leerlinge het opgestaan en op 'n ander plek gaan sit sodra daar 'n swart leerling langs hulle kom sit het, so daar is rassisme geopenbaar."]*

Harassment can be defined as causing pain, as it involves "impersonal, unreciprocated and unwelcome physical contact, comment, suggestion, joke, attention. The mistreatment is offensive to the person/s concerned and causes the victim/s to feel threatened, humiliated, patronised, embarrassed; it dehumanises, makes objects of the victim/s" (Kelly, 1994:66).

Kelly refers to the situation in the United Kingdom, where the Home Office estimated that Asian and black people are far more likely than white people to be harassed through incidents such as verbal abuse and spitting. Harassment seriously damages the quality of life of members of ethnic minority communities. In addition, research indicated that Asian and Afro-Caribbean learners experienced substantially more comments about their skin colour than did white learners (Kelly, 1994:65,67).

6.7.1.6   Social interaction

It appears that, interculturally, there is social integration at school, but it is not without reserve.

The general feeling among teachers was that there was not much intercultural mixing during break.

> *"No. Not at all ... we often spoke about things that were black – white issues, and they said to me that there's a lot of division ... And I've asked other kids and yes ... it does seem as if quite a few of them are divided."*

> *"They fit in well, but I do notice that they stick to their own groups during breaks."*

> *"Separate, very much."*

It appears that black and white courtships are actively discouraged in some instances and are seen as strange:

> *"Her parents wanted to send her ... to* [another country]. *His parents did not approve of it either ... Neither did his friends."*

> *"But we've had the exceptions for example we've had our matric dance recently, you know it could be a black guy and a white girl, and it's seen as strange."*

During sport and cultural activities, intercultural division is less pronounced.

> *"On the sportfield or on the stage, you know there is no difference I ... think ... "*

Intercultural interaction depends on individual preferences, individual personalities and how a person relates to others. Some teachers attributed the types of intercultural interactions that occurred to differences in sophistication or social class. Skin colour appears to be relatively unimportant.

> *"You'll find ... a black child and a white child and all together chatting quite happily, and they're not thinking of each other as black or white. But you will find groups that are just black or just white ... but it is a matter of more your personality, your likes and dislikes and the facts that you have in common."*

> *"There are cases where there is fantastic mixing ... Really he is my buddy! ...* [name] *has never been to a township school.* [Name] *thinks he is English speaking. He is white in a black body."*
> *"So he thinks he's white?"*
> *"We think he is white ... Ja, he is whiter than everybody else. I've never thought of*

[name] as being black ... [name] just speak beautifully. He speaks better than I do ... I don't think we're racist. I think we're snobs. I think it's class – class difference ... It's not colour – it's class. ... Because I don't think of some of these children as being ... [gestures, indicating black skin colour]. *But some of them again I look at him and I think 'You look like a thug – and then I think because you are* [gestures - indicating black skin colour.] *And it is not true. It's* **not** *true! ... It's the class that hangs together. That's why these children say it's the brain that's what makes you - separates you - how much you know - isn't it?"*

"Those who are in the parallel stream ... do not mix socially outside their group ... Our experience is also that those children who are in the double-medium stream, fit in better in the sport and social functions at the school, since they have friends amongst the white learners."

["... terwyl daardie leelinge wat in die parallel stroom is ... nie regtig buite hulle klasgroep assosieer nie ... Ons belewenis is ook dat daardie kinders wat in die dubbelmedium stroom staan ook meer by sport inskakel en by sosiale funksies by die skool omdat hulle ook maats onder die wit leerlinge het."]

The literature mentions a tendency for children to choose playmates of the same race, even in multi-cultural societies such as the United Kingdom and United States (Smith, 1994:42-43). Girls in the British and American studies displayed more same-race preference. This could be due to boys spending almost two-thirds of their time in rule games, implying that during team games, racial considerations could be of less importance than when small groups of people gather.

Kelly (1994:68-73) says that it appears that much sexist harassment occurs at school and is regarded as "normal", especially in co-educational schools, where boys normally dominate physically and verbally. Consequently, the girls learn to avoid groups of boys in order to avoid being harassed by the boys' behaviour. It seems that the games boys play could take up so much space that little space is left for the activities of the girls. Positive school ground policy can "liberate children for freer play and the absence of such policy generates injustice and tension" (Kelly, 1994:70).

In line with this suggestion, and to challenge intercultural sexual and racial harassment, schools should plan to create environments which will meet the requirements of "safe schools". In such an environment, all learners can experience accommodation and they can thrive. In this way the "full potential of social learning is to be unlocked in a safe and just environment" (Kelly, 1994:72). In this way, learners can unlearn the prejudices and discrimination that legitimise victimisation.

The fact that the current study has shown that, in the Gauteng schools studied, girls tend to be more likely to mix suggests that this can make a positive contribution to bridging intercultural gulfs (see also Section 6.3.3.3(d)).

Smith also points out that a preference for same-race partners (and playmates) does not necessarily reflect prejudice as such. He does concede that limited different-race interaction in schools with a fairly equal mix of racial groups could worry those who wish to promote multicultural attitudes. Same-race preference could, however, simply be a manifestation of the consolidation of racial identity. Alternatively it could even reflect real differences in activity preference.

In line with the one teacher's sentiment about class differences as a determinant of mixing, Bot (1992:98) quotes Braun and Wieland (1989) as saying that, in Zimbabwe, a society that is very class aware has taken the place of a society that was very racially aware, and the elite is now being recruited from the upper stratum of African society.

6.7.2 Intracultural differences

Within black cultures, there is much pressure to conform to group expectations. In this regard, scholastic pressure and social interaction are discussed.

6.7.2.1 Scholastic pressure

Those learners who excel in any way are often exposed to tremendous stress to keep up their performance (see also Section 6.3.3.3(d)).

> "I can see that for the rich black kids that are in these schools, it's a major issue that they must be nearly perfect ... the very rich black kids in our school, the moment that they struggle scholastically, it's like devastating to them, because ... then they're going to give the other kids the reason to throw stones at them. It's like the poor kids are waiting for a reason to nail them: 'See you're not as smart as you thought you were!' They **cannot** handle it when they fail, or they can't pass or when they battle."

6.7.2.2   *Social interaction*

It appears that intraculturally, mixing depends on differences in social class (as mentioned in Section 6.7.1.6) and socio-economic differences, the places where the learners live, origins (South African or otherwise) and language (see also Sections 6.3.2.2 and 6.3.2.4).

"There's a lot of antagonism uh ... uh ... if you don't fit into the black group."

"As a matter of fact the black kids uhhh ... reject the other black kids that do not want to speak the black language. Uhhhm ... I've often heard that if our children go to the townships, the township kids will also mock them, or uhmmm ... put them down, or don't want to have anything to do with them, because they are in an English school. Uhhhm ... There are quite a lot of class differences, like if you are a rich, black kid, uhmm ... then you kind of keep yourself isolated from the other kids, because they immediately think you think you're better than they are. We have the problem with water sharing – that the rich people would have water, and then when the kids are friends with poorer kids, those kids' parents would come and ask for water and that would bring problems. So some of the relationships ... the parents prefer that if you are rich and you live in a township, that you stay isolated, because it brings other problems.

"You ... have children uhmm where it is felt that they are too white. You know they, they enjoy speaking English ... Their standards of living is very different – they have not lived in a township ... and then there are children – who ... black children – who will as it were ... uhmm ... almost shun those few ... They also tell me that if you come to this school and you live in [name of] township, the rest of the kids that go [to the township high school] call you a snob ... within the township they say: 'Ma'am they hardly even greet you. They say: Ag no, you, you don't want to know us ... The rest of my buddies in the township tell me OK, you want to go to school with the whites – you don't want to associate with us and we don't want to associate with you.' "

"What is interesting is that black kids that come from other African countries fit in with the white kids. They don't fit in with the black kids. They're more readily accepted. But these Rwandans ... They are clever children. They are not accepted by our black children. They are accepted by our white kids. In South Africa, there's division, and we're not keen to take you from Zambia or Angola ... I get the impression they're threatened – the average to maybe a little bit below average kid ... doesn't think much of kids coming from other African states. That's the feel I get ... there's the snob value amongst their society – it exists. Certain people think they're better than others, simply because of the language they speak."

According to Kaschula and Anthonissen (1995:36-38) and Zimbabwean learners quoted by Frederikse (1992:27), language can symbolise group-membership, indicating that when people identify with a particular group, this identification is reflected in their speech. Such

language and group identification can lead to social prejudice against other groups and lead to the "them" and "us" syndrome. People are also categorised according to their speech, hairstyle, clothing, and other observable factors as well as their educational levels. A change in language use or accent could be regarded as "snobbish" or "prestigious" and lead to old school friends commenting: "I've got nothing to say to those guys any more – they even speak differently" (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:37).

6.7.3   High percentage of failure

The following elements appear to be directly related to a high failure rate at school.

6.7.3.1   Language difficulties

Every respondent pointed out problems centred around language. These problems varied between an inability to understand either English or Afrikaans or learners competency level in a specific language. Learners' competency may not be good enough to enable them to cope scholastically (see also Sections 6.3.3.1 and 3.5.2.3(a)).

> "The initial problems which are the same problems that we have now, is that the children cannot speak English and they ... cannot follow what's being done in class."

> " ... the children cannot master the English language and therefore cannot pass ... "

> "I think the language problem is still one of the biggest problems ... They don't follow what's going on in class. I find that when someone comes from X or Y college, I think the medium there is English – but I find when they come from any of those colleges they still battle. I would say if they spend at least two to three years in A or B [primary schools] then they don't battle as much when they get here."

> "Maybe I should mention first the language competency that they do not possess. Maybe they would have achieved better in an English school."

> ["Miskien moet ek heel eeste dalk noem die taalvaardigheid waaroor hulle nie beskik nie. Hulle sal dalk in 'n Engels-medium skool beter gevaar het."]

It appears that some teachers are themselves struggling to cope with English terminology:

> "Because we are an Afrikaans-medium school ... They interrupted in English ... Some teachers that are not fluent in English, just never explained in English at all."

> ["Omdat ons 'n Afrikaans medium skool is ... Hulle het onderbreek in Engels. Party onderwysers wat nie Engels vaardig is nie, het net glad nie in Engels verduidelik nie."]

One school found that learners who cannot cope, partly due to language difficulties, simply stayed away:

> " ... when he can't cope, then we just find that he starts staying away."
>
> [" ... as hy nie kan 'cope' nie, dan tel ons nou maar op dat hy begin wegbly ... "]

In South Africa, many black parents prefer to send their children to schools where the medium of instruction is English, because they consider fluency in English to be empowering (Kaschula & Anthonissen, 1995:59; Lemmer, 1996:325). Often these learners are sufficiently fluent, according to English assessment tests administered upon enrolment, but lack the command of cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) that, according to a theory by Cummins, is required to ensure successful scholastic performance. Teachers from a wide spectrum of South African schools have endorsed this theory (Lemmer, 1996:332).

6.7.3.2 Latecoming/Absenteeism

In all the schools, latecoming presented a problem to a greater or lesser degree (see also Section 6.3.3.3(b)). The distance between the parental home and school, as well as unreliable transport, were blamed. In some instances, living far away from school was fraudulently used as an excuse.

> "Coming late was a very big problem last year ... but we clamped down on them ... We didn't accept any excuses ... The problem isn't that big any more."
>
> " ... you might find that there are a handful who are regularly late and that is a problem, because it is something foreign to our culture."
>
> " ... latecoming in the mornings. They sometimes arrive here at school at half past nine, ten o'clock. School starts at half past seven."
>
> [" ... laatkom in die oggende. Hulle kom tot partymaal halftien-tienuur hier by die skool aan. Die skool begin halfagt."]
>
> "Especially initially, I think they found it difficult to be on time for school, and they thought it was strange to see that teachers are on time for school. They – and I have spoken to them a lot – they were not used to that."
>
> ["Aan die begin veral – ek dink hulle het dit moeilik gevind om betyds by die skool te wees en dit was vir hulle snaaks om te sien dat die onderwysers betyds by die skool is. Hulle – ek het nou baie al met hulle gepraat – hulle was nie gewoond daaraan nie."]

" ... one of the biggest frustrating factors still is that they are not as watch-bound as we are."

[" ... een van die grootste frustrerende faktore op die oomblik nog, is dat hulle nie so horlosie-gebonde soos ons is nie."]

Local research by Pacheco (1996:239,243,245) indicates that learners regard it as normal to arrive as late as nine o' clock for school in the townships, with no fear of punishment for the offence of arriving late. She also found that black learners at these schools also complained that their teachers were late or did not turn up for school at all (Bot, 1992:79).

- Transport

One of the problems related to latecoming was transport, especially since many learners depended on unreliable transport to get to school. Lack of reliable transport was blamed for latecoming, lack of participation in sport and other cultural activities. All the respondents identified transport as a problem:

"You have a problem with the taxis and that ... the transport when they have to come for matches ... "

"The problem that they have is ... is ... a real problem and that's the convoys of the taxis."

"Latecoming is a problem, but this is due to transport."

"Their excuses then are always transport."
["Hulle verskonings is dan altyd vervoer"]

- Cultural factors

Unreliable transport is also blamed when learners do not come to school at all. At one school, absenteeism presented a particular problem and appeared to have an additional cultural cause.

" ... we have a very high percentage of absenteeism amongst black learners ... We find especially a big tendency amongst many of them to be absent on Fridays and Mondays ... The absentee letters that they always bring ... is that they had to go to some distant place for a funeral and first had to struggle to get transport again. It's always funerals."

[" ... ons kry 'n geweldige hoë afwesigheidspersentasie by die swart leerlinge ... Ons kry veral 'n groot tendens onder 'n groot aantal van hulle, dat hulle op Vrydae en

Maandae afwesig is ... Die afwesigheidsbriewe wat hulle altyd bring ... is dat hulle een of ander ver plek toe moes gaan vir 'n begrafnis en eers moes gesukkel het om weer vervoer te kry. Dis altyd begrafnisse."]

The cultural component of the problem voiced by the teacher above related to the frequency with which black learners have to attend funerals. It has already been mentioned that the family concept varies in black cultures to include a vast extended family (hence, many family funerals). In a township, group solidarity also demands attendance at the funerals of neighbours. Attendance at funerals cannot be cut short, but must include the service, the actual interment and refreshments at the home of the family of the deceased (see also Section 3.5.2.5).

•   Distance

Another demographic factor associated with latecoming and transport is the distance that learners have to travel every day.

> *"There are some ... who travel quite a distance every day ... "*

Distance from school was sometimes used as a convenient, but not necessarily true, excuse for coming late.

> *"The black kids that were living the furthest from us were coming on time. The black kids that were living up the road were late."*

The general feeling was that if the child stays far away from the school, participation in extra-mural activities usually has to be forfeited.

> *"Sport ... they take part, but it depends on where the child stays. If he stays in* [name of township] *and has to take a taxi home immediately, then he cannot stay for sport, so it is those that stay close to the school that are involved."*

> *["Sport ... hulle skakel in, maar dit hang maar af van die kind waar hy bly. As hy in* [naam van township] *bly en onmiddellik 'n taxi moet huis toe haal, dan kan hy nie bly vir sport nie, so dit is die klompie wat om die skool bly wat meer betrokke is."]*

Literature on the South African situation indicates that learner and parental involvement can really only occur if the school is close to the community from which it draws its learners. For this reason, Bot (1992:68-69) stresses the importance of schools' being situated in areas where they are more easily accessible to the local community.

The education system in Zimbabwe faced the same problem. Frederikse (1992:32) quotes one interviewee as saying that distance and transport make learners late for school and prevent them from taking part in sport.

6.7.3.3 Educational background: home/family situation

- **Parental expectations**

Parental expectations appear to be high and therefore there is often huge disappointment when such expectations are not realised (see also Section 6.3.1.1). Such expectations often cause tremendous stress and emotional problems for the children, as is apparent from the following statement by one teacher:

> *"Another problem is that the parent expectations are very high of their children and then they feel very disappointed, because the children cannot master the English language and therefore cannot pass ... The parents are very disappointed and then they are very harsh towards the children, and that causes emotional problems in the children ... I think the parents work very hard to get their children into these schools. They pay a lot of money and, and they've got this vision of uhhhh ... of a good education. They are really providing a good education, and then they are very disappointed."*

> *" ... the parents want to give these learners an education of a higher standard ... "*

> *[" ... die ouers graag aan hierdie kinders 'n opvoeding wil gee van 'n hoër standaard ... ")*

South African research indicates the following that while black parents value better education, the increased expectations may not always be met (Bot, 1992:79). Cleaver (1994:12) points out that many parents regard their children as extensions of themselves and dream that their children will succeed where they have failed. The literature shows that black parents may well subject their children to harsh treatment at times in their concern to toughen their children in order for the children to cope with being powerless in a victim system – this can turn into abuse if carried too far (Chinkanda, 1994:182,184).

Pinderhughes (1982, as cited in Lemmer 1996:337) suggests that black parents often enrol learners in all-English schools and encourage them to abandon the use of their mother tongue. Also they could apply exorbitant pressure on the learners to acquire the English language as quickly as possible, which in turn could create severe stress for these learners.

Much is also expected from the school. Coutts (1992:55) says: "Many parents will make great demands of teachers, as they see the school as an avenue to social advancement in a discriminatory society."

- **Housework**

The family structure may disintegrate when parents are often unavailable for their children. This leaves the children responsible for housework and sibling care, for which these children have neither the time nor the maturity. Therefore household tasks can become a stumbling block to good scholastic performance. It also appears that parents often do not understand the scholastic demands of the school (see also Section 6.3.1.1).

> *"The children are responsible for a lot of the chores, like fetching the brothers and sisters from crèche, making the supper, cleaning the house, and by the time their parents get home, they are very tired ... so the children ... they've got responsible chores. Sometimes they even have to wake up the family in the morning and see to it that they get onto the buses, so, you know, they've got a lot of work to do at home ... when it comes to the exam time and we work out their timetable – that we actually have to call the parents and say ... or tell the child to go and talk to the mom: Can I maybe only dust the house Thursdays and ... and Mondays and not like every day? Can't you help me out with the cooking? And then the parents are willing. It's like they don't really realise the pressure the children are under here, as well as looking after the household ... that the parents would actually accommodate their tough programme so that they can have more time to study, because they literally finish round about six o'clock with all the cooking, the chores, bathing brother and sister and then they're quite exhausted to start to study then."*

> *"The mothers are going out at 6 o'clock in the morning to keep the pot boiling. It seems to me that the father is very absent in the black home – terribly absent ... "*

> *" ... many of the girls ... have complained to me that they have many tasks at home. They have to look after small children. Mother and father work, arrive home late, they have to do the housework and prepare food and look after their siblings so that they really have little time to study."*

> *[" ... baie van die dogters ... het al by my gekla dat hulle baie pligte by die huis het. Hulle het klein kindertjies na wie hulle moet omsien. Ma en pa werk, kom laat by die huis, hulle moet die huiswerk behartig en die kos maak en na die boeties en sussies kyk, dat hulle werklik min tyd kry om te leer."]*

In some households little time is allocated to schoolwork. Liddell *et al.* (1994: 60) found that in larger households, little time was spent in school- or literacy-related activities. One reason could be that older children, especially the girls, are often given the responsibility of

housework (Pacheco, 1996:244). At times they are even absent from school in order to deal with the workload.

Healthy development in children depends on parents' awareness of the dangers of demanding too much of their children (Cleaver, 1994:12). Bot (1992:66) mentions various educationists who are of the opinion that parents need to be educated and informed along with their kids, as many of the parents really want to support their children, but lack the skills to do so.

- **Parental discipline**

It appears that in some cases, parental discipline amounts to verbal and possibly physical abuse, instead of following more healthy disciplinary measures.

