ADOLESCENT LIFE SKILL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ACTIVE
RECREATION: A CASE STUDY

by

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DECLARATION

I, Eloise Nel, hereby declare that this research for the degree, Magister Artium (Human Movement Science), at the University of Pretoria, has not previously been submitted by me for the degree, at this or any other university; that it is my own work in design and execution, and that all materials from published sources contained herein have been duly acknowledged.

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Date   Signature

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STUDY SUMMARY

Title: Adolescent life skill development through active recreation: A case study

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The study investigated how active recreation opportunities can be utilised to develop adolescent's life skills in a lower socio-economic community. Adolescence is known as one of the most difficult developmental periods in an individual's life and life skill development is an important contributing factor in assisting an adolescent in this difficult period. Adolescents in lower socio-economic communities are faced with limited opportunities for the development of life skills that possibly contribute to the use of drugs, alcohol, teenage pregnancies and other deviant behaviours. Active recreation opportunities can provide an avenue by creating an environment in which life skills can be learned practiced and later be transferred to life situations in which life skills are required.

The aims of the study were:

➤ To identify how active recreation can contribute to life skill development of adolescents in lower social communities.

➤ To explore how adolescents in Eersterust perceive current active recreation opportunities in the community.

➤ To investigate adolescents in the Eersterust community and their perception of how life skills can be achieved through active recreation.

Grounded in the exploratory qualitative research design with a case study approach framework, the research methods for the study included focus groups and participation observation. Participant selection included voluntary high school adolescents in the Eersterust community between the ages of 14 and 17.

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It was founded that recreation programs provided in the lower socio – economic communities do not meet the needs of the adolescents and this leads to non participation. Adolescents have indicated an understanding of the importance of life skills and that through participating in active recreation activities they could obtain these skills.

For future studies the following recommendations are suggested:

- The gender division should be considered and therefore it is recommended that there must be an equal amount of each gender in a group or that the groups consist of one gender only.

- Recreation providers must include adolescents in the design of active recreation programs as adolescents understand the importance of life skill development and to insure that the time allocation of the activities accompanies their schedule.

- Adolescents need to become familiar with presenters of activities. It is therefore recommended that test are done more than once to provide the adolescents with the opportunity to become familiar with the activity presenters and this provides the researcher with the opportunity to observe the results not only on their first meeting but also later on.

- Instructions must not be too difficult or take long periods to explain. Participants tend to get irritated and their mind wonders. It is therefore recommended that instructions are kept short and sweet

- Barriers for example the maintenance of facilities, lack of equipment and supervision should be taken into account when developing programs.

Key words:

Adolescents, active recreation, life skills, development

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, AIM, AND METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The period of adolescence is generally known as a difficult developmental period in which adolescents are faced with numerous challenges (Louw & Louw, 2007). Challenges include a variety of developmental changes, for example physical changes. Establishing an identity in which the adolescent needs to accept their perspective of themselves and how other people see them, the social challenges of fitting into a certain peer group and during late adolescent romantic relationships begins to play a bigger role. Adolescents also undergo cognitive developmental changes in which they develop the skill to reason and solve problems more effectively and to learn to make their own choices and taking responsibility for those choices. Another challenge is becoming emotionally intelligent which means that the adolescent must handle stress, to be able to control their emotions and feelings in different situations and must consist of the ability to work with individuals with different backgrounds and beliefs (Goleman, 2005).

The National Youth Policy (2009 – 2014) defines youth development as being : " *an intentional comprehensive approach that provides space, opportunities and support for young people to maximise their individual and collective creative energies for personal development as well as development of the broader society of which they are an integral part*" (The National Youth Policy, 2009 – 2014 :11).