> *" ... they want to see those same qualities in their children. But when their children don't pass, or they see their children lack in discipline or they don't study as hard as they should, they start really getting abusive ... verbally abusive, as well as, maybe ... it's physical abuse. I don't know if it was always part of their culture. But the children will come to me and say that they are scared of their parents, that the mothers especially would like to hit the children. They would ... uhh, they would have short tempers and then they lose their tempers and then hit the children. They wouldn't really like gate them or take their money or follow behaviour programmes. They would physically and verbally put the children down."*
> *"You've had the experience that they actually come to you?"*
> *"Oh yes - lots of them."*

The school staff is sometimes seen as the ultimate authority and disciplinary body. In cases where there is a complete breakdown in communication, the teaching staff is expected to mediate between parent and child.

> *"The **mother** phoned us and said my child won't listen to me. It's almost as if so many of them live only with the mother who's not really coping ... would we please deal with this child? ... we called the girl in and the mom – and they wouldn't look at each other ... And then ... the child came back, she said my mother has hidden all my clothes. She won't let me go out. Will you please tell my mother to stop this.'"*

A study by Cleaver (1994:9-11) showed that black parents wish to instil their own norms and values in their children. The mothers appeared to enclose and protect their children, while the fathers shield their children through power and control. Some fathers indicated that dominance over children counteracted a feeling of subordination in the workplace. Coutts

(1992:63) says that many parents display a remarkably severe and authoritarian view on discipline.

Cleaver (1994:9-11) found that the youth displayed an increasing tendency to defy authority and to practise anti-normative behaviour, which often left the parents feeling powerless to instil a responsibility and a desire towards learning in the child. Parents viewed teacher involvement as a possible solution to an academic inability to supervise their children's homework, and when this was not realised, it led to disappointment.

Note should be taken of a quantitative analysis of the rates of command and information in African children's language exchanges by Liddell *et al.* (1994:61). This found little evidence to suggest either a **general** pattern or a greater degree of authoritative interactions in the black rural as opposed to the black urban settings. This means that there was little evidence of an authority-based communication structure for either rural or urban children.

- **Emotional support**

Often parents do not render the necessary emotional support to their children. Speaking about personal matters appears to be particularly fraught with difficulty (see also Section 6.3.1.2).

> *"There was **no** communication. Not as much as in the white home – sorry ... And they don't want to talk to them ... they say they can't speak to their parents."*

> *"No, they tell me their parents don't listen to them ... And she dated this guy for ages and she said my father will kill me if he knows. There isn't that openness."*

Good communication depends on the parents' availability. When parents or caregivers return home from work, they are often exhausted. Consequently they are not readily available for communication and quality communication suffers.

> *... I found that the parents were very busy. A lot of the parents come home very late ... So they are not always available."*

> *" ... again it has a lot to do with the job situation of the parents where in some instances ... they're out all day and they don't have a chance to see them."*

In the case of single-parent families, the problem is compounded.

"It all depends on the structure that they have at home, whether there's a father and a mother and a support structure and the mom really tends to the emotional needs of the children. But I often find single mothers that have more than one job to keep the children in this school. Sometimes they even study and then ... they won't always sleep at home."

" ... mostly the mother. And that in itself can also have problems. I mean social problems where eventually there's a new man in a situation where he doesn't like the child ... envy and so on, you know. Some of these children have a very hard life."

There may be a lack of communication between the black family home and the school.

"I know that in some of the schools you know that it is a problem just to get those parents in ... "

"The parents are ... not very involved."

One respondent found the lack of communication particularly disturbing, especially in the case of a family crisis, when the school needs to be notified in order to render the necessary support to the learner concerned.

" ... I think that you are not always aware of how to read them emotionally – or to read how they are experiencing it. So it takes a little longer to pick up the essence of the problem. I mean sometimes for example if a white child's mother or father has died, you know virtually immediately – somebody will phone and tell you. But, that's not always the case in the black family ... It might take a day or two before you'll actually hear the child has lost a parent ... It has got to come from the family sometimes – it's slow ... "

The general unavailability of black parents for their children (mainly due to socio-economic reasons) appears to influence the emotional support learners receive greatly. The literature mentions that many parents are forced to choose between employment to ensure survival and attending to their children's emotional and intellectual needs (Ramphele, 1992:23). A study by Liddell *et al.* (1994:61) indicates that rural children interacted more often with adults than urban children did. Cleaver (1994:11) found that when questioned about need satisfaction, mothers especially mentioned physical exhaustion, possibly resulting from the physical tasks involved in child-caring and/or displaced frustration.

Long-term positive emotional engagement with caring adults is an essential aspect of sound human development. Deprivation of such experiences may lead to an increased vulnerability to the effects of adversity and to ineffective parenting (Rutter, 1989, as cited by Richter,

1994:44). Learners deprived in this way most probably require focused accommodation structures within the school situation.

Even in private schools, it was found that contact between the school and the learner's homes was fairly limited (Bot, 1992:67). She points out that among the black community there is no tradition of parent participation. More contact between home and school could foster a feeling of belonging to the school.

6.7.3.4   Educational background: The school/formal situation

Basic primary education is very important. The learners' scholastic coping skills depend on the learners' previous scholastic background.

> *"Or they haven't had the basic primary education and therefore they really battle when they come here. That first year they really battle."*

> *"If they come from the townships, they can't cope at all ... if they fail their first year, they'll do better the next year. Some of them battle uhmm ... I won't say it's more than the whites. All depends on the primary education."*

> *"The achievement in their schoolwork is to a large degree connected to their previous background. So there are children who speak English very well and are well read and therefore cope well. But there are some of them who do not have an English background, but want their teaching to be in English ... while maybe their language capability is not so good. This is naturally detrimental to their performance, since they do not always understand. But there are a number of individuals who rise above the others."*

> *["Die vordering van hulle skoolwerk is in 'n groot mate gekoppel aan hulle vorige agtergrond. So daar is kinders wat baie goed Engelssprekend en goed belese is en dus ook maklik vorder. Maar daar is van hulle wat nie Engelse agtergrond het nie, maar hulle wil hulle onderwys in Engels hê terwyl hulle ... taalvermoë dalk self nie eers so goed is nie. Wat dan natuurlik 'n nadeel is vir prestasie omdat hulle nie altyd so goed verstaan nie. Maar daar is 'n hele klomp individue wat uitstyg bo die ander ... "]*

It appears that many learners lack a culture of learning, especially with regard to adequate study methods.

> *I don't think they really have a culture of learning ... for example, they do not talk of learning – 'we learn – we read' – so they think that just by reading something over and over, a person learns ... and then it is a revelation for them to realize that they should make summaries and do revision ... and with many their attention is easily distracted ... I don't think that they are used to homework, a daily study routine, like most of our children are from Grade One."*

["Ek dink nie hulle het regtig 'n leerkultuur nie ... hulle praat byvoorbeeld nie van hulle 'leer' nie – 'we learn – we read' – so hulle dink deur slegs 'n ding oor en oor te lees, leer jy ... en dan is dit vir hulle 'n openbaring dat hulle besef maar hulle moet opsommings maak en hulle moet hersiening doen ... daar is baie wat baie aandagafleibaar is ... Ek dink nie hulle is van graad een af soos ons leerlinge gewoond aan huiswerk, 'n daaglikse studieroetine, soos wat die meeste van ons kinders is nie."]

"It really appears that a total culture of learning is missing ... They do not do their schoolwork."

["Dis werklik asof daar 'n totale leerkultuur ontbreek ... Hulle doen nie huiswerk nie."

Pacheco (1996:260) has researched the subject of a lack of a culture of learning, and came to the conclusion that learners do not know how to plan or execute a study programme. An important factor that facilitates scholastic as well as intercultural adjustment is exposure to a stimulating, advantaged and supportive educational background, preferably already from primary school level.

"Well I think you've got two differentials between black children coming from a disadvantaged educational background uhhh and black children coming from a perhaps more advantaged situation – private school and ... people living in say lower income group areas and children who had a higher standard of living ... "

" ... initially a lot of them spent another year in Grade Eight or Nine ... so a lot of them repeated and then they were fine. They were pretty average. I won't say they're fantastic, but certainly we are now seeing kids that are really very, very good academically.

6.7.4 Increase in deviant behaviour

6.7.4.1 Substance abuse

From the interviews it appears that the transitional period is difficult and that behaviour patterns have not stabilised. Substance abuse in the form of drinking alcohol, as well as taking dagga, was mentioned by some respondents.

" ... white kids ... have a problem with dope, with dagga. Our black kids have got the same problem with drink ... .they don't really have a problem with dope like they have with drink."

"Alcohol I think is used over weekends, particularly at parties and so on."

"They don't drug. That's one thing, the girls don't drug ... The boys all drink. The boys all smoke ... .and they smoke ... whatever they call it - dagga ... A lot of them will tell me it's medicinal. He smokes it for his blood pressure, he smokes it for this, he smokes it for his asthma, all sorts of wild and wonderful things ... .The girls are ... beginning to drink ... "

Generally speaking, it appears that the girls do not abuse drugs, alcohol or tobacco to the extent that the boys do. Nevertheless, one respondent mentioned that girls are starting to drink alcohol. Another respondent ascribed the fact that black girls are now beginning to smoke to the influence of Westernisation.

" ... a Westernised influence ... in that we have now even caught black girls who smoke, while before that never happened. "

[" ... 'n verwesteringsinvloed ... deurdat ons al selfs nou swart dogters gevang het wat rook, terwyl dit vroeër nooit voorgekom het nie. "]

The literature refers to a strong linear relationship between smoking and acculturation. Landrine and Klonoff (1996:4-5) mention a Latin-American study which shows that acculturated Latino youths smoked the most, bicultural Latino youths smoked less and those with strong traditional ties smoked the least, or not at all. The importance of this finding is that analyses have shown that the Latino youths not only smoked as frequently as whites did, but they smoked for the same reasons as the whites did.

6.7.4.2 Theft

Theft is a problem that every school experiences to a greater or lesser degree. Some respondents are of the opinion that the occurrence of theft has a cultural connotation, while others insist that this problem has always been present and therefore cannot be laid at the door of a particular cultural orientation. It is noticeable that all the schools have instituted strict disciplinary measures to contain the problem. These measures appear to be generally very effective (see also Section on the facilitating elements especially the disciplinary process.) Some remarks of the respondents in this regard are the following:

"Stealing does happen in the school, but that goes for all. "

"Theft increased ... In many cases, about 95% of the cases that theft could be proved, it was black learners. "

["Diefstal het toegeneem ... In baie van die gevalle, daar wil ek sê omtrent 95% van die gevalle wat bewys kon word – die diefstal – was swart leerlinge. ")

*"Terrible, terrible and I have to say it's got worse since I have had black kids in this school, since I've seen black kids ... some kids are openly – well they're known and recognized as children that have stolen ... And kids say: 'Why are they still here?' **Black** kids say why are they still here!"*

Text books are much in demand by would-be thieves due to their good resale value, since the school buys the textbooks back at the end of the year.

"But we do have a problem with stealing ... The problem ... is that at the beginning of the year the children take each other's text books, then they keep it and they sell it at the end of the year back to the school ... "

"Uhmm ... our text books get taken ... he's taken it to sell it, because a lot of them have to buy."

One school experienced the theft of school cases.

"At some stage last year we had a major problem with ... cases being stolen."

It appears that it is extremely difficult to get some learners to admit to this particular form of transgression.

"It can take up to two days in the headmaster's office ... Before they will ... We had a child who ... took a bicycle the other day ... And they literally stopped him and they got him off the bike and he still wanted to say that that child said I can ride the bike. 'I was not stealing it, I was riding it ... '."

One of the teachers' bicycles was stolen at school when it was left unlocked for a short while. During assembly, the teacher made an impassioned plea to the learners please to return his bicycle and provided very convincing reasons as to why he needed his bicycle. This resulted in the return of the bicycle, but not without a warning note attached to it:

"Attached to his bike about a week later was a note: 'Sir, if you leave your bike there, then obviously you don't want it, so please look after it.' ... It was returned! It's marvellous – it's remarkable. But the gist of the message was: if you leave it there, you obviously don't need it ... "

From the above excerpt it appears that if goods seem to be lying around "unneeded" and not looked after, that could be regarded as items looking for a new owner. The teacher interviewed also remarked that it appears that some form of "ethics" could at times determine the act of stealing at school, namely that one does not take from other black learners.

"Sometimes they say they will be returned. Things ... a bag will go missing and then they'll see it's a black kid's bag and they will put it back. Uhmm, there does seem to be some sort of ethics that you don't take from black ... with some of them, but it doesn't seem to be everywhere."

In other instances, if items are not adequately secured and are easily replaced by the owner, this is apparently taken to indicate that these items are obviously not missed.

"But ja, look if something is left lying about, somebody is going to steal it, whether they'll need it or not."

"And it's almost as if there is this bit of the haves and the have nots ... You seem to replace it quite easily, whereas my parent have told me it's an impossibility - I cannot have those Nike tackies. They cost R500. My parents can't afford that."

South African research shows that property left in the classrooms is often either vandalised or stolen by the learners (Pacheco, 1996:249-250). However, the theft and vandalism is also partly due to the community living around the school. The legacy of theft and vandalism can lead to stereotyping when black learners enter traditionally white schools. Frederikse (1992:29) quotes a Zimbabwean learner: "When anything is stolen, we high-density students are the first suspects" (here, the term "high density" refers to the townships).

Not many references can be found in the literature regarding the aspect of theft at schools. This is probably due to the contentious nature of the subject. What is important though, is that this study demonstrates that the problems surrounding this issue could be a stumbling block to harmonious multicultural accommodation. More research in this field could provide answers and help to clear up misconceptions.

6.7.4.3   Violence

Another aspect of deviant behaviour that threatens an accommodating climate at school is the use of violence to solve conflicts, especially conflicts with a racial connotation:

"We had cases that we never had before. It also resulted from racism, where ... one of the white boys was stabbed with a knife by a black boy."

["Ons het gevalle gehad wat ons nooit voorheen gehad het nie. Dit het ook maar uit rassisme voortgespruit, waar ... een van die blanke seuns met 'n mes gesteek is deur 'n swart seun."]

"We had a case where a black girl broke a white girl's nose at school ... a racist conflict took place."

["Ons het 'n geval gehad van waar ... 'n swart dogter 'n wit dogter se neus afgeslaan het by die skool ... daar het 'n rassistiese konflik plaasgevind."]

The political violence in South Africa is compounded by domestic and criminal violence, especially in poor areas (Dawes & Donald, 1994b:5). Letlaka-Rennert *et al.* (1997:237) refer to Daniels, Nicholas and Dean (1994), to Kedijang (1991) as well as Sachs (1990), all of whom mention gender-directed violence such as rape and domestic violence. According to Mokwena (1992:39), there is a growing violent and criminal youth culture which manifests itself in an escalation of youth gangs in the townships. In a study by Liddell *et al.* (1994:62), the finding that rural children fought less often than urban children correlated strongly with the fact that there was less community violence in the rural areas than their urban counterparts experienced. Rudenberg, Jansen and Fridjhon (1998:112) refer to Fraser's (1974) statement that aggression learnt through observation and modelling may be generalised into other areas of a child's life (see also Section 6.3.3.3(c)).

Although learners are not necessarily negatively affected by violence, circumstantial evidence does suggest a tendency to resort to violence as a means of conflict resolution. The accommodation of learners who behave in this manner cannot be undertaken only by the school, no matter how motivated the school is. The origin of such behaviour must be sought mostly in the condoning of violence in society and/or at home and remains a project to be undertaken by the school in collaboration with the home and South African society at large.

6.7.5   Different and diverse social values

Individuals life-worlds dictate to a large extent the values and norms that these people honour. These values might conflict with the values and norms the rest of society insists on, which in turn can lead to confusion regarding which coping skills are permissible and which values should be upheld.

"... a black child also told me last week, that I don't understand what it is to stay in a township. When you steal, you are like on top of the world. You get **recognition** *when you steal. It seems like it's a total different set of social rules. He says ... and then, when they come to our schools, we enforce a total different set of rules and we actually punish for the theft for which they get recognised in the township ... He says it confuses him ... He's also a gangster. He says when he goes home, he's like on top*

*of the world, but here he gets punished for ... being a gang member, for stealing and for being tough ... [excitedly] But he **needs** to be tough to survive where he stays! ... Which causes a lot of frustration and that comes out in anger.* "

According to Mokwena (1992:41), social deprivation has led to the acceptance of crime as a way of life in some sectors of South African society. Passive acceptance of crime can even be found among many adults who have found honest employment. Some learners are exposed to parents who not only turn a blind eye to crime, but sometimes tacitly encourage it by buying stolen goods or by pilfering at work. Also known criminals boast about their "achievements" in public.

The learners' home background does have an important role to play. According to two teacher respondents, it appears that the level of acculturation could, in some instances, be related to problematic behaviour, and that more problems are associated with acculturated learners. One respondent said:

> " *... Yet, yet these are the kids that's giving us grief this year ... in Grade Eight and Nine these are not township kids. It's almost as if the township kids have better manners ... They were a bit scared when they got here. They were a bit wide-eyed and you know bushy-tailed and prepared to do things for you – listen to you.* "

In a study on the acculturation levels of Latino youths, Landrine and Klonoff (1996:4-5) found that the children who displayed behaviour problems were not the ones from traditional homes, but the acculturated ones.

One teacher felt strongly about the influence of role models on the junior learners. The essence of what the respondent conveyed indicates support for an assimilating approach. Such an approach suggests value preferences and could reinforce a "them" and "us" divide. In turn this could detract from the quality of accommodation the school has to offer.

> " *... the present Grade Tens are somewhat of a negative group and the juniors see that but this is how they act, let's do the same ... the first learners we had ... blended more easily with our culture, because they were in the minority ... there are negative elements like in any class, and many of the juniors tend to follow the example of these negative leaders.* "
>
> [" *... die huidige graad tien groep is 'n bietjie 'n negatiewe groep en die juniortjies sien maar dis hoe hulle optree, kom ons doen dieselfde. ... die eerstes wat ons gehad het ... Hulle het makliker ... in ons kultuur ingeskakel, omdat hulle in die verre minderheid was ... daar is negatiewe elemente soos in enige klas maar, en baie van die juniortjies is geneig om hierdie negatiewe leiers nou na te volg.* "]

Learners sometimes expect extra trouble to be taken for them. In certain instances, this could indicate a degree of the adoption of a culture of entitlement.

> *" ... they expect that trouble should be taken for them ... there is a subtle unspoken demand that one encounters from their side."*
>
> *["... hulle verwag nogal dat daar moeite gemaak moet word vir hulle ... daar's so 'n subtiele ongesproke 'demand' wat 'n mens van hulle kant af kry."]*

Ramphele (1992:22) refers to individual entitlement. It is up to black students to apply themselves to their studies and utilise any available resources or support programmes to reach success. Pleading victimisation and demanding special treatment is futile, unless individuals are determined to take responsibility for their own success.

6.7.6 Inability to take responsibility for actions

It appeared that the inability of some learners to take responsibility for their actions threatens the establishing of good intercultural relations and an atmosphere of accommodation at school, especially since such behaviour concerns the discipline and the code of conduct in a school. It appears that learners often refuse to "own up" and also ignore punishment such as having to attend detention class. This can lead to despondence amongst the teaching staff. Two respondents felt particularly strongly about this aspect. One of them mentioned the following:

> *"And if they are caught in the act, then they will dispute it and say that actually this one said they should do it. They always try to excuse themselves totally ... But black learners do not admit guilt easily, not at all easily ... they argue to the end."*
>
> *["En sou hulle op heterdaad betrap geword het* [tydens die begaan van die oortreding], *dan sou hulle 'n hewige dispuut van eintlik het so een vir hulle gesê hulle moet dit doen. Hulle probeer hulself altyd verskriklik verontskuldig ... Maar ... die swart leerlinge erken nie sommer maklik nie, glad nie maklik nie ... hulle stry tot op die einde toe."]*
>
> *"They simply do not turn up for detentions ... They ignore the school's code of conduct ... We become despondent at times."*
>
> *["Hulle daag eenvoudig nie vir die detensies op nie ... Hulle ignoreer die skool se gedragskode ... Ons raak nogal by tye moedeloos."]*
>
> *" ... when a person works* [individually] *with a black learner on a problem or a trespass that occurred, a greater degree of rebelliousness can be detected from the black learner than one gets from a white learner. Yes, they ... become rebellious and do not just want to accept things."*

[" ... wanneer 'n mens met die swart leerling werk oor 'n probleem of 'n oortreding wat begaan is, is daar ... .'n groter mate van rebelsheid te bespeur as wat jy by die blanke leerling kry. Ja, hulle ... raak makliker rebels en wil nie sommer net dinge aanvaar nie."]

Kelly (1994:72) says that learners are generally in touch with what is happening amongst the group. Therefore they are more likely to "own up" if the atmosphere is trusting and involved as opposed to distrusting and authoritarian.

6.8   FACILITATING ELEMENTS: THE TEACHERS' POINT OF VIEW

The discussion below focuses on those elements that promote a sense in black Grade Nine learners that they are accommodated in and belong to the school.

6.8.1   The disciplinary process

The respondents generally felt that negative behaviour can be controlled with the correct disciplinary procedures. Good and fairly applied discipline promotes a just and therefore accommodating school environment. Respondents also emphasise personal responsibility rather than blaming the group or external factors regarding transgressions. This means, for example, that being late cannot be blamed on external factors, since with good planning it can be prevented.

> *" ... it was acceptable for a very long time, but the moment that we said sorry, we're not going to accept it any more , we – we have a no-tolerance policy at the school, which goes for black, white whoever, and we applied it to the latecoming as well – whatever your excuse, we're sorry. And I would say after about four months of applying it, we saw the results."*

> *"But you have to address it, you have to then go back to the parents ... We've got a system whereby if they're late on one day, any child that's late on one day, they have to stay for detention."*

> *"The black kids that were living up the road were late. And that is why we said - no way. You come from [name of township] and you're here at 7 o'clock? Why should you not ... why should you not see the others being punished that rock up at 7h45 in stead of 7h40? And we started punishing them. We stopped them there – we take their names ... And they do detention on the day and its come down incredibly from 60 to 10 to six to two. I think there were two late yesterday."*

"If an individual is late, he or she is punished, however. There is room for pupils to arrive late during the ten minutes allocated for Devotions."

Local research has shown that learners display a need for external discipline and order (Pacheco, 1996:237). However, since children display a preoccupation with fairness (Blatchford, 1994:29), fairness could be a prerequisite for learners to abide by disciplinary measures. Learners will even accept corporal punishment as long as the matter is dealt with fairly (Pacheco, 1996:241).

Klein (1993:119-120) points out that people tend to experience a just environment as a safe environment. Schools are made safer by the strict application of rules preventing any form of abuse, harassment or bullying. If learners experience security in their schools, it will lead to more positive interaction. Klein refers to research by Eggleston, Dunn and Anjali (1986) and Smith and Tomlinson (1989) that has shown that, if learners experience security in their schools, more positive interaction will result and consequently they will learn more. Rules should be enforced through sanctions, but should first be agreed to within the school.

If learners are given responsibilities, they appear to try harder to conform with that which is expected from them.

> *"But there is ... a still bigger adjustment when ... responsibilities are given to them. So children that have a specific task, ... that are classleaders, that are members of the SRC ... we get a stronger, bigger sense of obligation to be on time, for instance."*
>
> *["Maar daar is ... 'n al groter aanpassing wanneer ... verantwoordelikhede aan hulle toegestaan word. So kinders wat 'n spesifieke taak het, wat ... 'n klasleier is, wat 'n lid van die SRC ... kry ons 'n sterker, groter verantwoordelikheid om byvoorbeeld betyds te wees."]*

Charlton (1996:56,59) mentions that there is a trend to take note of learners' opinions by involving them in school affairs. If learners are meaningfully involved in the decision-making process, they are more likely to develop a healthy interest in school matters and understand and support the decisions and subsequent rules.

Discipline is administered by teaching responsibility for one's own actions and for taking care of one's own belongings.

> *" ... we told the children that they had to look after their own suitcases. You've got to keep it next to you, you can't leave it alone."*

"But then we instituted a system whereby never to leave your bag alone for any time and during breaks no bags are left out. You have to move before break to the next period after break, and so bags are locked in the classrooms."

" ... we have installed lockers and the child can ... lock his sport equipment or such things away safely."

[" ... het ons ... sluitkaste geïnstalleer en die kind kan ... sy sporttoerusting of só veilig ... toesluit."]

Blatchford (1994:29) believes that an approach which seeks collaboration with pupils may be an effective approach to effective supervision, because children are more likely to be committed to decisions and rules that they had a part in devising. It is also advisable to allow them responsibility for actions on the playground. It is important to determine the appropriate adult role in effective supervision.

6.8.2   Sense of belonging

Taking part in cultural, sport and social activities fosters a sense of belonging, collectiveness and cultural integration, and vice versa. The general feeling amongst the teachers interviews was that not enough learners take part in extra-mural activities. They also acknowledge that taking part in cultural activities can encourage a sense of belonging to a school. This feeling creates a positive spiral, in that a sense of belonging encourages learners to participate in extra-mural activities. Van der Merwe (1996:284-285) points out that it is only when young people feel secure in their relationships and experience a sense of belonging that they can accept responsibility for their own lives and not engage in delinquent behaviour. Belonging in this sense implies strong institutional ties with families, schools and communities and it can be strengthened by involvement in cultural activities, sport and social activities (see also Section 6.3.2.4).

6.8.2.1   Cultural activities

One teacher had the following to say about the participation of black learners in cultural activities:

"Cultural activities – our biggest Christian organisation is run by black kids ... Very committed, very enthusiastic. Quite charismatic ... Lots of singing, loud praying ... quite outspoken ... they're not half-heartedly into anything. They ... don't compromise ... They do come together to spend time together or just to sing songs, they come together, they pray in chains, they pray for each other, they give each

other teachings ... I think ... if you look at our SRC ... there are more black kids than white kids there ... "

"They love to perform. They love to sing for us at clan evenings. Our choir is virtually black ... Not every child is involved, but then, not every white child is involved."

Although different tastes in music has been shown to be a potential stumbling block to accommodation of these black learners at school, Atmore (1994:160) says that music, movement, singing and playing musical instruments is enjoyed by learners from all cultures. Therefore, a multicultural range of music is a means of learning about, developing respect for and enjoying what other cultures have to offer. Events such as festivals, special holidays and celebrations provide similar opportunities to introduce the relevance, history, purpose and content of the occasion, especially if approached from an educational perspective. According to Coutts (1992:80,82), school plays that involve a large cast can strengthen the communal ties within a school. Also, cultural evenings provide learners with the opportunity to display the more visible and spectacular aspects of their particular cultures.

6.8.2.2   Sport

Most of the teachers said that, although the majority do not participate in sport, sport is enjoyed very much by those learners who do.

"Soccer is big ... Netball is big ... Hockey!"

"Ja, they're actually quite enthusiastic ... I was involved with the softball and they're very enthusiastic ... and committed."

" ... the girls like netball very much."

[" ... die dogters hou baie van netbal."]

"Some of them are doing very well. The favourite activities are volleyball and soccer, also netball. Some do swimming and cricket. It's difficult – I won't say there's a vast majority taking part."

Coutts (1992:80) is convinced that school sport as part of the non-formal curriculum can facilitate the accommodation of the multicultural component of the school. Sport can develop positive attitudes and create social bonds in the participants. Qualities such as fair-mindedness, co-operation and perseverance can also be fostered, while inter-school leagues can broaden interracial and interschool contacts (see also Section 6.8.2.3).

It must be mentioned that although the teachers in this study agree with this view, they point out that the majority of learners are not taking part. Poor participation could be related to the distance between learners' homes and the school. A local study by Van der Merwe (1997:195) found that, although schools create many opportunities to encourage participation in sport, the learners were not much involved.

It would appear that many Zimbabwean learners also do not share the enthusiasm of traditionally white schools for school sport (Frederikse, 1992:8,29). One Zimbabwean learner attributed it to the fact that black learners come to school with the sole aim of learning, while another said sport was overdone at school. In the present study, one of the female interviewees experienced ridicule by the group for taking part in a such a babyish activity as sport. Another could not explain why black learners do not participate in sport.

The literature offers several explanations for this lack of enthusiasm, which includes the school's emphasis on sport and the types of sport offered.

According to Klein (1993:160-161), there is a perception in the United Kingdom that sport is what black learners are best at. It also appears that teachers there "disproportionately foster black pupils' enthusiasm for sport". Such an approach could be seen as patronising and racist should the pupils have to forfeit lessons to pursue sport. The South African situation differs from that in the United Kingdom, in that sport (excluding physical education) is scheduled as an extra-mural activity. It is encouraging that of the respondents who completed the questionnaire in this study, 196 of 388 responses in a multiple choice question indicated that the respondents participated in sport as an extra-mural activity (see Table 5.8 (b)).

Coutts (1992:80) might have the answer to the lack of participation in sport when he suggests that the emphasis should move from Western, Euro-centric sporting favourites such as rugby and tennis, to whatever the community as a whole might prefer.

6.8.2.3   *Social activities*

Social activities can also serve as a barometer of the degree to which a school has succeeded in creating an accommodating atmosphere. Again, most of the teachers interviewed felt that

not enough learners were involved, but they spoke positively of the atmosphere when there was intercultural participation.

> *"And I think you will find there that either some of the teenagers do their dancing in groups and then the black-white group mix, but if it's one and one we seem to find that it's a black couple or a white couple. But we've had the exceptions for example we've had our matric dance recently, you know it could be a black guy and a white girl, and it's seen as strange."*

> *"They are not prepared to come if the duration will be short. They want a long social and therefore they ask for the social to last throughout the night – they speak about a 7 to 7 ... they've got their own rhythm that they like and they gather in the courtyard, but outside the hall, but if they hear a certain tune, they rush inside and then they enjoy it tremendously."*

> *[Hulle is egter nie bereid om te kom as dit vir te kort tyd is nie. Hulle wil 'n lang sokkie hou en hulle vra dus ook vir 'n deurnagsokkie. Hulle praat van 'n '7 to 7' ... hulle het hulle eiesoortige ritme wat hulle aanstaan en hulle kuier ... by die vierkant, maar buite die saal, maar as hulle 'n sekere deuntjie hoor dan storm hulle binnetoe en dan geniet hulle dit verskriklik."]*

Coutts (1992:81-82) states that social mixing can reinforce the aims of the non-formal curriculum in that socialising can lead to more inter- as well as intracultural insights by learners.

To illustrate the point: a sense of belonging to a school fosters participation in school events. A school that experienced intercultural interaction rather negatively said the following about integration in sport and culture, emphasising the value of sport and cultural activities in cultivating a sense of belonging:

> *"There was only **one** black boy that took part in the cultural activities this year. This includes the choir, revue, play – everything ... there are very few black boys ... that take part in the winter sports ... since they prefer soccer and we do not offer soccer ... There's a couple of boys that play rugby ... then there are about ... four or five girls that play netball."*

> *["Daar was slegs **een** swart seun wat aan die kultuur deelgeneem het vanjaar. Dit sluit die koor, revue, toneel – alles – in ... aan die winter sportsoorte is daar baie min swart seuns ... wat deelneem ... want hulle verkies sokker en ons bied nie sokker aan nie ... Daar's 'n paar seuns wat rugby speel ... dan is daar so ... vier of vyf dogters wat netbal speel."]*

Although sport could be an obstacle to a sense of belonging, if this facility is appropriately handled, sport could also be a strong facilitating element, especially if learners' needs are met

(see also Section 6.8.2.2). Coutts's (1992:80) suggestion of shifting the emphasis (or at least including) to types of sport popular with black learners could be very helpful in this regard.

6.8.3   Supportive school infrastructure

It appears that it would be required of the school to fulfil a supportive role and provide an infrastructure to supplement the role of the family. This allows children a safe context within which they can develop the various facets of their personality.

> *"Some children ... their parents will drop them off at six and they will pick them up at six at night ... so they **can** do whatever in the afternoon and do their homework and so on and then go home ... Sometimes they sleep over ... one of our top music students ... she sometimes has to sleep over ... "*

> *"We've had quite a number of children ... having come in you know, years ago, already – 5 or 6 years ago – so of course to them it was an adjustment, some of them are now in matric ... but there again it was their frame of mind, whether they wanted to achieve, you know and they made use of the help ... Their frame of mind, their motivation, their determination to succeed really is extremely important. "*

Chinkanda (1994:194-196) says that the school needs to empower black learners by helping them to take control of their lives and shaping their destiny. Direct or indirect obstacles should be identified as early as possible and strategies to reduce these blocks should be instituted. Where the infrastructure of the school is lacking, all available community resources should be utilised to address the problems identified.

6.8.4   Uniform

The teacher respondents all felt that the school uniform was an element that was regarded with pride. In this sense it can be regarded as an element that provides a sense of belonging.

> *"Yes , they're very proud to wear a uniform. "*

> *"... they are very neat regarding their school uniform. They are in fact continuously busy shining their shoes in the classrooms and they all walk with toilet paper in their pockets to clean their shoes. And where a tie ... is not compulsory for our boys, many of them wear a tie ... and the parents buy school blazers at great cost, while white learners are not used to wearing blazers any longer. So there is a sort of pride in their school uniform ... To identify with a particular school appears to be important. Maybe it also makes them feel important ..."*

> *[... dat hulle baie netjies is op hulle skooldrag. Hulle sit trouens voortdurend in die klaskamers en skoene blink vryf en hulle loop almal met toiletpapier in hulle sakke*

*om hulle skoene skoon te maak. En waar 'n das ... nie by ons seuns verpligtend is
nie, dra baie van hulle uit eie keuse 'n das. En so koop die ouers ten duurste
skoolbaadjies aan, terwyl blanke leerlinge uit die gewoonte geraak het om
skoolbaadjies te dra. So wat hulle gedrag betref, is daar tog 'n soort van 'n trots op
die skooldrag ... Om te identifiseer met 'n bepaalde skool lyk nogal vir my belangrik.
Miskien laat dit hulle ook belangrik voel ... "]*

*"They've got a tremendous pride in them that we don't find **at all** with the coloured
or white, but he ... wants to wear a blazer and he wants to be neat ... "*

*["Hulle het 'n geweldige trots in hulle wat ons **hoegenaamd** nie by die kleurling,
hoegenaamd nie by die blanke kry nie, maar hy ... wil 'n kleurbaadjie dra, hy wil
netjies wees ... "]*

According to Pacheco (1996:264) learners who feel that they belong to their school, are
proud of their school. They avoid behaviour that can damage their school's good reputation.

An Zimbabwean interviewee quoted by Frederikse (1992:28) demonstrates this point very
well; he said that wearing his school uniform prevented him from pushing in or from pushing
old ladies in the bus queue.

6.9   SYNTHESIS OF TEACHER INTERVIEWS

6.9.1   Intercultural differences

- Teachers sometimes overcompensate in their efforts to accommodate black learners.

- It appears that colour blindness could result in a policy of denial that can harm good
  cultural interaction in a school.

- Teachers find the transition period difficult and are worried about the long-term
  effects of intercultural schooling on the ethos of the school.

- Learners have a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) level, which makes it difficult for
  both learners and teachers to communicate on learning content.

- Teachers find the noise level unacceptably high in the school context.

- Latecoming is a problem – reasons given include transport, the distance from the school and cultural factors.

- Racism in the form of name-calling and verbal abuse features quite prominently amongst learners.

- Intercultural social interaction during break is limited.

- It appears that black and white courtships are actively discouraged, or at least regarded as strange.

- During sport and cultural activities, intercultural division is less pronounced.

6.9.2 Intracultural differences

- Much pressure is exerted on learners to conform to group expectations.

- Those who excel in any way are often exposed to tremendous stress to keep up their performance.

- Intracultural interaction depends on differences in social class.

6.9.3 Educational background: home/family situation and school/formal situation

- The reasons given for latecoming and the lack of participation in extra-mural activities are usually related to the distance of the parental home from the school, which in turn forces learners to make use of unreliable transport.

- Parental expectations are high and cause much stress when learners try to conform.

- Parents are very disappointed when these expectations are not met.

- Learners (especially the girls) are expected to take responsibility for housework and sibling care, which leaves them with too little time to attend to their schoolwork.

- In some cases, parental discipline amounts to verbal and possibly physical abuse, instead of parents' instituting more healthy disciplinary measures.

- School staff is sometimes seen as the ultimate authority and disciplinary body, and is expected to mediate between parent and child.

- Parents often do not render the necessary emotional support to their children.

- Good communication between the family home and the school is lacking.

- The learners' scholastic coping skills depend on the learners' previous scholastic or educational background.

- There is a lack of a culture of learning amongst many learners.

- There is an increase in the use of alcohol and the smoking of tobacco and dagga, especially amongst boys. Girls are also starting to smoke and drink.

- Theft at school is perceived as a real problem, and could be due to items not being properly secured or appearing "unneeded". If an item could be easily replaced by the owners, such an item is more likely to be stolen.

- Learners do not admit easily to transgressions, although they may be caught red-handed.

- Violence is used at times to solve conflicts, especially conflicts with a racial connotation.

- Learners are often confronted with a different set of values at home from those that the school expects them to honour, which leads to confusion for learners.

- Learners are often not willing to take responsibility for their actions, for example, to turn up for detention classes.

6.9.4 Facilitating elements

- Good, constant and fairly applied procedures are an important element in controlling negative behaviour. Some teachers place a high priority on viewing transgressions as individual, rather than as group-oriented problems.

- Involvement in sport, cultural and social activities can strengthen a feeling of belonging.

- The school needs to fulfil a supportive role and provide an infrastructure to supplement the family's role.

- Learners feel very proud to wear a school uniform, and this provides a sense of belonging.

6.10   FIELD NOTES

Disclosing the realities of one's life-world to a stranger is a brave and trusting act. This realisation plus an awareness of the accompanying ethical responsibility were experienced by the researcher throughout the interviews.

First impressions of a school's atmosphere are usually formed during interaction with the administrative personnel at the reception desk. In most schools, the welcome was extremely friendly and forthcoming, but at two schools the interaction amounted to mere courtesy. In one instance, the researcher observed interaction with black parents and she detected an undertone of misunderstanding and resentment in both parties. This could have been due to a language problem which clearly complicated the communication.

The teachers were generally very co-operative and went out of their way to accommodate the researcher.

Four of the learners interviewed were particularly impressive, due to the self-assurance, enthusiasm and sense of purpose that they displayed during the interviews. The rest of the learners appeared more subdued and there was some initial display of closed body language. Still, they co-operated very well and answered the questions with forthrightness and honesty. Two learners were noticeably less fluent in English than the others, although they could still express their thoughts and feelings. These learners came from less affluent surroundings and their parents were clearly ambitious for them, since their enrolment at the particular schools was at their parents' insistence.

The researcher picked up an underlying message that learners felt caught between their fortunate status versus impostor status. Although the respondents viewed themselves as fortunate to be able to attend their schools, time and again they referred to experiences of not feeling totally accepted. Racist incidents or incidents which ignored the principle of fair play appeared to be the causal factor. Blatchford's (1994:29) comment on children's apparent preoccupation with fairness when left to their own devices is important in this context. He says that, paradoxically, cheating can only be understood in the context of a shared awareness of what is fair. It appears that the respondents are caught in a double-bind situation of wanting to be accepted at school and still wanting to retain their cultural ties.

One teacher subscribed to the policy of denial and "colour-blindness". The teachers interviewed all appeared to be dedicated educationists who displayed appreciation for the complexity of the situation and were truly concerned about the welfare of all their learners.

The interview length varied, but interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes each.

Interviewing the learners in the "natural" setting of the school meant exposure to some degree of background noise associated with the normal school day routine. Fortunately, this did not interfere with the interviews.

It was a privilege to interview the respondents and share in their experiences.

6.11   CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the interviews were analysed according to identified elements that could either prevent or promote effective accommodation in the school. The findings were discussed according to existing relevant research to ensure a literature control and to heighten the reliability of the research. Syntheses of both the findings from the learner and teacher interviews were also given.