Robertson (1994) found that adolescents stated that they felt that they had a restricted amount of recreational activities that they could participate in on a regular basis. Adolescents stated that they would like to have the opportunity to participate in more sport or outdoor recreational activities without being limited to do so. In Robertson's (1994) study, sport was identified as one of the recreational activities that adolescents could participate in, but in sport there is a limited amount of space in a team and therefore not everyone is given the opportunity to participate. Taking into consideration all the developmental changes taking place during adolescence society

needs to improve their assets to recognise that adolescents are in need of amplified encouragement and motivation and those that in the future may have tendency be involved in negative socialisation (Britton, 2007).

Adolescents in lower socio-economic communities have limited access to participation in active recreation and the activities that are presented do not meet the need of the adolescent. This leads to non-participation in activities that are available and spending this time engaging in negative activities for example drug use and other substance use behaviour (Weybright, Caldwell, Ram, Smith & Jacobs, 2014). Adolescents in a lower socio economic society like Eersterust are also faced with the fact that they need to look after their siblings after school which makes it difficult for them to participate in after-school activities. Access to active recreation opportunities can serve as an avenue in which the development of life skills and the provision of activities can meet the need of the adolescent is therefore critical in getting adolescents to participate in programs that will offer them the opportunity to develop much needed life skills (Gould & Carson, 2008).

Witt and Caldwell (2010) made the proposal that active recreation opportunities, for example wall climbing or adventure courses can help satisfy the adolescent's need for risk taking activities. Burgess Chamberlain (2009) emphasised the fact that adults must be aware that during cognitive development the adolescent are already stressed with the challenges they are confronted with like becoming familiar with the skill of identifying important work and how to manage different situations and by expecting them to more than one task at a time may be too much information for them and add more stress.

Life skills play an important part in assisting an adolescent to handle challenges that they are faced with everyday. Life skills are therefore an important aspect that needs to be learned and an effective environment needs to be created for this to take place. Active recreation provides the ideal framework for life skills to be learned and practiced. Life skills learned can then be transferred to other everyday life situations to assist the adolescent in challenges (Gould & Carson, 2008).

Sport and Recreation South Africa (2012) defined active recreation as activities in which the rules of the game are flexible; individuals participate for the purpose of improving their fitness and having fun while challenging themselves or nature .It can have both physically and mental benefits for participants and can assist in the development to formalise sport. Examples of active recreation can include walking, jogging and adventure recreation. The Australian National Sport and Active recreation policy framework (http://www.health.gov.au) adds onto the definition of active recreation by defining it as *"activities engaged in for the purpose of relaxation, health and wellbeing or enjoyment with the primary activity requiring physical exertion, and the primary focus on human activity."*

A community in Queensland, Australia encourages adolescents along with their families and friends to participate in fun and enjoyable active recreation for at least 60 min a day and encourage them to pursue a healthy life style that can contribute to them having more confidence and sleeping better which can lead to them having more energy.

1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Adolescence is known as one of the most difficult developmental periods in an individual's life. During this period the adolescent undergoes various physical, socio emotional, cognitive and moral changes. The development of life skills is an important contributing factor in assisting an adolescent in dealing with everyday challenges by providing a framework with which everyday challenges can be dealt.

Danish and Donohue (1995) define life skills as an individual's ability to be successful in a variety of skills ranging from physical, behavioural and cognitive skills in the community they live in. Life skills can therefore increase the adolescent's ability to make critical decisions, solve problems and show empathy towards others and to make better life choices.

Adolescents in lower socio-economic communities are faced with limited opportunities for the development of life skills. This possibly contributes to the use

of drugs, alcohol, teenage pregnancies and other deviant behaviours. Active recreation opportunities can provide an avenue by creating an environment in which life skills can be learned practiced and later be transferred to life situations in which life skills are required.

Recreation programs do not meet the developmental needs of the adolescents, resulting in a lower participation rate in active recreation programs. The participants in the lower socio- economic community of Eersterust have participated in active recreation activities for the past 3 years however activities provided did not meet the developmental need of the adolescents and this emphasises how important it is for active recreation programs to address the needs of the adolescent by providing programs that capture their attention.