Chapter Seven contains the summary, final conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

"Just to learn about other people's cultures is not to learn about the racism of one's own. To learn about the racism of one's own, on the other hand, is to approach other cultures objectively."

(Sivanandan 1983, quoted in Crozier, 1989:78)

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this study was to determine which educational and underlying emotional needs could arise from the cultural, socio-economic and historico-political orientation of black Grade Nine learners who attend a traditionally white school. This objective was reached, firstly, by means of a **theoretical study** and, secondly, by means of an **empirical study** of various dimensions of these learners' life-worlds. In this chapter, important findings from both research methods are synthesised and listed, and conclusions are drawn. Recommendations for future research and for improving the quality of accommodation at school are also made.

7.2 SUMMARY

7.2.1 The theoretical and literature study

The theoretical and literature study served as a foundation for the empirical study and focused on a number of areas.

In Chapter 1, the background to and actuality of the problem, the statement of the problem and the research aim were set out. The assumption that, due to different life orientations (cultural, social, economic and historico-political), black learners could experience specific educational and underlying emotional needs, was contextualised.

In Chapter 2, aspects of black learners' cultural and home situations were dealt with.

In Chapter 3, a culture-general framework was operationalised in the context of a traditionally white school. The main stumbling blocks and facilitating elements that black learners could encounter upon entering a traditionally white school were discussed according to this culture-general framework.

7.2.2   The empirical study

Chapter 4 focused on the design and methodology of the empirical research and offered an explanation of the rationale for and application of the empirical research. As this was a two-phase research design, both the quantitative and the qualitative research methods were employed. The most probable intent of a two-phase design is to triangulate or "converge" the findings (Creswell, 1994:184,189). In this study, a two-phase design was used to ensure that phenomena could be understood even better, given that the two methods are interrelated, supportive of and complementary to each other. Consequently, a multifaceted and holistic picture of learners' experience of and needs in a traditionally white school can be obtained. Eight schools in the greater Gauteng area were involved in the empirical research. A structured questionnaire was applied to black Grade Nine learners during school visits. Individual semi-structured focus interviews were also conducted with learners and teaching personnel.

In Chapter 5, the findings and interpretation of the questionnaire were discussed as the quantitative component of the research.

Chapter 6 concentrated on the interviews, as the qualitative component of the empirical research. The results were summarised in Sections 6.5 and 6.9.

7.3   FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This research has given a number of learners "voices" which enabled them to draw attention to their feelings about and needs in the school. With that the opportunity arises to help schools and educational reform movements to respond better to the needs of such learners. The most prominent findings from the quantitative and qualitative studies were confirmed by the literature study and are integrated and listed in this section.

In terms of the affirmation of the value of schooling, learners basically display the same attitude as was found in previous studies (both local and abroad). In this study, however, the researcher came to the conclusion that one of the more important issues identified as a stumbling block to school accommodation centres around racism. Other important stumbling blocks to school accommodation concern learners' feelings about school rules, the Afrikaans language and teachers. Some of the findings in this study have profound implications for the approaches and practices currently in use – not so much in terms of **what** is done, but rather of **how** it is done. Next, the research findings are presented in terms of the three dimensions that were researched.

7.3.1 The family dimension

- In the family dimension, the most prominent findings appear to be that high parental expectations put pressure on learners to perform scholastically – in many instances above their capabilities and in schools that would not necessarily have been their first choice, either because of a language problem or a particularly high academic standard.

- Many learners stay in the townships. Being on time for school demands much extra effort. Furthermore, the family support system is often inadequate in that learners (particularly girls) are burdened with too much responsibility for housework and sibling care, which leaves little time for studying. It appears that many parents are ignorant about the time demands of schoolwork, but are willing to co-operate when they are better informed.

- The data indicates that authority relationships within the family are still reasonably intact, and parents' traditional viewpoints are still respected by a large number of learners. However, there seems to be a general lack of communication between parents and children. The parent-child relationship appears to lack emotional intimacy, since few learners felt they could discuss personal matters with their parents or caregivers. Consequently, many learners do not receive the benefit of parental or other adult guidance in handling their personal problems and basic life issues.

- The mode of discipline respondents were mostly exposed to, was being talked to. The general quality of discipline may be questioned, since being shouted at and other negative methods of punishment constitute a large percentage of the disciplinary actions reported by the respondents. In the majority of cases, the disciplinarian is female, highlighting the important role that mothers or other female caregivers play as the parents or caregivers who usually carry most responsibility for childcare.

- It seems that traditional Afri-centric values are still an influential aspect in the family system. Learners appear to find themselves in the unenviable situation of being in transition. This means that they inhabit two different life-worlds, in that they are expected to be as much part of an Africa-oriented culture as they are of a Westernised culture. This leaves these learners to deal with the dilemma of a double-bind situation – an extremely difficult situation in which many learners receive neither the necessary support, recognition, nor guidance.

7.3.2 The individual dimension

- In the individual dimension it was found that learners have good self-esteem. This finding is in line with current research and thought on minority groups, but is still surprising, considering the regular exposure to either subtle or overt displays of racism at school. It appears that there are a number of protective and buffering processes which can protect the self-esteem of minority groups (Foster, 1994:236-237). However, regular exposure to racism could possibly have generated, at least to some degree, the negative self-responses regarding the scale item "I wish I could like myself more". Respondents felt marginalised and it appears that their self-esteem can easily be shaken by inconsiderate actions.

- Learners have to juggle identities between two different life-worlds in that, apart from functioning in their own culture, they also have to interpret accurately cultural rules not their own.

- Learners have unrealistically high social, scholastic and career aspirations. There are, however, indications that many struggle with their schoolwork and that they do not devote the time to their studies needed in order to achieve their goals.

- Self-esteem and encouragement by parents of learners to attend to studies, as well as an ability to confide in their parents, were positively correlated.

- There was limited evidence of identity confusion.

7.3.3 The school/cultural dimension

- Some learners prefer to socialise with out-group (white) learners rather than with in-group (black) learners.

- There appears to be some realisation of big differences between African and Western traditions.

- Indications are that wealth and scholastic excellence are attributes that are not sanctioned by the group.

- The majority of respondents are happy at school. The reasons specified for unhappiness when at school centre around interpersonal relationships and mainly concern teachers and social factors.

- Learners concede the importance of good schooling but some appear to go on simply because they feel they should, as this would give them upward mobility in life. They view their schools as good educational institutions and as providing much better quality schooling than can be found in the townships.

- When given a choice of schools, the majority would choose a school where all race groups are equally represented. A very small minority would prefer an all-black school population. It was found that the frequency of racist remarks influenced learners' preference regarding the composition of the learner population in a school. This could be interpreted as a wish genuinely to belong to and be accepted in the schools they are currently attending.

- It appeared that many respondents dislike the institutional control of the school in the form of rules that control their dress code and general freedom of behaviour. School rules are the most frequently cited factor that learners want to change about their schools. However, the need for discipline is quite well understood and there is a distinct need for externally imposed order and discipline. The majority of learners were against corporal punishment, although about a fifth of the respondents would be in favour of it. However, it is regarded as extremely important that discipline should be fair and devoid of any racial bias whatsoever.

- English is only spoken in very few of the respondents' homes. Despite this, it is still the language most popular as the medium of instruction, but a fairly high level of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) was reasonably common (see Section 1.2).

- There is extreme antipathy towards the Afrikaans language. It is viewed as undesirable, as being of limited use and as difficult to cope with. It is the third most frequently cited factor learners want to change about their schools.

- Although most respondents regard being punctual for school as important, a number still condone getting to school late. There are, however, indications that some learners think in terms of a future-oriented time perspective.

- Condoning latecoming for school and time spent on schoolwork are significantly correlated. Learners who condone latecoming appear not to be motivated to do their homework, whereas those who spend some time on their homework do not condone latecoming.

- It appears that communication based on traditional courtesy, such as loud talk, the undesirability of eye contact as a sign of respect and the extent of personal space maintained during conversations can cause cultural misunderstanding, as these issues are approached from learners' own cultural mindset(s).

- The data indicate that respondents see the interests of the group as more important than the interests of individuals to the point of sacrificing individual comfort and well-being.

- It appears that some learners could experience group pressure regarding the undesirability of individual achievement and excellence.

- Although the preferred way of conflict resolution appears to be discussion, more than a third of respondents would opt for more drastic measures, including the use of physical force. There was a strong, though not statistically significant, relationship between the ways in which trouble is handled at school and feeling happy/unhappy when at school. The manner in which trouble is handled at school and working harder at a subject learners dislike are significantly correlated. It was found that learners who would work harder at a subject they disliked would also handle trouble at school by admitting their guilt and apologising, but the converse was also strongly correlated: learners who would not work harder at a subject they dislike would also not admit guilt and apologise if they got into trouble at school.

- It appears that, in class, questions will not easily be asked spontaneously.

- Many respondents either regard females as inferior disciplinarians or are unsure about the issue. A narrow majority believe without a doubt that women can administer discipline as well as men can.

- It appears that the majority of learners are prepared to accept the blame if they cannot complete their studies or if they have done something wrong at school, according to their responses to the questionnaire. From the teacher interviews, however, it appears that learners do not easily admit to it when they have done something wrong, and could in fact go so far as to challenge the school's code of conduct by refusing to submit to being disciplined for a transgression.

- On the aspect of honesty, the majority of learners stated that they will not keep what they have picked up, but about two-fifths of the learners will either keep such an object or are uncertain whether they should do so. Although the majority maintained that they will not help classmates to "crib" during exams, it is alarming that some would be willing to provide answers. The majority will ask first before borrowing from others, but a few indicated that permission is not necessary.

- Despite extremely high academic and occupational aspirations, the time spent on schoolwork by the majority of respondents does not exceed two hours per day. It therefore appears that learners do not see any relationship between personal input and academic success. Although most respondents indicated a preparedness to work hard at a disliked subject, a substantial number of respondents are not prepared to do so or are uncertain. Almost half of the respondents prefer not to be examined to determine who should pass or fail.

- The frequency of racist insults experienced and relations between cultural groups were significantly correlated. Racism was the factor second most frequently cited by learners in terms of what they want to change about their school. The vast majority of learners indicated that racist insults occur "very often" or "sometimes", which demonstrates that this is a contentious issue. The frequency of racist insults and the medium of instruction of the schools are significantly correlated. It was found that the frequency of racist insults was higher at Afrikaans-medium schools than at English-medium schools. Of the learners who described intercultural relations at their school as "co-operate but do not mix" most experienced racist insults only "sometimes". By contrast, among those who chose the "putting up with one another" option, few never experienced racist insults or name-calling. There was limited evidence that white girls are experienced as being more relaxed about interracial contact than white boys. At the same time, there is some indication that black girls recognise the fact that white girls are also exposed to intra-cultural group pressure concerning intercultural relationships.

7.3.4 Facilitating elements

The elements of an approachable and supportive teaching staff, as well as a need for fair and equitable disciplinary measures qualified, according to the interviews, as elements that could facilitate an accommodating school environment. However, from the questionnaire a more contradictory approach emerged towards discipline and teachers, since learners rated school rules as the aspect they would most like to change at school. Teachers were rated fourth among the elements these respondents would most like to change. A possible explanation for such a contradiction could be that the learners differentiate between discipline and rules.

Discipline could be seen as effecting general order in the school, while rules could represent restrictions that control learners' time, dress code and space – in short their freedom of behaviour and movement. For this reason, rules are deeply resented. However, despite the resentment of rules, learners do value the fact that there is no breakdown of order, and, hence, discipline and rules remain important facilitating elements, provided they are fair.

The interviews indicated a feeling of goodwill between teachers and learners. The teachers were generally regarded as approachable and very supportive. However, during the interviews, strong emotions accompanied a number of references to individual teachers and incidents that were regarded as racist and demeaning. In the questionnaire, teachers who were seen as racist were unkindly mentioned and even referred to by name. This suggests that learners do not stereotype teachers as racist or unkind, but that they know that teachers have individual characteristics. The story of Mr Chips is a case in point. This illustrates that teachers have an invaluable role to play in the creation of an accommodating school environment.

7.3.5 Conclusion

From the analysis of the literature and the empirical research data, it was found that black Grade Nine learners in traditional white schools do experience specific emotional and educational problems. In the light of the above, the hypothesis of this research project can be verified, namely that black Grade Nine learners in traditionally white schools experience specific educational and underlying emotional needs.

The most important findings of the four dimensions are summarised in Table 7.1. The summary is done according to the following principles: the research findings that were supported by both research methods, namely the questionnaire and the teacher and learner interviews, are listed first. Next, the findings supported by the learner and teacher interviews are listed, followed by the findings supported by the questionnaire and teacher interviews. Those findings that were supported by only one of the research methods are also listed. Contradictions in the research findings are indicated at the end of Table 7.1.

The following key is used in the table:

Q   =   Questionnaires

L   =   Learner interview(s)

T   =   Teacher interview(s)

Combinations of these elements are set to group findings. The findings are presented in the following order: first, L/T/Q are presented; second, L/T; third, T/Q; fourth, L; fifth, Q; and finally, T.

Table 7.1 overleaf

Table 7.1:   Summary

STUMBLING BLOCKS						FACILITATING ELEMENTS	
The family dimension		The individual dimension		The school/cultural dimension			
L/T/Q	Learners communicate between two life-worlds (culturally and physically)	L/T/Q	Learners display good self-esteem. However, attacks with racist undertones affect self-concept	L/T/Q	Racism is found throughout these schools. It is the factor second most frequently cited as needing to be changed.	L/T	There is a feeling of goodwill towards other learners and staff
L/T/Q	Learners cannot discuss personal problems or dating matters with parents	L/T/Q	Learners do not spend the required time on their schoolwork to realise their ambitions	L/T/Q	Learners appear to struggle with schoolwork, especially languages	L/T	Learners are generally proud of their schools
L/T/Q	Learners feel pressurised to help with household duties	L/T/Q	Learners have high social and scholastic aspirations	L/T/Q	Stereotyping due to misinterpretation of culturally-correct communicative behaviour	L/T	Uniforms create a sense of pride and belonging
L/T	Household duties leave little time for schoolwork	L/T/Q	Learners experience control at school – require freedom of choice regarding other matters	L/T/Q	Communication appears to be approached from a cultural mindset.	L/T	Ability to achieve scholastically or in other spheres inspires positive feeling
L/T	Learners feel pressurised by parents to perform scholastically	L/T/Q	Learners feel marginalised at school	L/T/Q	Learners tend to want to solve conflict through physical force/violence	L/T	Social gatherings aid feeling of belonging
L/T	Parental expectations of learners are very high	L/T	Learners experience a double-bind situation	L/T/Q	Scholastic excellence is frowned upon by the group	L/T	Mutual acceptance based on individual characteristics and not group characteristics is regarded as a powerful facilitating element

Table 7.1 is continued overleaf

Table 7.1 (continued)

The family dimension		The individual dimension		The school/cultural dimension		Facilitating elements	
L/T	Parents choose the school, leaving learners to cope with demanding and difficult scholastic situations and very high standards	T/Q	Learners find it problematic to see a relationship between good marks/ achievement and input	L/T/Q	Afrikaans is undesirable, of limited use and difficult to cope with (language – 3rd factor learners want to change)	L	Teachers are generally considered approachable and supportive
		L	There is some evidence of identity confusion	L/T/Q	Latecoming elicited various responses: • some demanded special treatment/leniency • some felt school should be grateful learners turn up at all • some showed growing acceptance of rules that govern latecoming • some levelled criticism against peers who come late • some revealed a future-oriented time perspective	L	The need for discipline is quite well understood
				L/T	There is a realisation of big differences between African and Western traditions	L	Learners experience a need for externally imposed order and discipline
				L/T	• Learners feel marginalised • They feel belittled and devalued due to stereotyping and/or verbal and/or physical abuse	L	Discipline must be fair, devoid of racial bias. Feedback through rewards is important

Table 7.1 is continued overleaf

Table 7.1 (continued)

The family dimension		The individual dimension		The school/cultural dimension		Facilitating elements	
				L/T	• Group pressure promote anti-social behaviour amongst learners • Group pressure allows little individual freedom	L	Good intercultural working relationships are important
				L/T	Individual wealth is frowned upon by the group	Q	Learners prefer multicultural schools
				L/T	Alcohol, tobacco and dagga most frequently abused substances		
				T/Q	Female teachers not regarded as disciplinarians		
				L	Learners require more understanding, empathy, cultural awareness and sensitivity within intercultural context		
				L	White girls more relaxed about interracial interaction than white boys		
				L	Some learners socialise with the out-group (white) rather than the in-group (black)		
				L	White learners are also exposed to intra-cultural group pressure concerning intercultural relationships		

Table 7.1 (continued)

The family dimension		The individual dimension		The school/cultural dimension		Facilitating elements	
				L	The media could promote anti-social behaviour amongst learners		
				L	Taking part in athletics is scorned by the group		
				Q	Teachers are the factor 4th most cited as needing to be changed		
				T	Learners experience problems with study methods		
CONTRADICTIONS IN THE FINDINGS							
L	• Learners concede a need for externally imposed order and discipline BUT						
Q	• School rules is the first important factor in the order of importance that learners cite as a factor they would like to change about their school. Also, this is the fourth most important factor cited as causing unhappiness when learners are at school.						
L	• Teachers are regarded as approachable and supportive BUT						
Q	• Teachers are cited as the fourth most important factor learners would like to change about their school. Also, teachers are cited as the most important factor causing unhappiness at school						
Q	• Participation in sport was indicated as the most popular extra-mural activity BUT						
T	• There is limited participation in sport activity						
Q	• Learners say they would accept blame for something done wrong in school or if they cannot complete their studies BUT						
T	• Learners do not admit easily to transgressions and challenge the code of conduct if they are punished						
Q	• Learners display high occupational aspirations BUT						
T	• Learners are not prepared to spend much time on schoolwork.						

7.3.6 Implications of the study

In a multicultural school system, the challenge for teachers is to meet the needs of learners from pre-industrial, modern and post-modern environments and different cultural, socio-economic and historico-political backgrounds. This will prepare learners for life in a world where they will meet, live and work with fellow citizens from diverse backgrounds. It is imperative that teachers should possess the necessary interpersonal and professional skills to negotiate complex situations that might arise in the school.

The research findings suggest that racism is a central issue and therefore a core stumbling block to good accommodation at school. The ideology of crude racism in South Africa has been buried along with the past. Nevertheless, it appears to be reincarnated and flourishing in many subtle, and some not so subtle, guises within South African society, and consequently in South African schools. Racism is an ideology that assigns a higher value to one group's rights compared to the value assigned to other groups' or individuals' rights. No human being should experience his/her worth as a person only in relation to being a member of a white, black or brown group, but this appears to be an important problem for many learners at school.

As with any complicated issue, there is no simple solution. Being knowledgeable about other cultures can only solve part of the problem, as this results only in tolerance. Tolerance in itself is insufficient, in that it indicates mere endurance of and not respect for other cultures. The solution involves changes of attitude toward, rather than only the acquisition of knowledge about, other cultures. Also, multiculturalism should not be treated as a series of isolated experiences. Instead, it should form part of the curriculum, and teacher training should incorporate multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills as part of the teachers' course. In the light of the findings of this study, this means that rather than being regarded as an appendix to traditionally white schools, black learners and their cultures should be regarded as an integral part of these schools. There is therefore a serious need for the application of an approach that would counteract racism in schools.

Gillborn (1995:120) advocates anti-racism as such an approach, in that it does not downplay the important aspects of cultural diversity, but rather aims to combat racism. Gillborn (1995:80,172,175) refers to Troyna and Hatcher (1992) as saying that any racist

incident is about the misuse of power. Such transgressions or attacks may be perpetrated by white learners against black learners, or vice versa. Consequently, by no means can white learners be singled out as the only ones who are capable of "committing" racism. Gillborn warns, however, that by adopting a doctrinaire approach of "symbolic" or "moral" anti-racism, the legitimacy of an anti-racism approach may be undermined. (Symbolic or moral anti-racism is described as an extreme and reductionist form of anti-racism. This approach assumes the factors of race and racism to be dominant in the experiences of black and white learners, with the former cast as the victims and the latter as the aggressors.) Rather, the answer lies in a commitment to equality, which translates into a genuine concern for the rights of all learners as individuals, as they go about their daily school routine in the classroom and playground. Where anti-racism is taken seriously, perpetrators should be dealt with according to the merits of the situation without resorting to "automatically" pointing out a culprit.

Therefore, effective school accommodation does not imply the assimilation of one culture by another. Instead, the basis for accommodation at school – as in society as a whole – lies in the **recognition** of and **respect** for the **rights** of the **individual**, as opposed to the **rights** of any **cultural or race group**.

7.3.7 Limitations of the study

Although this study used a two-phase design, the design was limited to the method, results and discussion sections. Creswell (1994:186) discusses a similar study. The original intention behind using a two-phase design in this study was to triangulate research findings. However, this mixing of methods could have been broadened to include an examination of different and overlapping facets, or to use the methods sequentially to find contradictions and new perspectives, as suggested by Creswell (1994:189).

The validity and reliability of the investigation depends on the validity and reliability of the instrument used. The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire designed by the researcher. It met the criterion of internal validity. The questionnaire was designed on the basis of a thorough review of relevant literature and was compiled with the assistance of experts and authorities in this field. The questionnaire's compilation was discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

The researcher does not attempt to extrapolate from this study to all Grade Nine learners in traditionally white schools. However, on the basis of the data obtained from these respondents, as well as the researcher's experience as educational advisor and the information gleaned from the literature study, it would appear feasible to propose that the findings may be valid for a broader group than only these particular respondents.

7.4   RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings of this study and the important role that society, schools and families can play to improve the quality of accommodation at schools, a number of recommendations are set out below. These guidelines can help to work towards the goal of improved accommodation.

7.4.1   Society

As schools do not exist in isolation, they reflect the state of society to a large extent. In order then for schools to become truly accommodating and value the rights of the individual, society should also work at change.

7.4.2   School

Because learners construct their identities to a large extent in the context provided by the school, it is of great importance to pay attention to their feelings about school. An accommodating school environment means a fostering, supportive and comfortable environment, where learners feel valued for the individuals they are. Such an environment takes into account possible cultural dilemmas and the fact that some learners could find themselves in a double-bind situation.

Only an approach involving change on all levels of schooling – a whole-school approach – can transform schools from mere portals of knowledge into institutions which provide quality accommodation for all learners. The following guidelines have been identified:

7.4.2.1 Sensitive management style

Any process of change in schools hinges on personal interaction between colleagues, as well as between teachers and learners. Therefore, the practice of a sensitive management style, as opposed to a dogmatic leadership style, especially with regard to the introduction of an anti-racism approach, is particularly important in effecting successful transformation. The management structure of schools should encourage and be supportive of initiatives involving change and should only intervene strategically when really necessary.

7.4.2.2 General staff development and training

The development and training of staff regarding the school's policy on dealing with racism is very important. What has proved to be effective abroad is the establishment of core groups of school staff within schools (Gillborn, 1995:180). Such groups have the task of establishing what the adoption of a particular approach, such as anti-racism, might mean for a specific school, since the needs of various schools manifest themselves differently. The ultimate aim would be to recruit the support of the whole staff (including the administrative staff) to become involved in a whole-school approach to change.

7.4.2.3 Guidelines for teaching staff

Certain research findings can serve as guidelines to develop better accommodation strategies at school. These are the following:

- Learners should, first and foremost, be treated as individuals, and not as representatives of a particular culture or group of people.

- It is vital that any disciplinary measures should not favour anybody, but that they should be applied fairly and consistently. However, the rationale of rules that are seen as unaccommodating should be discussed with groups representing all learners, and not only those in leadership positions. Learners should be given the opportunity to become involved in the drawing up of the code of conduct. Rules and values decided on should regularly be reflected on, evaluated and possibly reviewed. Cultural determinants and an Afri-centric world-view should be considered.

- As Limited English Proficiency (LEP) presents a severe and extensive problem, this phenomenon should be accommodated to the best of the school's ability within the confines of the means at the school's disposal. The establishment of bridging classes should be considered where there are none. Access to existing classes should be facilitated.

  At enrolment, the implications of choosing a particular medium of instruction should be set out clearly for learners, and they should know that they have a choice in schools.

7.4.2.4 Guidelines for learners

- All learners should be made aware that they have a right to a physically and mentally "safe" school environment where any form of racial harassment towards learners of any creed or colour will not be tolerated. However, should such incidents occur, learners should feel free to "voice" their experiences and have the assurance that school staff will deal with the matter in a fair and equitable manner.

- Discipline should be fair.

- The school should encourage learners to ask questions and a critical approach towards society as a whole, and taken-for-granted assumptions in particular. Such an approach is needed to challenge obsolete ideologies and should, as a by-product, encourage learners to ask questions spontaneously in class. The dangerous idea that all whites are racists and all black people are victims should be challenged (Gillborn, 1995:179).

- It is important for learners not to experience the norms upheld as those of the school as unattainable due to an experience of themselves as "different". Norms should display a distinctly multicultural character, or at least accommodate learners of various cultures and creeds.

- In the stratified society of South Africa, it has to be remembered that for some students, entering traditionally white schools is like entering foreign terrain. The only way to enable all learners to enjoy equal opportunities at school is not to

overlook their cultural context. Therefore, all learners should be given an opportunity to study other cultures, religions and languages. Acquiring knowledge breaks down ignorance and fosters tolerance, understanding and sensitivity towards other cultural groups, as well as an understanding of the interdependence of nations in a global village. However, such an approach may never culminate in patronising or condescending behaviour. It must be remembered that this approach is insufficient to effect good intercultural relationships by itself and is only effective as part of a whole-school and especially a general societal approach.

7.4.2.5   Counselling groups

Learners receive very confusing messages from society. Schooling should create an opportunity for them to verbalise their concerns and fears about a range of family and societal problems. Establishing peer counselling groups involving educational psychologists can fulfil this need. The reality of the various cultural and ethnic groupings within society can be explored in this way and learners can be helped to "negotiate meanings to the complex and divided society that we live in and to understand the influences and constraints on their lives" (Bennett, Sohal & Wale, 1995:148). It is particularly important to help learners to understand who they are and to help them make sense of their lives. Issues such as racism, harassment, violence, equality, media messages regarding body image, as well as images of masculinity and femininity are all topics that might prove to be particularly troublesome and therefore could require group counselling.

7.4.2.6   Life-skills training

In addition, it is also important that learners receive general life skills training in order to empower them to manage their own lives and make informed decisions. This is especially important considering that they could experience the stress of having to cope with a double-bind situation characteristic of a transitional phase.

7.4.2.7   Study skills

During the research it was found that many learners lack effective study skills. They also need to allocate more time for and generally be more dedicated to their studies. Study skills could possibly be incorporated as part of the life skills training.

7.4.2.8   Parental guidance

The teaching of parenting skills could help parents to provide more optimally supportive home environments for their children. Also it should sensitise parents to the demands of the school. The parent community should also be involved in and consulted about school matters.

7.5   FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research could focus on:

- the presence of various types of violence in multicultural schools and its effect on intercultural interaction within schools;

- the role of gender differences in challenging racism at secondary school level;

- the role of the school and family in encouraging or impeding the formulation of collective or individual identities;

- learners' differentiation between school rules and discipline; and

- the design of parental guidance programmes aimed at the family in transition.

7.6   SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Truly accommodating schools further the psychological health and mental hygiene of their total learner population. This requires teaching values, attitudes and life-skills required for coping with the demands of the twenty-first century and should result in healthy, happy, confident and capable South African citizens.

All learners should be treated fairly and equitably, regardless of race, gender or culture.

We still have to proceed from racial relationships to human relationships. Maybe then most learners will indicate "no" as the appropriate response to the questionnaire item "I wish I could like myself more".

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:

QUESTIONNAIRE

SCHOOL AND CULTURAL SURVEY

Aim:

The aim of this questionnaire is to get a better understanding of your views about yourself, your school and your life circumstances.

> The information obtained from every questionnaire will be kept secret. Your name need not appear on the questionnaire, so we can never know who completed which questionnaire.

> In most cases you are only expected to **circle** a number in the block of your choice.

> Please answer all questions honestly.

> Please do not skip or leave out answers to any questions.

Example:

How many brothers do you have? (Mark only one option)

I have:

(a)	One	1
(b)	Two	(2)
(c)	Three	3
(d)	Four or more	4
(e)	No brothers	5

If you have 2 brothers, you will circle the **2** in the block opposite *Two*

So remember, only circle the number in the block of your choice or write your answer clearly in the space provided.

SCHOOL AND CULTURAL SURVEY

	FOR OFFICE USE

1 Respondent number   V1 [ ][ ][ ] 1-3

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

2 Your age:

(a)	13 years	1
(b)	14 years	2
(c)	15 years	3
(d)	16 years	4
(e)	17 years	5
(f)	18 years and older	6

V2 [ ] 4

3 Your gender? (Mark only one option)

Boy	1
Girl	2

V3 [ ] 5

4 Is this your first year in grade nine? (Mark only one option)

Yes	1
No	2

V4 [ ] 6

5 Which extra-mural activity(ies) do you participate in at school?

(a)	Debating	1	V5	7
(b)	Sport	2	V6	8
(c)	Choir	3	V7	9
(d)	Chess	4	V8	10
(e)	Drama	5	V9	11
(f)	Religious/church organizations	6	V10	12
(g)	Service organizations (e.g. Landservice)	7	V11	13
(h)	Hiking group/nature group	8	V12	14
(i)	I do not participate in any	9	V13	15
(j)	Other (specify):		V14	16-17

....

6 How often do you attend religious or traditional services?
(Mark only one option)

V15 [ ] 18

(a)	Regularly (once a week)	1
(b)	Often (once or twice a month)	2
(c)	Seldom (only on special occasions)	3
(d)	Never	4

7   What language do you mostly speak at home?   V16 [ ] 19-20

(a)   Southern Sotho | 1
(b)   Tswana | 2
(c)   Northern Sotho | 3
(d)   Swazi | 4
(e)   Ndebele | 5
(f)   Afrikaans | 6
(g)   Xhosa | 7
(h)   Zulu | 8
(i)   Tsonga | 9
(j)   Venda | 10
(k)   English | 11
(l)   Other (specify): ....

8   What job does your father do? (If you don't know, just write "I don't know")   V17 [ ] 21-22

....

9   What is your father's highest qualification? (Mark only one option)   V18 [ ] 23

(a)   Grade 7 (Standard 5) and lower | 1
(b)   Grade 10 (Standard 8) | 2
(c)   Grade 12 (Matric) | 3
(d)   Grade 12 (Matric) plus diploma | 4
(e)   Grade 12 (Matric) plus degree | 5
(f)   I don't know my father | 6
(g)   I don't know | 7

10   What job does your mother do? (if you don't know, just write "I don't know)   V19 [ ] 24-25

....

11   What is your mother's highest qualification? (Mark only one option)   V20 [ ] 26

(a)   Grade 7 (Standard 5) and lower | 1
(b)   Grade 10 (Standard 8) | 2
(c)   Grade 12 (Matric) | 3
(d)   Grade 12 (Matric) plus diploma | 4
(e)   Grade 12 (Matric) plus degree | 5
(f)   I don't know my mother | 6
(g)   I don't know | 7

12 Who takes care of you now? (You may mark more than one option)

(a)	Both my parents	1	V21	27
(b)	My mother alone	2	V22	28
(c)	My father alone	3	V23	29
(d)	My mother and stepfather	4	V24	30
(e)	My father and stepmother	5	V25	31
(f)	My sister or brother	6	V26	32
(g)	My grandmother	7	V27	33
(h)	My grandfather	8	V28	34
(i)	Another relative or relatives	9	V29	35
(j)	Other people (specify):		V30	36-37

....

13 Have you ever been treated by a: (Mark both options)

		Yes	No		
(a)	Medical doctor?	1	2	V31	38
(b)	Traditional healer (e.g. herbalist, sangoma)?	1	2	V32	39

14 How many people live with you in your home (don't count yourself, visitors or any domestic workers? (Mark only one option)   V33   40

(a)	Two to four people	1
(b)	Five to six people	2
(c)	Seven or more people	3

15 Do you or your family/caregivers read newspapers at home? (Mark only one option)   V34   41

Yes	1
No	2

16 How many bedrooms are there in your home without counting the livingroom or study? (Mark only one option)   V35   42

(a)	One	1
(b)	Two	2
(c)	Three	3
(d)	Four	4
(e)	Five	5
(f)	More than five	6

17 In your home, do you have? (Mark them all)

		Yes	No		
(a)	Running water (water from taps)	1	2	V36	43
(b)	Electric lights	1	2	V37	44
(c)	A geyser	1	2	V38	45
(d)	A fridge	1	2	V39	46

18 Where is your home situated? (Mark only one option)   V40   47

(a) A suburb in Pretoria   1
(b) A township outside Pretoria   2
(c) A farm or small-holding outside Pretoria   3
(d) Other (specify): ....

19 Write down the name of the suburb or area where you live: V41   48-49

....

INDIVIDUAL DIMENSION

20 What is the highest level of education you would like to get?   V42   50
(Mark only one option)

(a) Grade 9 (Standard 7)   1
(b) Grade 10 (Standard 8)   2
(c) Grade 11 (Standard 9)   3
(d) Grade 12 (Standard 10)   4
(e) A post-school diploma and/or certificate   5
(f) A degree   6
(g) A degree and a diploma or certificiate   7

21 Given your present life circumstances, do you feel that you will be   V43   51
able to get the education you indicated in the previous question?
(Mark only one option)

Yes	1
No	2

22 Who or what will mostly be to blame if you do not reach the level of   V44   52
education that you would like to reach? (Mark only one option)

(a) Myself   1
(b) My close family   2
(c) Classmates   3
(d) Society   4
(e) Teachers   5
(f) Lack of school facilities (books, classroom equipment, study space)   6
(g) Lack of money   7
(h) Education department   8

23 What job would you like to do when you have finished your studies? V45 [ ] 53-54
    (Mark only one option)

    (a) Doctor — 1
    (b) Lawyer — 2
    (c) Teacher — 3
    (d) Politician — 4
    (e) Professional sportsman — 5
    (f) Farmer — 6
    (g) Nurse — 7
    (h) Church leader — 8
    (i) Policeman — 9
    (j) Soldier — 10
    (k) Self-employed — 11
    (l) Other (specify): ....

    ....

24 Thinking of how you feel now, say if you agree (yes) or
    disagree (no) with the following statements: (Mark all
    the options)

	Yes	Uncer-tain	No			
(a) In general I am happy with myself	1	2	3	V46	[ ]	55
(b) At times I think that I am no good at all	1	2	3	V47	[ ]	56
(c) I feel that I have some good in me	1	2	3	V48	[ ]	57
(d) I am able to do things as well as any other young person	1	2	3	V49	[ ]	58
(e) I feel I do not have much to be proud of	1	2	3	V50	[ ]	59
(f) Sometimes I feel useless	1	2	3	V51	[ ]	60
(g) I am just as valuable as any other young person	1	2	3	V52	[ ]	61
(h) I wish I could like myself more	1	2	3	V53	[ ]	62
(i) On the whole I think that I am a failure	1	2	3	V54	[ ]	63
(j) I feel good about myself	1	2	3	V55	[ ]	64

25 How upset do you feel when anyone laughs at you for something V56 [ ] 65
    that you have done wrong? (Mark only one option)

    (a) Very upset — 1
    (b) A little upset — 2
    (c) Not at all upset — 3

26 How many of your close friends are members of another race group? V57 ☐ 66
(Mark only one option)

(a) None `1`
(b) One `2`
(c) Two `3`
(d) More than two `4`

27 If you could choose today, would you rather go to a school that has? V58 ☐ 67
(Mark only one option)

(a) Only black learners `1`
(b) 50% black learners and 50% learners from other race groups `2`
(c) 80% black learners and 20% learners from other race groups `3`
(d) All race groups equally represented `4`

28 When at school, most of the time I feel: (Mark only one option) V59 ☐ 68

(a) Happy `1`
(b) Unhappy `2`

29 If you chose "unhappy" in question 28, what makes you feel so unhappy
when you are at school? (You may mark more than one option)

(a) Social factors (classmates, friends) `1` V60 ☐ 69
(b) Too little discipline `2` V61 ☐ 70
(c) Too much discipline `3` V62 ☐ 71
(d) Schoolwork `4` V63 ☐ 72
(e) Teachers `5` V64 ☐ 73
(f) Lack of facilities (books, desks, classrooms) `6` V65 ☐ 74
(g) Other (specify): .... V66 ☐ 75-76

....

30 Any person who picks up something valuable on the school grounds has V67 ☐ 77
the right to keep it for him- or herself: (Mark only one option)

(a) Agree `1`
(b) Uncertain `2`
(c) Disagree `3`

31 My schoolmarks make me feel: (Mark only one option) V68 ☐ 78

(a) Very happy `1`
(b) Satisfied `2`
(c) Disappointed `3`
(d) Unconcerned `4`

32 It is more important to get my household duties done than it is to get my schoolwork done: (Mark only one option)   **V69** □ 79

    (a) Agree | 1 |
    (b) Uncertain | 2 |
    (c) Disagree | 3 |

33 How much time do you spend at home on average per day doing schoolwork? (Mark only one option)   **V70** □ 80

    (a) No time | 1 |
    (b) One hour | 2 |
    (c) Two hours | 3 |
    (d) Three hours | 4 |
    (e) More than three hours | 5 |

FAMILY DIMENSION

34 On schooldays, do you normally have breakfast at home? (Mark only one option) | Yes | 1 | **V71** □ 81
                                               | No | 2 |

35 How are you normally disciplined? (Mark only one option)   **V72** □□ 82-83

    (a) My parent/caregiver stays calm and talks to me | 1 |
    (b) I am shouted at | 2 |
    (c) I get a hiding | 3 |
    (d) My parent/caregiver brings in another adult member to settle the matter | 4 |
    (e) I am scolded | 5 |
    (f) I am ignored | 6 |
    (g) I am grounded | 7 |
    (h) I am never disciplined | 8 |
    (i) Other (specify): ....

....

36 What is the gender of the person who usually disciplines you? (Mark only one option)   **V73** □ 84

    (a) Male | 1 |
    (b) Female | 2 |

37 **Generally** I know better than my parents/caregivers: (Mark only one option) | Yes | 1 | **V74** □ 85
                                               | No | 2 |

38 If you chose "yes" in question 37, why do you feel like that?   V75   ☐ 86
    (Mark only one option)
    (a) I am better educated | 1 |
    (b) I know more about life | 2 |
    (c) I am cleverer | 3 |
    (d) They're oldfashioned | 4 |
    (e) Other (specify): ....