Providers of active recreation must be aware of adolescent characteristics and developmental phases to ensure that the developmental needs of the adolescent are met. The National Sport and Recreation Plan (NSRP, 2012) of South Africa recognises the important role of active recreation in youth development, however, examples provided include walking, jogging, playing hop scotch, skipping and adventure recreation. Options are clearly very limited and do not respond to the developmental need of the adolescent. This study asks the question: *How can active recreation opportunities be utilised to develop adolescent's life skills in a lower socio-economic community?*

1.3. AIMS OF THE STUDY

The overall aim of this study was to explore how active recreation opportunities can be utilized to develop life skills in adolescents in a lower socio economic community.

The study's objectives included:

➤ To identify how active recreation can contribute to life skill development of adolescents in lower social communities.

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➢ To explore how adolescents in Eersterust perceive current active recreation opportunities in the community.

➢ To investigate adolescents in the Eersterust community and their perception of how life skills can be achieved through active recreation.

1.4. LITERATURE REVIEW

In exploring how active recreation opportunities can be utilized to develop life skills in adolescence in a lower socio economic community, the following concepts were discussed: adolescent developmental challenges, life skills development, and active recreation.

Adolescents face a number of developmental challenges in the period between childhood to adulthood (Witt & Caldwell, 2010). These developmental challenges include socio-emotional, physical and cognitive changes, and it is important that parents and youth workers are aware of these changes. Adolescence consists of three different stages namely early adolescence (12-14 years), middle adolescence (14-17 years) and late adolescence (17-19 years). Each of these phases has their own developmental issues and challenges that the adolescent must deal with (Witt & Caldwell, 2010).

Santrock (2005:327) defines the term socio-emotional as *"changes in an individual's relationships with other people, changes in emotion and changes in personality"*. During socio-emotional development the adolescent moves from being dependent on their parents to being more dependent on peer groups. O'Koon (1997) stated that families must understand that this shift does not mean that the families are now less important to the adolescent. The type of involvement with the peer group will depend on which stage of adolescent the individual is in. For example in early adolescence it consists typically of one peer group and is usually of the same gender (Savin-Williams & Berndt, 1990). In this stage it is important for the adolescent to be accepted into a group in which they feel they belong.

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During middle adolescence peer groups consist more of different genders and the adolescents are also more aware that individuals are different in appearance, values and opinion. In late adolescence, an individual is more matured and becomes more interested in romantic relationships and having a special friendship with one person (Micucci, 2009).

Physical development during early adolescence includes a growth spurts and the onset of sexual maturation in boys and girls. The growth spurt in boys starts at the age of 12 to 13 years and in girls at 10 to 11 years. This causes a change in the adolescents' body weight and height. Girls stop growing more or less during late adolescence and boys early on in their twenties. Puberty in girls starts two years before puberty in boys and it begins when the brain stimulates hormones to activate sexual maturation. It is during puberty that adolescents feel the desire to participate in activities that involves risk and therefore Witt and Caldwell (2010) suggested that activities like wall climbing and adventure courses can be provided to the adolescent to satisfy this "risk taking behaviour".

There are several hormones that play a role during physical development. In both male and female adolescents the somatotrophin and gonadotrophin hormones are involved. The sex hormones of males are known as androgens and the two that are of importance are testosterone and androsterone. The female hormone estrogen is also produced in males only in smaller amounts (Burgess Chamberlain, 2009).

Jean Piaget (Singer & Revenson, 1996) believes that an individual reaches their full cognitive potential during adolescence and this stage is known as the 'formal operational thought'. During cognitive development the adolescents' become more capable of thinking logically in situations, attend to problem solving situations that arise and their ability to communicate will improve (Santrock, 2005). Adults must keep in mind that adolescents are starting to become familiar with these skills and by expecting an adolescent that is already stressed to multitask may be a too challenging task for them to handle at this stage (Burgess Chamberlain, 2009).