39 My parents/caregivers scold me for my mistakes more than   V76   ☐ 87
    I deserve: (Mark only one option)

    | Yes | 1 |
    | No | 2 |

40 Do your parents/caregivers encourage you to do your homework? V77   ☐ 88
    (Mark only one option)

    | Yes | 1 |
    | No | 2 |

41 There are circumstances at home that make it very difficult for me   V78   ☐ 89
    to study (e.g. lack of study space, noise, household duties):
    (Mark only one option)
    (a) Not at all | 1 |
    (b) Sometimes | 2 |
    (c) Usually | 3 |
    (d) Everyday | 4 |

42 I can usually discuss my personal problems with my parents/   V79   ☐ 90
    caregivers: (Mark only one option)

    | Yes | 1 |
    | No | 2 |

43 When my parents/caregivers attend a schoolfunction at which I am   V80   ☐ 91
    also present, I feel: (Mark only one option)
    (a) Happy that they attend | 1 |
    (b) Embarrassed | 2 |
    (c) Don't mind if they come | 3 |
    (d) Feel unhappy that they came | 4 |

44 Do you believe in the spirits of your forefathers? (Mark only   V81   ☐ 92
    one option)

    | Yes | 1 |
    | No | 2 |

45 I have respect for the traditional viewpoint of my parent(s)/
    caregiver(s): (Mark only one option)

Yes	1
No	2

V82 ☐ 93

SCHOOL DIMENSION

School atmosphere

46 It is OK for a learner to regularly arrive at school after the bell has
    gone: (Mark only one option)

Yes	1
No	2

V83 ☐ 94

47 If learners talk loudly to one another in the corridors between classes,
    one could say that: (Mark only one option)
    (a) It is a sign of bad manners | 1 |
    (b) It is a sign of openness | 2 |
    (c) It prevents gossiping | 3 |
    (d) It is to be expected | 4 |
    (e) It is a sign of an ill-disciplined school | 5 |

V84 ☐ 95

48 When a learner speaks to a teacher, it is a sign of respect not to look
    the teacher in the eye: (Mark only one option)
    (a) Agree | 1 |
    (b) Uncertain | 2 |
    (c) Disagree | 3 |

V85 ☐ 96

49 When talking to somebody, learners should generally stand closer
    than arms length to that person: (Mark only one option)

Yes	1
No	2

V86 ☐ 97

50 If learners strongly disagree with school authorities about a matter, to
    prove their point, they may: (You may mark more than one option)
    (a) Discuss the matter with the school authority | 1 | V87 ☐ 98
    (b) Not come to school | 2 | V88 ☐ 99
    (c) Take part in a protest action | 3 | V89 ☐ 100
    (d) Other actions - please specify. You may give more than one example: V90 ☐ 101-102

    ....

    ....

51 If learners need something, it is OK for them to borrow if from other learners without asking them first: (Mark only one option)

Yes	1
No	2

V91   □ 103

52 With regard to relations amongst cultural groups, learners at my school: (Mark only one option):

(a) Put up with one another | 1 |
(b) Co-operate, but do not mix | 2 |
(c) Are hostile to one another | 3 |
(d) Remain cross/unfriendly | 4 |

V92   □ 104

53 How often do racist insults (eg name-calling) occur at your school? (Mark only one option)

(a) Never | 1 |
(b) Sometimes | 2 |
(c) Very often | 3 |

V93   □ 105

In the classroom

54 In a classroom, a learner should: (Mark only one option)

(a) Never ask questions | 1 |
(b) Only ask questions if the work is not understood | 2 |
(c) Only answer questions when asked | 3 |
(d) Ask questions whenever he/she feels like it | 4 |

V94   □ 106

55 If the class is already full and more learners were to join in, would you be happy to share a single desk, even if it is inconvenient to you? (Mark only one option)

Yes	1
No	2

V95   □ 107

56 When I do extremely well at school, I usually: (You may mark more than one option)

(a) Tell my parents | 1 | V96   □ 108
(b) Tell my caregivers | 2 | V97   □ 109
(c) Tell my friends | 3 | V98   □ 110
(e) Tell my relatives (that are not caregivers) | 4 | V99   □ 111
(f) Keep quiet about it | 5 | V100   □ 112

57 One has to work hard at a subject one dislikes in order to get a good
    mark: (Mark only one option)

(a) Agree	1
(b) Uncertain	2
(c) Disagree	3

    V101 ☐113

58 In what language would you prefer to be taught? ....

    ....

    V102 ☐☐114-115

59 The language teachers use to explain schoolwork is often difficult
    to understand: (Mark only one option)

Yes	1
No	2

    V103 ☐116

60 I feel that my teachers mostly understand what I am saying:
    (Mark only one option)

Yes	1
No	2

    V104 ☐117

61 How easy do you find it to: (Mark every option)

	Very easy	Easy	Diffi-cult	Very difficult		
(a) Speak English	1	2	3	4	V105	☐118
(b) Read English	1	2	3	4	V106	☐119
(c) Write English	1	2	3	4	V107	☐120

    Assessment

62 If learners do not know the answer to an exam question, their
    classmates should provide them with the answer:
    (Mark only one option)

Yes	1
No	2

    V108 ☐121

63 Do you think it is good that pupils should write exams to determine
    who should pass or fail? (Mark only one option)

Yes	1
No	2

    V109 ☐122

    School discipline

64 If a learner does something wrong and gets into trouble at school with
    the teachers, he/she should: (Mark only one option)

(a) Admit it and apologize	1
(b) Deny he/she had anything to do with it	2
(c) Admit it, but blame somebody or something else for talking him/her into it	3

    V110 ☐123

(c) Talk about it to try and find a solution	3
(d) Turn one's back on the other person and walk away	4
(e) Give up	5

68 Corporal punishment should be reintroduced in schools:
    (Mark only one option)

(a) Agree	1
(b) Uncertain	2
(c) Disagree	3

    V114 ☐127

57 One has to work hard at a subject one dislikes in order to get a good mark: (Mark only one option)

(a) Agree   1   V101   ☐ 113

(b) Uncertain   2

(c) Disagree   3

58 In what language would you prefer to be taught? .... V102 ☐☐ 114-115

....

59 The language teachers use to explain schoolwork is often difficult to understand: (Mark only one option)   V103 ☐ 116

| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |

60 I feel that my teachers mostly understand what I am saying: (Mark only one option)   V104 ☐ 117

| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |

61 How easy do you find it to: (Mark every option)

	Very easy	Easy	Diffi-cult	Very difficult		
(a) Speak English	1	2	3	4	V105	☐ 118
(b) Read English	1	2	3	4	V106	☐ 119
(c) Write English	1	2	3	4	V107	☐ 120

Assessment

62 If learners do not know the answer to an exam question, their classmates should provide them with the answer: (Mark only one option)   V108 ☐ 121

| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |

63 Do you think it is good that pupils should write exams to determine who should pass or fail? (Mark only one option)   V109 ☐ 122

| Yes | 1 |
| No | 2 |

School discipline

64 If a learner does something wrong and gets into trouble at school with the teachers, he/she should: (Mark only one option)   V110 ☐ 123

(a) Admit it and apologize   1

(b) Deny he/she had anything to do with it   2

(c) Admit it, but blame somebody or something else for talking him/her into it   3

65 If somebody makes me cross for any reason whatsoever, it is OK for me to   V111   ☐ 124
    hit that person: (Mark only one option)
    (a) Agree   1
    (b) Uncertain   2
    (c) Disagree   3

66 Female teachers can't discipline learners as well as male teachers can:
    (Mark only one option)   V112   ☐ 125
    (a) Agree   1
    (b) Uncertain   2
    (c) Disagree   3

67 The best way to solve an argument is to: (Mark only one option)   V113   ☐ 126
    (a) Physically enforce one's opinion on another   1
    (b) Argue with the person   2
    (c) Talk about it to try and find a solution   3
    (d) Turn one's back on the other person and walk away   4
    (e) Give up   5

68 Corporal punishment should be reintroduced in schools: V114   ☐ 127
    (Mark only one option)
    (a) Agree   1
    (b) Uncertain   2
    (c) Disagree   3

69 If you could, what would you change about your school to make you like it
    more? ....   V115   ☐☐ 128-129

    ....   V116   ☐☐ 130-131

    ....   V117   ☐☐ 132-133

    ....   V118   ☐☐ 134-135

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX B:

INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

INTRODUCTION

1.   What the research is about and why it is done.

2.   The purpose of the interview session, namely to get a better understanding of the learners' feelings about the school, what they like and dislike about the school.

3.   No names will be recorded, so the identities of the respondents will be dealt with confidentially. Only one independent fellow coder who is not in any way connected to the school will have access to the tapes, after which the tapes will be erased.

4.   It is important to say what you think. Do not think that it might be out of line. There are no right or wrong answers, only your opinions.

QUESTIONS PUT TO THE *LEARNERS AND *TEACHERS READ AS FOLLOWS:

*LEARNERS:

- When you first came to this high school, what were your general expectations of this school?

- How do you feel about your school now? Especially regarding:
     language;
     discipline (uniform / latecoming / noise);
     teachers.

- How do you feel about being with your fellow black learners compared to being with your fellow white learners?

- Do you take part in cultural/sporting activities?

- Do you feel that you belong in this school?

- What would you change about your school and why, to make you like it more?

*TEACHERS:

- When black learners first came to this school, were there any initial adjustment problems?

- How are they coping scholastically?

- Can they speak to their parents about their personal problems – is there adequate communication between parent(s) and child?

- Do you find that the learners from the different cultural groups mix socially?

- Do they take part in sport and cultural activities at school?

- Are there any adjustment problems still evident?

First a pilot study was done in order to refine the methodology of the data gathering process. Also, it provided the researcher with experience in this method of data gathering (Krefting, 1991:220; Burns & Grove, 1987:57).

APPENDIX C:

SAMPLE EXCERPTS FROM

THE SEMI-STRUCTURED FOCUS INTERVIEWS

TAKEN FROM INTERVIEWS WITH

FIVE DIFFERENT RESPONDENTS

SAMPLE EXCERPTS FROM
THE SEMI-STRUCTURED FOCUS INTERVIEWS
TAKEN FROM INTERVIEWS WITH
FIVE DIFFERENT RESPONDENTS

SAMPLE ONE: TEACHER

I: So amongst the blacks, do you also find division?

T: A little yes – a little.

I: And it is classwise – shall I say in the sense of level ...

T: Class distinction?

I: That's right, ja.

T: Yes – there's the snob value amongst their society – it exists. Certain people think they're better than others, simply because of the language they speak.

I: Oh, OK.

T: I've got that from Xhosa. I've got ... the Xhosas think they're smarter. Maybe because the state president is, I don't know ... . [laughs].

I: OK. I see what you mean.

T: Then they say to me, the Xhosas: "Oh, but that's typical, that's Xhosa."

I: Oh, they say that's typical!

T: Ja – "That's typical – you can expect that of the Xhosas!"

I: OK, they say that about themselves?

T: Yes.

I: Interesting.

T: I always try and teach them we must laugh at our **own** idiosyncrasies. We must laugh over our own odd things that we do and we must be able to laugh at each other, but in a nice way. So I think I have ... I think I have them on my side, so I ... but I don't often talk about those things. This has happened now and it sort of got into that ... you know what I mean?

I: Ja, but it's a very sensitive issue all round, but it is very interesting. OK. Do they take part ...

T: I also think – sorry that I interrupt you ...

I: No, that's fine ...

T: They also tell me that if you come to this school and you live in [name of township], the rest of the kids that go to [the township high school] call you a snob.

I: OK ...

T: So you already a couple of steps ahead of the child who goes to the township school.

I: Yes.

T: And obviously, if you go to Y or Z [private schools] then you're even, you know, a cut above the children who are coming to the government so-called model C, ex-model C, type schools. So within their **own** – also the kids living in the suburbs – I don't find much animosity, between the suburbs and the township – but **within** the township they say: "Ma'am they hardly even greet you. They say : 'Ag no, you ... you ... you don't want to know us.'"

I: Yes.

T: The kids in the township – now I'm getting off the point, but it's typical of me ...

I: No, that's very interesting.

T: The kids in the township tell me that the suburbs are boring. And we've had interesting exchanges with people – a guy – from Germany, that actually lived with people from [name of township] – with a family – shared a bed – outside toilet, bath in the middle of the whatever room – Kitchen – where they can pour hot water in – uhm, and he obviously found it quite an adjustment and eventually that was home and it was actually more of a buy living in [name of township] than living here with one of his friends in the suburb – he's a white guy obviously. But the black kids tell me that they'll far rather live in townships. They, they, they worry about the crime. They worry about the, the taxi wars and things like that, and rape and what have you. I think it's a common occurrence, **but** it's terribly boring behind our six feet walls, and nobody speaks to anybody in the suburbs.

I: Uhuh. Ja.

T: But, I don't feel almost he lives in the suburbs – he's more important than me – I live in the township. I don't get that vibe.

I: Uhuh.

T: But I do get the vibe I come to this **school,** from the township. The rest of my buddies in the township tell me OK you want to go to school with the whites – you don't want to associate with us and we don't want to associate with you. That's the feeling I get – the feedback I get.

I: And how do they get on with their parents? Can they talk to them?

T: No, they tell me their parents don't listen to them.

I: Mmm.

T: In guidance, when we talk about dating – and we talk about, well obviously we talk about S-E-X a lot, and we talk about Aids, and the spread of Aids, especially after Mr Mbeki spoke on the radio – this was a great opening again for me just to [resounding clap of the hands] plug it for ten minutes. I tell them I'm just plugging it for ten minutes. And then we'll go onto something else, because you're so sick of it. I get the impression – (...)

T: Yes, of course ...

T: ... from a lot of the black girls that "Hey, catch a wake-up, we're doing it"

I: Mmm, Ja ... Mmm ... Ja.

T: I get the ... they're very open about it. I got a ... I've one class in Grade 11 that's predominantly black, with two white boys in the class. And the girls said to me, on Thursday – get awake ... you know, just wake up, we're doing it ... No, don't pretend that we're not gonna have sex – we're not gonna wait for marriage and so on.

I: Mmm. Mm.

T: So ... . uhmmm. Obviously. Then we just push on and on and on.

I: That's right.

T: It's all I can do – push.

I: And for prevention and ...

T: Ja, and say we can channel more energy into something else [laughs] we find they have all that energy left over that – maybe you know maybe you can get another interest, but I get that more openness from them.

I: But the parents – they cannot discuss this with the parents?

T: Speak to them ... No.

I: No?

T: Right. I know that one girl ... [...] – she said ... she dated behind her father's back, totally behind her father's back. And I use to warn her and say it's dangerous and you know, you can go missing and where does your daddy know, he doesn't know the truth, but I would never go and squeal on a child, I mean I can't do that, they take me into their confidence. And she dated this guy for ages and she said my father will kill me if he knows. There isn't that openness. We had a case of a girl who had a ... her mom took her extensions out of her hair ... you know these braids ...

I: Yes.

T: And so she wouldn't come to school. The **mother** phoned us and said my child won't listen to me. It's almost as if so many of them live only with the mother who's not really coping. The mothers are going out at 6 o'clock in the morning to keep the pot boiling. It seems to me that the father is very absent in the black home – terribly absent ... And would we please deal with this child? And Mrs [name] and I, she's the Grade Eight's form teacher – we called the girl in and the mom – and they wouldn't look at each other – and we acted as the two lawyers [laughs] it

was amazing. And then the mother phoned again – no, the child came back, she said my mother has hidden all my clothes. She won't let me go out. Will you please tell my mother to stop this. There was **no** communication. Not as much as in the white home – sorry.

SAMPLE TWO: TEACHER

I: I realise that some of the questions might touch on sensitive issues. Please be at ease in the knowledge that all the answers will be treated as confidential and that your identity will not be made known.

T.   Yes, I understand.

I: When black pupils first came to this school, were there any initial adjustment problems?

T.   Yes. The initial problems which are the same problems that we have now, is that the children cannot speak English and they cannot understand what's really uhhh ... ... they cannot follow what's being done in class. Another problem is that the parent expectations are very high of their children and then they feel very disappointed, because the children cannot master the English language and therefore cannot pass. Or they haven't had the basic primary education and therefore they really battle when they come here. That first year they really battle. The parents are very disappointed and then they are very harsh towards the children, and that causes emotional problems in the children. That's a problem that I encounter.

I: Yes. In other words you say that it's mostly the parents' expectations that worries them?

T: Yes, yes, because I think the parents work very hard to get their children into these schools. They pay a lot of money and, and they've got this vision of uhhhh ... of a good education. They are really providing a good education, and then they are very disappointed. I also think ... that the parents who can afford to stay in these areas had to persevere in the previous regime and they know that it takes a lot of guts and hard work to get where you were ... they are, and they want to see those same qualities in their children. But when their children don't pass, or they see their children lack in discipline or they don't study as hard as they should, they start really getting abusive.

I: Would you say uhh ... when you say abusive what do you mean?

T: Yes, verbally abusive, as well as, maybe just in my frame of mind, its physical abuse. I don't know if it was always part of their culture. But the children will come to me and say that they are scared of their parents, that the mothers especially would like to hit the children. They would ... uhh, they would have short tempers and then they lose their tempers and then hit the children. They wouldn't really like gate them or take their money away or follow behaviour programmes. They would physically and verbally put the children down.

I: You've had the experience that they actually come to you?

T: Oh yes – lots of them.

I: Do you find that they can actually speak about their personal problems to their parents?

T: Yes ... oh, to their parents? Uhhh ... some of them can, but initially I found that the parents were very busy. A lot of the parents come home very late. The children are responsible for a lot of the chores, like fetching the brothers and sisters from crèche, making the supper, cleaning the house, and by the time their parents get home, they are

very tired. So they're not always available. It all depends on the structure that they have at home, whether there's a father and a mother and a support structure and the mom really tends to the emotional needs of the children. But I often find single mothers that have more than one job to keep the children in this school. Sometimes they even study and then ... they won't always sleep at home, so the children are very ... they've got responsible chores. Sometimes they even have to wake up the family in the morning and see to it that they get onto the buses, so, you know, they've got a lot of work to do at home.

I: It's very interesting. Uhmmm ... , so basically then its the English, and then the expectations that the parents have, and how the parents react towards them if they don't fulfil those expectations and that the children are bogged down by chores?

T: Mmmmm ... ja ... to such an extent that it often – when it comes to the exam time and we work out their timetable – that we actually have to call the parents and say ... or tell the child to go and talk to the mom: Can I maybe only dust the house Thursdays and ... and Mondays and not like every day? Can't you help me out with the cooking? And then the parents are willing. It's like they don't really realise the pressure the children are under here, as well as looking after the household.

I: Yes, they cannot cope.

T: Yes, that the parents would actually accommodate their tough programme so that they can have more time to study, because they literally finish round about six o' clock with all the cooking, the chores, bathing brother and sister and then they're quite exhausted to start to study then.

I: Can I ask, how are they coping scholastically?

T: I'm not sure if there ... on that specific topic, if there's a major difference between black and white. But I would say that it depends on the primary school they come from ... If they come from [name of primary school], [name of another primary school], [name of third primary school], they cope the same. If they come from the townships, they don't cope at all and I see that it often takes ... if they fail their first year, they'll do better the next year. Some of them battle uhmmm ... I won't say its more than the whites. All depends on the primary education. I also ... what is a problem to me is that one cannot refer them really to special education any more when they don't have the potential and they get stuck into the system, their self-images go down. They have to sit here until ...

I: OK. Do you find that the different cultures mix socially?

T: Uhhhm ... . not the majority. As a matter of fact the black kids uhhh ... reject the other black kids that do not want to speak the black language. Uhhhm ... . I've often heard that if our children go to the townships, the township kids will also mock them, or uhmmmm ... put them down, or don't want to have anything to do with them, because they are in an English school. Uhhhm ... . There are quite a lot of class differences, like if you are a rich, black kid, uhmm ... then you kind of keep yourself isolated from the other kids, because they immediately think you think you're better than they are. We have the problem with water sharing – that the rich people would have water, and then when the kids are friends with poorer kids, those kids' parents would come and ask for water and that would bring

problems. So some of the relationships ... the ... the parents prefer that if you are rich and you live in a township, that you stay isolated, because it brings other problems. I'm talking about isolated cases. I'm talking about four cases. I can see that for the rich black kids that are in these schools, it's a major issue that they must be nearly perfect ... that ... what I want to say is the very rich black kids in our school, the moment that they struggle scholastically, it's like devastating to them, because they ... then they're going to give the other kids the reason to throw stones at them. It's like the poor kids are waiting for a reason to nail them: "See you're not as smart as you thought you were!" They **cannot** handle it when they fail, or they can't pass or when they battle.

I: So they absolutely have the pressure on them to perform.

T: Yes, ja.

I: So they cannot let their sides down?

T: No, ...no. There's a lot of antagonism uh ... uh ... if you don't fit into the black group. A ... a black child also told me last week, that I don't understand what it is to stay in a township. When you steal, you are like on top of the world. You get **recognition** when you steal. It seems like it's a total different set of social rules. He says ... and then, when they come to our schools, we enforce a total different set of rules and we actually punish for the theft for which they get recognised in the township.

I: Mm, mm.

T: He says it confuses him.

I: Mm, mm.

T: He's also a gangster. He says when he goes home, he's like on top of the world, but here he gets punished for ...

I: For what he's done?

T: Yes. For being a gang member, for stealing and for being tough.

I: Mm. So it's quite a different ...

T: [excitedly] But he **needs** to be tough to survive where he stays!

SAMPLE THREE: LEARNER

I: OK ... Right ... now, with regard to the discipline in the school – how do you find that?

L: No, it's OK., but I don't like the part when you, when you're late.

I: Mmm.

L: It's like, it's not my fault if I'm late. Could be my sister's or something.

I: Mmm.

L: Ja, so I don't like the part where you come late to school and you have to stay after school so ...

I: Mmm. That's when it's discipline?

L: Ja, that's discipline.

I: So that's bad. Do you feel that it must be there, or do you feel it's too strict?

I: No, it's OK if it's there. But it's just that I don't like it. Like everybody doesn't like discipline.

I: Mmm. That's true. Uniform?

L: Ja, I love this uniform. I just don't like the winter. It's horrible, the socks, I mean ...

I: So you would like some changes made?

L: Ja, but the socks are OK for like when it's cold, but they're not OK like when you have to pull them up every time.

I: So maybe you'd like to switch over to something else?

L: Ja.

I: OK. like?

L: Uhh ... maybe smaller socks or something.

I: OK ... Hairstyles?

L: They're OK.

I: Do they allow enough variety in hairstyles?

L: Ja, ja they do. It's a very good school.

I: So there's no problem, they don't clamp down on you too much for that.

L: Ja, but they told this other girl to take out her braids.

I: Uhum. So braids they don't allow?

L: Some of them.

I: Ja.

L: She, she had colourful ones.

I: OK, but if it's just plain braids, will they allow that?

L: The other teacher told this other girl to take them out, and they were very neat. She

had to take them out.

I: Were they coloured braids or ... ?

L: No, it was just plain black.

I: So braids they don't want?

L: Mmm.

I: OK. Would you prefer them to allow that?

L: Ja, I would.

I: Mmm.

L: 'Cause like everybody has them – every school.

SAMPLE FOUR: LEARNER

I: Uhh, now, sport and cultural activities, do you ... ?

L: No, I don't do those, 'cause I go home early.

I: Go home early?

L: I just usually study.

I: Ja, do you live far away? I mean, do you live quite far away?

L: It's not very far. It only takes like fifteen minutes to get there.

I: Oh really?

L: Ja, it's not very far.

I: OK. Uhhh ... Teachers generally ... How do you feel about the teachers in the school?

L: Most of the teachers I like a lot, but there are some other teachers, you know. Every now and then they put something racially towards you, you know or they call you some ... .. they have some racial thing, just like they still have this apartheid thing going on – they have a thing against black people. Which I think is very unfair. You should leave it at home. If you've got a racial thing, you should leave it at home, because its your place to teach us, not to tell us about what you feel.

I: Mmmm ... .so there, there's still ... some teachers are still racist?

L: Yes.

I: In their attitude?

L: Yes.

T: At times?

L: At times.

I: Yes ...

L: You feel, that that should stay at home. Their place here is to teach, and not to bring that with them ...

I: Mmm.

L: They should be neutral when they're here.

I: Now were coming to racism, and racist remarks and all that. You say you find that **some** of the teachers are like that. How about the general school – the feeling here?

L: Like I said, some of the teachers I like quite a lot. They are very friendly towards you and they try as much as they can to help you, to welcome you and all that – so, I'm quite happy.

I: Ja, but now the children – the other fellow white students, learners, racism, racist remarks, do you find that? Do you find they accept you? Or mix with them socially?

L: Socially I do mix with some of them. Not all of them, because as I say, there are some of them who are still caught up with the apartheid thing. They still think they

should be top priority and we should take the back seat, which is quite unfair.

I: Mmm. What ... what do you see as the solution for that?

L: [long silence] I don't know. I just think they should realise you know, that that everybody's equal ... so they must not expect things to be done for them and to be done by us for them. They should actually do the things themselves, because we all need each other eventually at the end.

I: Mmm.

L: So I don't know. If ever you can't , if ever you, if ever you're still a racist, try to pretend at least, to be nice to one, you know. Don't actually show your feelings.

I: Mmm ... .uhh ... pretending that would be ... would help as well?

L: If, if, if you're forced to.

I: Yes.

L: Yes.

I: At least just to co-operate, that's basically what you're saying?

L: Yes.

I: Whilst you're in a situation where you have to be together.

L: Uh-hum.

SAMPLE FIVE: LEARNER

I: Now, what, when you do well, you know, the group, the black group, how do they feel when, when somebody does well in a group. Say for instance academically, scholastically?

L: They're very jealous.

I: Is that so?

L: Yes, they're jealous. I mean, they're **very** jealous. They'll start gossiping about you, you know. If you get high marks, and the teacher comments on you, they like look at you. OK, she got high marks, we'll see what she does next time! And next time if you get low marks, they say: "Ha, she thought she was clever!", you know and stuff like that, that happens. And in fact so if you get high marks, you gotta make sure you **stay** there! Yes. So you gotta study hard and make sure you stay on top, because once you go down [bitter laugh], that's when they gonna step on you.

I: Ja.

L: They're gonna say: "Ah, she thought she was clever. Did you see what she got for maths?" And stuff like that, yeah, it's like that.

I: And so ... if you do well? How would you handle that? Would you tell them?

L: If you do well, you keep quiet [bitter laugh]. It's just you and the teacher that knows. If you do well, you just say, if they ask you: "How did you write?" You say: "Oh it was good!"

I: Mmm.

L: That's all you have to say.

I: Ja.

L: You don't go say: "I did the best, you know I got this and this!" [shouts it out].

I: Ja.

L: No, no. You don't do that. You just nod your head and carry on with life [laughs heartily].

I: Mmm. Mmm.

L: That's, that's how it is.

I: Ja, makes it quite hard.

L: Yes, and, and when you are commented by the teacher – oh, that's hard! We don't want teachers commenting, because once she makes this comment about you, then you've gotto make sure that comment sticks to you, yes. If she says: "Oh, she's well behaved in her class", then you gotta make sure you behave every **day**, 'cause if, if you, then if you do something **wrong**, they'll say: "Ah, isn't that little Miss uhhh, Miss Behaviour", then they start giving you, then they say: "Oh I thought, I thought she was the most behaving girl in the class!" and you get things like that.

I: So it's not being accepted in the group that, is that worrying for a black person?

L: Yes, yes, it's very worrying.

I: Ja, so you've gotto behave so that the group will accept you?

L: Yes, you have to do what **they** do, what **they** like.

I: Mmm.

L: So you have to do what they do and what they like. And like **they** do. If they, if they, if they say, OK, tomorrow we're not coming to school, tomorrow you **don't** come to school!

I: Yes.

L: If you come to school then that means OK, you don't agree with them, so you're not in the group any more.

I: Mmm. Mmm.

L: And so it's like that.

I: Ja, ostracised?

L: Yeah [giggles].

I: Pushed aside?

L: Yes, yes. Then they're gonna say: "Oh, did you see, she thought she was better. She came to school." They say: "Oh but we said we're not coming to school" and it's like that. So you start getting all these remarks.

I: And then, if somebody is wealthy, from a wealthy family, how does that affect the group?

L: Ah, well, if, if someone is wealthy, then you don't, you don't talk about your wealthiness. You don't.

I: Mmm.

L: 'Cause once you, you start talking about wealthy and all, they're gonna say: "We don't wanna play with you, 'cause you're rich. We're not rich and you keep bragging about your richness, I mean what do you expect us to do? No, no you better go play with the rich kids, that's where you belong." It's like that. So when you're wealthy, you just have to keep it quiet and just, you know, bond with them and say whatever they say [laughs]. Say: "Oh, you know, you know at home we haven't got money." So, if you're wealthy, you just have to go: "Oh, I know that situation!" [laughs].

I: Ja, ja, play it by their rules.

L: Ja, play it by their rules. You don't have to say: "Oh at home, oh no, we've always got money". No.

I: OK, now your ... uhm friends, do you ... if you listen to some of them, uhh do they have problems with their parents, talking to their parents about personal problems?

L: Yes, they do, **very** much. Uhh, it's very difficult for black parents to talk to their children, like sit down with them – OK – talk about such, such a situation like having a boyfriend, uhhh ... doing whatever. It, it's actually in our culture, the only time you must have a boyfriend is when you're twenty one.

I: Uhum.

L: **Then** you start dating. And it's very difficult with us [giggles], because when you're like sixteen and all then you have to get in the group say: "Oh girl, you must have a boyfriend, you're old enough", and stuff like that.

I: Mmm, ja.

L: And when you have to talk to your parents, and then they get angry, and ... it starts being an argument, now. It's not a talk anymore. So it's very difficult to cope with that situation.

I: Would you.. it sounds to me as if the parents believe something else..

L: And ...

I: ... and the younger group have got ... .

L: Exactly, exactly! [sounds very pleased]

I: ... another set of rules.

L: It's like that! OK, we, they were taught differently than us. We were taught OK if you maybe turning, becoming a teenager, then your hormones start acting.

I: Yes.

L: And, OK, you know, they don't see it that way. The only time you should have a boyfriend, is when you're twenty one, and that's final. It's like that [laughs].

I: Yes. And still they stick to that?

L: They still stick to that. Uhh, I think I think they need to be taught that OK this is the stage where the hormones start acting, and this is the stage where this has to happen. No, I think they need to be taught like that, because right now, I mean, like **me** right now, I can't go to my dad and say: "Dad I've got a boyfriend and I'm going out tonight." Uhuh. [laughs]. Then you're actually like looking me like he wants to kill me or something. But it's difficult to talk to your parents, especially for our black kids. It's difficult to talk to your parents about boyfriends and girlfriends and stuff like that. They think now you're **young,** I mean, you're **seventeen,** you're young, you're not suppose to have a boyfriend! And it works the other way round. We, we think OK, now fifteen, now I can start dating, you know!

APPENDIX D:

TABLES

Table D1: Comparison between the frequency of racist insults (V93) and the language medium of the school (no variable)

Frequency of insults		Language medium of schools		
		English	Afrikaans	Total
Never	f	8	10	18
	%	3.8	8.2	5.4
Sometimes	f	127	46	173
	%	60.5	37.7	52.1
Very often	f	75	66	141
	%	35.7	54.1	42.5
Total	f	210	122	332
	%	100	100	100

Table D2: Comparison between the frequency of racist insults (V93) and type of school preferred (V58)

	Type of school preferred							
	80% black/ only black		50/50% black/other		All race groups equal		Total	
Frequency of racist insults	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Never	0	0.0	4	7.6	14	5.5	18	5.4
Sometimes	4	19.0	23	43.4	146	56.8	173	52.3
Very often	17	81.0	26	49.1	97	37.7	140	42.3
Total	21	100	53	100	257	100	331	100

Table D3: Comparison between keeping picked-up goods (V67) and the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

Keeping picked-up goods		The nature of intercultural relations at school				Total
		Put up with one another	Co-operate but don't mix	Hostile to one another	Remain cross or unfriendly	
Agree	f	26	25	5	11	67
	%	17.7	19.1	22.7	35.5	20.2
Uncertain	f	27	33	3	3	66
	%	18.4	25.2	13.6	9.7	19.9
Disagree	f	94	73	14	17	198
	%	63.9	55.7	63.6	54.8	59.8
Total	f	147	131	22	31	331
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D4: Comparison between keeping picked-up goods (V67) and feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

Keeping picked-up goods		Feeling happy/unhappy when at school		Total
		Happy	Unhappy	
Agree	f	43	24	67
	%	17.1	30.0	20.2
Uncertain	f	51	15	66
	%	20.3	18.8	19.9
Disagree	f	157	41	198
	%	62.6	51.2	59.8
Total	f	251	80	331
	%	100	100	100

Table D5:   Comparison between keeping picked-up goods (V67) and the desired educational level (V42)

Keeping picked-up goods		At most Grade 12	Diploma and/or certificate	Degree	Degree and diploma or certificate	Total
Agree	f	2	4	7	54	67
	%	9.1	25.0	13.7	22.3	20.2
Uncertain	f	5	3	14	44	66
	%	22.7	18.8	27.5	18.2	19.9
Disagree	f	15	9	30	144	198
	%	68.2	56.3	58.8	59.5	59.8
Total	f	22	16	51	242	331
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D6: Comparison between keeping picked-up goods (V67) and job aspirations (V45)

Keeping picked-up goods		Job aspirations								Total
		Doctor	Lawyer	Professional Sportsman	Self-employed	Engineer	Chartered accountant	Unsure	Other	
Agree	f	11	8	5	9	3	9	2	20	**67**
	%	16.4	21.1	45.5	45	10.7	20	20	17.9	**20.2**
Uncertain	f	17	8	2	3	3	5	4	24	**66**
	%	25.4	21.2	18.2	15	10.7	11.1	40	21.4	**19.9**
Disagree	f	39	22	4	8	22	31	4	68	**198**
	%	58.2	57.9	36.4	40	78.6	68.9	40	60.7	**59.8**
Total	f	67	38	11	20	**28**	45	10	112	**331**
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table D7: Comparison between keeping picked-up goods (V67) and time spent on schoolwork (V70)

Keeping picked-up goods		Time spent on schoolwork					Total
		No time	One hour	Two hours	Three hours	More than three hours	
Agree	f	6	27	20	5	9	67
	%	33.3	21.4	25.0	10.0	15.8	20.2
Uncertain	f	3	22	18	8	15	66
	%	16.7	17.5	22.5	16.0	26.3	19.9
Disagree	f	9	77	42	37	33	198
	%	50.0	61.1	52.5	74.0	57.9	59.8
Total	f	18	126	80	50	57	331
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table D8: Comparison between keeping picked-up goods (V67) and working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

Keeping picked-up goods		Work hard at a subject the learner dislikes			
		Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Total
Agree	f	41	14	12	67
	%	18.3	20.3	31.16	20.2
Uncertain	f	41	20	5	66
	%	18.3	29.0	13.2	19.9
Disagree	f	142	35	21	198
	%	63.4	50.7	55.3	59.8
Total	f	224	69	38	331
	%	100	100	100	100

Table D9: Comparison between condoning latecoming for school (V83) and the location of the home (V40)

Condoning latecoming for school		The location of the home			
		Suburb	Township	Other	Total
Yes	f	39	40	3	82
	%	22.4	28.4	21.4	24.9
No	f	135	101	11	247
	%	77.6	71.6	78.6	75.1
Total	f	174	141	14	329
	%	100	100	100	100

Table D10:   Comparison between condoning latecoming for school (V83) and feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

Condoning latecoming for school		Feeling happy/unhappy when at school		
		Happy	Unhappy	Total
Yes	f	55	27	82
	%	21.8	33.8	24.7
No	f	197	53	250
	%	78.2	66.3	75.3
Total	f	252	80	332
	%	100	100	100

Table D11:   Comparison between condoning latecoming for school (V83) and the desired educational level (V42)

Condoning latecoming for school		Desired educational level				
		At most Grade 12	Diploma and/or certificate	Degree	Degree and diploma or certificate	Total
Yes	f	5	5	15	57	82
	%	22.7	31.3	28.8	23.6	24.7
No	f	17	11	37	185	250
	%	77.3	68.8	71.2	76.4	75.3
Total	f	22	16	52	242	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D12: Comparison between condoning latecoming for school (V83) and job aspirations (V45)

Condoning latecoming for school		Doctor	Lawyer	Professional sportsman	Self-employed	Engineer	Chartered accountant	Unsure	Other	Total
										Job aspirations
Yes	f	11	12	3	9	3	9	1	34	82
	%	16.4	31.6	27.3	45.0	10.7	20.0	10.0	30.1	24.7
No	f	56	26	8	11	25	36	9	79	250
	%	83.6	68.4	72.7	55.0	89.3	80.0	90.0	69.9	75.3
Total	f	67	38	11	20	28	45	10	113	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table D13: Comparison between condoning latecoming for school (V83) and working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

Condoning latecoming for school		Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Total
			Working hard at a subject the learner dislikes		
Yes	f	51	16	15	82
	%	22.8	23.2	39.5	24.8
No	f	173	53	23	249
	%	77.2	76.8	60.5	75.2
Total	f	224	69	38	331
	%	100	100	100	100

Table D14: Comparison between condoning loud talk (V84) and the location of the home (V40)

Loud talk		Location of the home			
		Suburbs	Township	Other	Total
Bad mannered	f	80	71	7	158
/ill-disciplined school	%	46.2	50.4	50.0	48.2
Cultural factors	f	93	70	7	170
	%	53.8	49.6	50.0	51.8
Total	f	173	141	14	328
	%	100	100	100	100

Table D15: Comparison between condoning loud talk (V84) and the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

Loud talk		The nature of intercultural relations at school				
		Put up with one another	Co-operate but don't mix	Hostile to one another	Remain cross/ unfriendly	Total
Bad-mannered	f	86	47	11	16	160
/ill-disciplined school	%	58.5	35.9	50.0	51.6	48.3
Cultural factors	f	61	84	11	15	171
	%	41.5	64.1	50.0	48.4	51.7
Total	f	147	131	22	31	331
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D16:   Comparison between condoning loud talk (V84) and the desired educational level
(V42)

Loud talk		At most Grade 12	Diploma and/or certificate	Degree	Degree and diploma or certificate	Total
Bad-mannered / ill-disciplined school	f	16	10	20	114	160
	%	72.7	62.5	39.2	47.1	48.3
Cultural factors	f	6	6	31	128	171
	%	27.3	37.5	60.8	52.9	51.7
Total	f	22	16	51	242	331
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D17: Comparison between condoning loud talk (V84) and job aspirations (V45)

Loud talk		Job aspirations								
		Doctor	Lawyer	Professional sportsman	Self-employed	Engineer	Chartered accountant	Unsure	Other	Total
Bad-mannered /ill-disciplined school	f	39	16	3	8	16	21	4	53	160
	%	58.2	42.1	27.3	40.0	57.1	46.7	40.0	47.3	48.3
Cultural factors	f	28	22	8	12	12	24	6	59	171
	%	41.8	57.9	72.7	60.0	42.9	53.3	60.0	52.7	51.7
Total	f	67	38	11	20	28	45	10	112	331
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table D18: Comparison between condoning loud talk (V84) and time spent on schoolwork (V70)

Loud Talk		Time spent on schoolwork					
		No time	One hour	Two hours	Three hours	More than three hours	Total
Bad-mannered/ ill-disciplined school	f	8	53	34	30	35	160
	%	44.4	42.1	42.5	60.0	61.4	48.3
Cultural factors	f	10	73	46	20	22	171
	%	55.6	57.9	57.5	40.0	38.6	51.7
Total	f	18	126	80	50	57	331
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table D19: Comparison between condoning loud talk (V84) and working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

Loud Talk		Working hard at a subject the learner dislikes			
		Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Total
Bad-mannered/ ill-disciplined school	f	111	32	17	160
	%	49.6	46.4	44.7	48.3
Cultural factors	f	113	37	21	171
	%	50.4	53.6	55.3	51.7
Total	f	224	69	38	331
	%	100	100	100	100

Table D20:   Comparison between regarding eye contact as disrespectful (V85) and the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

Eye contact is disrespectful		The nature of intercultural relations at school				
		Put up with one another	Co-operate but don't mix	Are hostile to one another	Remain cross/ unfriendly	Total
Agree	f	37	36	9	10	92
	%	25.2	27.3	40.9	32.3	27.7
Uncertain	f	39	38	4	5	86
	%	26.5	28.8	18.2	16.1	25.9
Disagree	f	71	58	9	16	154
	%	48.3	43.9	40.9	51.6	46.4
Total	f	147	132	22	31	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D21:   Comparison between regarding eye contact as disrespectful (V85) and feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

Eye contact is disrespectful		Feeling happy/unhappy when at school		
		Happy	Unhappy	Total
Agree	f	66	26	92
	%	26.2	32.5	27.7
Uncertain	f	71	15	86
	%	28.2	18.7	25.9
Disagree	f	115	39	154
	%	45.6	48.8	46.4
Total	f	252	80	332
	%	100	100	100

Table D22: Comparison between regarding eye contact as disrespectful (V85) and the desired educational level (V42)

Eye contact is disrespectful		Desired educational level				
		At most Grade 12	Diploma and/or certificate	Degree	Degree and diploma or certificate	Total
Agree	f	8	5	13	66	92
	%	36.4	31.3	25.0	27.3	27.7
Uncertain	f	5	2	15	64	86
	%	22.7	12.5	28.8	26.4	25.9
Disagree	f	9	9	24	112	154
	%	40.9	56.3	46.2	46.3	46.4
Total	f	22	16	52	242	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D23: Comparison between regarding eye contact as disrespectful (V85) and job aspirations (V45)

Eye contact is disrespectful		Doctor	Lawyer	Professional sportsman	Self-employed	Engineer	Chartered accountant	Unsure	Other	Total
		Job aspirations								
Agree	f	19	8	2	10	12	12	2	27	92
	%	28.3	21.1	18.2	50.0	42.9	26.7	20.0	23.9	27.7
Uncertain	f	19	13	4	3	4	14	2	27	86
	%	28.4	34.2	36.4	15.0	14.3	31.1	20.0	23.9	25.9
Disagree	f	29	17	5	7	12	19	6	59	154
	%	43.3	44.7	45.5	35.0	42.9	42.2	60.0	52.2	46.4
Total	f	67	38	11	20	28	45	10	113	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

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Table D24: Comparison between regarding eye contact as disrespectful (V85) and time spent on schoolwork (V70)

Eye contact is disrespectful		Time spent on schoolwork					
		No time	One hour	Two hours	Three hours	More than three hours	Total
Agree	f	10	30	24	11	17	92
	%	55.6	23.8	30.0	21.6	29.8	**27.7**
Uncertain	f	1	27	25	16	17	86
	%	5.6	21.4	31.2	31.4	29.8	25.9
Disagree	f	7	69	31	24	23	154
	%	38.9	54.8	38.8	47.1	40.4	46.4
Total	f	18	126	80	51	57	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table D25: Comparison between regarding eye contact as disrespectful (V85) and working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

Eye contact is disrespectful		Working hard at a subject the learner dislikes			
		Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Total
Agree	f	63	17	12	92
	%	28.1	24.6	31.6	27.8
Uncertain	f	51	27	7	85
	%	22.8	39.1	18.4	25.7
Disagree	f	110	25	19	154
	%	49.1	36.2	50.0	46.5
Total	f	224	69	38	331
	%	100	100	100	100

Table D26: Comparison between standing distance when talking to someone (V86) and the location of the home (V40)

Standing distance		Location of the home			
		Suburb	Township	Other	Total
Yes	f	66	59	7	132
	%	37.9	41.8	50.0	40.1
No	f	108	82	7	197
	%	62.1	58.2	50.0	59.9
Total	f	174	141	14	329
	%	100	100	100	100

Table D27: Comparison between standing distance when talking to someone (V86) and the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

Standing distance		The nature of intercultural relations at school				
		Put up with one another	Co-operate but do not mix	Hostile	Remain cross/unfriendly	Total
Yes	f	62	56	9	6	133
	%	42.2	42.4	40.9	19.4	40.1
No	f	85	76	13	25	199
	%	57.8	57.6	59.1	80.6	59.9
Total	f	147	132	22	31	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D28: Comparison between standing distance when talking to someone (V86) and the desired educational level (V42)

| Standing distance | | Desired educational level | | | | |
		At most Grade 12	Diploma and/or certificate	Degree	Degree and diploma or certificate	Total
Yes	f	7	5	21	100	133
	%	31.8	31.3	40.4	41.3	40.1
No	f	15	11	31	142	199
	%	68.2	68.8	59.6	58.7	59.9
Total	f	22	16	52	242	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D29:   Comparison between standing distance when talking to someone (V86) and job aspirations (V45)

Standing distance		Job aspirations								
		Doctor	Lawyer	Professional sportsman	Self-employed	Engineer	Chartered accountant	Unsure	Other	Total
Yes	f	32	14	7	8	13	12	5	42	133
	%	47.8	36.8	63.6	40.0	46.4	26.7	50.0	37.2	40.1
No	f	35	24	4	12	15	33	5	71	199
	%	52.2	63.2	36.4	60.0	53.6	73.3	50.0	62.8	59.9
Total	f	67	38	11	20	28	45	10	113	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table D30:   Comparison between standing distance when talking to someone (V86)
and time spent on schoolwork (V70)

Standing distance		Time spent on schoolwork					
		No time	One hour	Two hours	Three hours	More than three hours	Total
Yes	f	6	52	29	19	27	133
	%	33.3	41.3	36.3	37.3	47.4	40.1
No	f	12	74	51	32	30	199
	%	66.7	58.7	63.8	62.7	52.6	59.9
Total	f	18	126	80	51	57	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table D31:   Comparison between standing distance when talking to someone (V86)
and working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

Standing distance		Working hard at a subject the learner dislikes			
		Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Total
Yes	f	92	26	14	132
	%	41.1	37.7	36.8	39.9
No	f	132	43	24	199
	%	58.9	62.3	63.2	60.1
Total	f	224	69	38	331
	%	100	100	100	100

Table D32: Comparison between borrowing without permission (V91) and the location of the home (V40)

Borrowing without permission		Location of the home			
		Suburb	Township	Other	Total
Yes	f	17	18	2	37
	%	9.8	12.8	14.3	**11.2**
No	f	157	123	12	292
	%	90.2	87.2	85.7	**88.8**
Total	f	174	141	14	329
	%	100	100	100	100

Table D33: Comparison between borrowing without permission (V91) and the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

Borrowing without permission		The nature of intercultural relations at school				
		Put up with one another	Co-operate but do not mix	Hostile	Remain cross/ unfriendly	Total
Yes	f	17	10	4	6	37
	%	11.6	7.6	18.2	19.4	**11.1**
No	f	130	122	18	25	295
	%	88.4	92.4	81.8	80.6	**88.9**
Total	f	147	132	22	31	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D34: Comparison between borrowing without permission (V91) and feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

Borrowing without permission		Feeling happy/unhappy when at school		
		Happy	Unhappy	Total
Yes	f	28	9	37
	%	11.1	11.3	11.1
No	f	224	71	295
	%	88.9	88.8	88.9
Total	f	252	80	332
	%	100	100	100

Table D35: Comparison between borrowing without permission (V91) and the desired educational level (V42)

Borrowing without permission		Desired educational level				
		At most Grade 12	Diploma and/or certificate	Degree	Degree and diploma or certificate	Total
Yes	f	2	7	25	3	37
	%	9.1	13.5	10.3	18.8	11.1
No	f	20	45	217	13	295
	%	90.9	86.5	89.7	81.3	88.9
Total	f	22	52	242	16	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D36: Comparison between borrowing without permission (V91) and job aspirations (V45)

Borrowing without permission		Job aspirations								
		Doctor	Lawyer	Professional sportsman	Self-employed	Engineer	Chartered accountant	Unsure	Other	Total
Yes	f	7	6	2	3	3	4	1	11	37
	%	10.4	15.8	18.2	15.0	10.7	8.9	10.0	9.7	11.1
No	f	60	32	9	17	25	41	9	102	295
	%	89.6	84.2	81.8	85.0	89.3	91.1	90.0	90.3	88.9
Total	f	67	38	11	20	28	45	10	113	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table D37: Comparison between borrowing without permission (V91) and time spent on schoolwork (V70)

Borrowing without permission		Time spent on schoolwork					Total
		No time	One hour	Two hours	Three hours	More than three hours	
Yes	f	5	14	9	5	4	37
	%	27.8	11.1	11.3	9.8	7.0	11.1
No	f	13	112	71	46	53	295
	%	72.2	88.9	88.8	90.2	93.0	88.9
Total	f	18	126	80	51	57	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table D38: Comparison between approving of the writing of exams to pass (V109) and the location of the home (V40)

Writing exams		Location of the home			Total
		Suburb	Township	Other	
Yes	f	87	71	9	167
	%	50.3	50.4	64.3	50.9
No	f	86	70	5	161
	%	49.7	49.6	35.7	49.1
Total	f	173	141	14	328
	%	100	100	100	100

Table D39:   Comparison between approving of the writing of exams to pass (V109) and the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92)

| Writing exams | | The nature of intercultural relations at school | | | | |
		Put up with one another	Co-operate but do not mix	Hostile	Remain cross/ unfriendly	Total
Yes	f	73	70	12	14	169
	%	49.7	53.0	54.5	46.7	51.1
No	f	74	62	10	16	162
	%	50.3	47.0	45.5	53.3	48.9
Total	f	147	132	22	30	331
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D40: Comparison between approving of the writing of exams to pass (V109) and feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

Writing exams		Feeling happy/unhappy when at school		
		Happy	Unhappy	Total
Yes	f	136	33	169
	%	54.2	41.3	51.1
No	f	115	47	162
	%	45.8	58.8	48.9
Total	f	251	80	331
	%	100	100	100

Table D41: Comparison between approving of the writing of exams to pass (V109) and the desired educational level (V42)

| Writing exams | | Desired educational level | | | | |
		At most Grade 12	Diploma and/or certificate	Degree	Degree and diploma or certificate	Total
Yes	f	12	6	25	126	169
	%	54.5	37.5	48.1	52.3	51.1
No	f	10	10	27	115	162
	%	45.5	62.5	51.9	47.7	48.9
Total	f	22	16	52	241	331
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D42:   Comparison between approving of the writing of exams to pass (V109) and job aspirations (V45)

Writing exams		Job aspirations								
		Doctor	Lawyer	Professional sportsman	Self-employed	Engineer	Chartered accountant	Unsure	Other	Total
Yes	f	39	17	7	7	13	21	5	60	169
	%	58.2	45.9	63.6	35.0	46.4	46.7	50.0	53.1	51.1
No	f	28	20	4	13	15	24	5	53	162
	%	41.8	54.1	36.4	65.0	53.6	53.3	50.0	46.9	48.9
Total	f	67	37	11	20	28	45	10	113	331
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table D43: Comparison between approving of the writing of exams to pass (V109) and working hard at a subject the learner dislikes (V101)

Writing exams		Working hard at a subject the learner dislikes			
		Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Total
Yes	f	109	35	24	168
	%	48.7	51.5	63.2	50.9
No	f	115	33	14	162
	%	51.3	48.5	36.8	49.1
Total	f	224	68	38	330
	%	100	100	100	100

Table D44: Comparison between the handling of trouble at school (V110) and the location of the home (V40)

Handling of trouble		Location of the home			
		Suburb	Township	Other	Total
Admit	f	158	125	12	295
	%	90.8	88.7	85.7	89.7
Deny/Blame	f	16	16	2	34
	%	9.2	11.3	14.3	10.3
Total	f	174	141	14	329
	%	100	100	100	100

Table D45: Comparison between the handling of trouble at school (V110) and feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

Handling of trouble		Feeling happy/unhappy when at school		
		Happy	Unhappy	Total
Admit	f	232	66	298
	%	92.1	82.5	89.8
Deny/ Blame	f	20	14	34
	%	7.9	17.5	10.2
Total	f	252	80	332
	%	100	100	100

Table D46: Comparison between the handling of trouble at school (V110) and the desired level of education (V42)

Handling of trouble		Desired level of education				
		At most Grade 12	Diploma and/or certificate	Degree	Degree and diploma or certificate	Total
Admit	f	20	47	217	14	298
	%	90.9	90.4	89.7	87.5	89.8
Deny/ Blame	f	2	5	25	2	34
	%	9.1	9.6	10.3	12.5	10.2
Total	f	22	52	242	16	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D47:   Comparison between the handling of trouble at school (V110) and job aspirations (V45)

Handling of trouble		Job aspirations								
		Doctor	Lawyer	Professional sportsman	Self-employed	Engineer	Chartered accountant	Unsure	Other	Total
Admit	f	61	35	7	15	27	43	10	100	298
	%	91.0	92.1	63.6	75.0	96.4	95.6	100.0	88.5	89.8
Deny/Blame	f	6	3	4	5	1	2	0	13	34
	%	9.0	7.9	36.4	25.0	3.6	4.4	0.0	11.5	10.2
Total	f	67	38	11	20	28	45	10	113	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table D48: Comparison between the handling of trouble at school (V110) and time spent on schoolwork (V70)

Handling of trouble		Time spent on schoolwork					
		No time	One hour	Two hours	Three hours	More than three hours	Total
Admit	f	12	121	67	49	49	298
	%	66.7	96.0	83.8	96.1	86.0	89.8
Deny/ Blame	f	6	5	13	2	8	34
	%	33.3	4.0	16.3	3.9	14.0	10.2
Total	f	18	126	80	51	57	332
	%	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table D49: Comparison between the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92) and feeling happy/unhappy when at school (V59)

Intercultural relations		Feeling happy/unhappy when at school		
		Happy	Unhappy	Total
Put up with one another	f	115	32	147
	%	45.6	40.0	44.3
Co-operate but do not mix	f	95	37	132
	%	37.7	46.3	39.8
Hostile	f	19	3	22
	%	7.5	3.8	6.6
Remain cross/unfriendly	f	23	8	31
	%	9.1	10.0	9.3
Total	f	252	80	332
	%	100	100	100

Table D50:   Comparison between the nature of intercultural relations at school
(V92) and close friends in another race group (V57)

Intercultural relations		Close friends in another race group				
		None	One	Two	More than two	Total
Put up with one another	f	45	19	13	70	147
	%	44.1	47.5	43.4	44.0	44.4
Co-operate but do not mix	f	37	15	11	68	131
	%	36.3	37.5	36.7	42.8	39.6
Hostile	f	6	4	4	8	22
	%	5.9	10.0	13.3	5.0	6.7
Remain cross/ unfriendly	f	14	2	2	13	31
	%	13.7	5.0	6.7	8.2	9.4
Total	f	102	40	30	159	331
	%	100	100	100	100	100

Table D51:   Comparison between the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92) and type of school preferred (V58)

Intercultural relations		80% black/ only black	50/50% black/other	All race groups equal	Total
Put up with one another	f	8	26	113	147
	%	38.1	49.1	44.0	44.4
Co-operate but do not mix	f	9	16	106	131
	%	42.9	30.2	41.2	39.6
Hostile	f	1	6	15	22
	%	4.8	11.3	5.8	6.6
Remain cross/ unfriendly	f	3	5	23	31
	%	14.3	9.4	8.9	9.4
Total	f	21	53	257	331
	%	100	100	100	100

The header "Type of school preferred" spans the 80% black/only black, 50/50% black/other, and All race groups equal columns.

Table D52: Comparison between the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92) and keeping picked-up goods (V67)

Intercultural relations		Keeping picked-up goods			
		Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Total
Put up with one another	f	26	27	94	147
	%	38.8	40.9	47.5	44.4
Co-operate but do not mix	f	25	33	73	131
	%	37.3	50.0	36.9	39.6
Hostile	f	5	3	14	22
	%	7.5	4.5	7.1	6.6
Remain cross/ unfriendly	f	11	3	17	31
	%	16.4	4.5	8.6	9.4
Total	f	67	66	198	331
	%	100	100	100	100

Table D53: Comparison between the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92) and borrowing without permission (V91)

Intercultural relations		Borrowing without permission		
		Yes	No	Total
Put up with one another	f	17	130	147
	%	46.0	44.1	44.3
Co-operate but do not mix	f	10	122	132
	%	27.0	41.4	39.8
Hostile	f	4	18	22
	%	10.8	6.1	6.6
Remain cross/ unfriendly	f	6	25	31
	%	16.2	8.5	9.3
Total	f	37	295	332
	%	100	100	100

Table D54: Comparison between the nature of intercultural relations at school (V92) and way to solve an argument (V113)

Intercultural relations		Way to solve an argument		
		Positive approach	Negative approach	Total
Put up with one another	f	119	28	147
	%	46.9	35.9	44.3
Co-operate but do not mix	f	99	33	132
	%	39.0	42.3	39.8
Hostile	f	15	7	22
	%	5.9	9.0	6.6
Remain cross/ unfriendly	f	21	10	31
	%	8.3	12.8	9.3
Total	f	254	78	332
	%	100	100	100

APPENDIX E:

CODING LIST FOR OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL OF PARENTS

CODING LIST (KODERINGSLYS)

CODE	OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS (BEROEPSGROEPE)	EXAMPLES OF OCCUPATIONS
3	Professional or semi-professional occupations	Chemist, architect, advocate, surgeon, geologist, engineer, surveyor, physician, teacher, clergyman, judge, dentist, nurse, translator
3	Administrative occupations	Division head, managing director, mine manager, personnel manager, secretary, executive officer
2	Clerical occupations	Clerk, postmaster, bank clerk, bookkeeper, cashier, postal sorter, storeman, stenographer, teller
2	Sales occupations	Auctioneer, insurance agent, door to door salesman, estate agent, commercial traveller, market agent, businessman
2	Schooled tradesmen (ambagsman)	Electrician, boilermaker, bricklayer, fitter and turner, welder, painter, butcher, carpenter, spray painter
2	Trained outdoors jobs (opgeleide buiteberoepe)	Ambulance driver, bus driver, crane operator, conductor, waiter, pilot, policeman, shunter, traffic officer
1	Farmers, gardeners	Farmer, farm manager, gardener
1	Personal and domestic service occupations	Funeral director, hairdresser, stewardess, steward, dressmaker, cook, caterer
1	Operators and semi-schooled operators	Concrete worker, block maker, tree trimmer, watchmaker, mineworker, ganger (ploegbaas)
1	Unschooled occupations	Road worker, farm hand, railway worker, cleaner, sweeper
0	Housewife	Housewife
0	Pensioner	Pensioner
0	Unemployed	Unemployed
3-	Other	Other occupations not mentioned

Source: Engelbrecht (1977: Appendix E)

APPENDIX F:

LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION FROM PARENTS

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Private Bag X 27825

SUNNYSIDE

0132

September 1998

Dear Parents

I am currently doing research on the adjustment of Grade Nine learners in schools. The aim of this research is to assist children from different cultures to adjust more easily to the school environment.

To help me to do the research, it will be necessary for your child to take part in answering a questionnaire. No individual child's information can be identified since the questionnaire is completed anonymously. Please give permission for your child to complete the questionnaire.

Please complete the attached permission slip and return it to the school as soon as possible.

We appreciate your help.

Kind regards

_____

P. Erasmus

---TEAR OFF---

I _____ (Parent / Guardian), grant permission for my child

_____ to complete the

questionnaire.

_____

SIGNATURE

_____

DATE

APPENDIX G:

WORK PROTOCOL

(LETTER FROM RESEARCHER TO EXTERNAL CODER)

WORK PROTOCOL
(LETTER FROM RESEARCHER TO EXTERNAL CODER)

Dear Colleague

Please use the following steps in the analysis and processing of the data from the transcribed semi-structured focus interviews (Tesch, 1990 in Creswell, 1994:155).

- Read through all of the transcriptions carefully in order to get a sense of the whole.

- Pick one transcription. Read through the transcription again and underline individual themes that have been identified. Repeat this procedure for the rest of the transcriptions.

- Make a list of all topics and cluster similar topics together. These must be organised into major or common topics, unique topics and side issues (leftovers).

- Abbreviate the topics as codes and write the codes next to the appropriate sections of the text.

- Find the most descriptive wording for these topics and turn them into categories and sub-categories. Aim to reduce your categories by grouping related topics. Lines can be drawn between your categories to show interrelationships.

- Make a final decision on the abbreviation for each category and alphabetise these codes.

- Gather the data that belong to each category in one place and perform a preliminary analysis.

- Should it be necessary, the existing data can be recoded.

The categories and sub-categories can then be placed according to the theoretical framework with its accompanying dimensions (as attached).

Thank you

P. ERASMUS