During adolescence changes occur in the limbic region of the brain that consists of the amygdale and hippocampus. The hippocampus in the brain is sensitive to the

hormone estrogen while the amygdale is more sensitive to the male sex hormones (Burgess Chamberlain, 2009). Functions of the frontal lobe include, emotions, memory, being enthusiastic, having insight, scheduling activities and moods particularly aggression (Saladin, 2007). During the evening the sleep hormone melatonin in adolescence is secreted two hours later than usual and this lack of sleep can lead to adolescence not being able to control their emotions and also to be more aggressive than usual (Burgess Chamberlain, 2009).

The cognitive development between adolescent males and females is different, in that the male brain consist of more white matter which leads to males being more confident in math and physical skills, whereas the female brain has greater amounts of gray matter which lead to them having more confidence in skills involving reading and socializing (Burgess Chamberlain, 2009). Taking note of these different developments taking place in both male and female adolescents can assist parents and youth recreational workers in understanding the behaviour of adolescents in different situations.

Participation in active recreation activities can provide the adolescent with opportunities to participate in activities that can enhance their self-esteem and provide them with the confidence they need to improve their self-image and how others see them. An individual who has confidence in themselves are more likely to be satisfied with the choices they have made.

Life skill development plays an important role in an individual's life and in assisting the adolescents to handle everyday challenges that they are faced with (Srikala & Kishore, 2010). The World Health Organization (1997) identified some core life skills that an individual needs to provide them with a better chance in life. This includes decision making, coping with stress, problem solving, coping with emotions, empathy, creative thinking, self-awareness, interpersonal relationships skills, critical thinking and effective communication (World Health Organization, 1997).

Being emotionally intelligent will assist the adolescent in handling stress; develop the ability to control their emotions in different situations and to develop the ability to work with different individuals (Goleman, 2005).

Even though the development of one's identity does not begin or end during adolescence, it is noted that during adolescence the individual has the cognitive ability needed to know who they are as individuals. An individuals' identity consists of self-concept which includes one's beliefs, values, morals and self-esteem. If an individual has a low self-esteem it is an indication that there is a gap between the individuals' self-concept and self-esteem (Harter, 1990).

Life skills can contribute to interventions that attempting to prevent adolescents from using drugs and teenagers becoming pregnant. Danish and Nellen (1997) identified that the factors playing a role in the lives of adolescents are school, families and the community. However adolescents in lower social economic societies are faced with the aspects of adulthood namely work, which includes looking after siblings and running the household, which prevents them from participating in after school sporting programs.

'The 40 developmental assets model framework' (Witt & Caldwell, 2010) is commonly used as a research approach in youth development. The framework is composed of twenty internal assets as well as twenty external assets. External assets are the positive experiences that young individuals experienced in their lives from other individuals or organisation.

Internal assets assist in developing the inner values of a young individual that will help guide them in making their own choices. These internal and external assets are taken from the supporting organisations and must be made available to adolescents at different locations, for example homes, schools and public places. Active recreation organisations must develop recreational programs that will aim to improve these assets and by doing this they will meet the related developmental outcomes needed for the frame work to be effective.

The department of active recreation can contribute to offering positive participation in recreational activities in which the personnel of the department of park and recreation can take the part of being a role model to young adolescence.

Current recreation activities available for adolescents in lower socio-economic communities do not meet the needs of the adolescent. This gives rise to a situation in which the adolescents are not positively attracted to participate in the recreation activities available (Ngcobo, 2007). Witt and Caldwell (2010) identified and discussed five factors that play a role in the developmental stage of adolescence and how recreation can contribute to this stage.

Firstly, the need to establish an identity, it is essential for every adolescent to discover their identity and how they fit into this world. They need to accept how they see themselves and how they think other people see them. By providing different activities for individuals to participate in, recreation can provide each individual the opportunity to find and participate in an activity that best suits their personality and interests. Secondly, the need to establish autonomy during which adolescent needs to learn to be independent, make their own decisions and to take responsibility for the choices they make. Thirdly, the need for achievement where adolescents notice what their strong points are and what characteristics they still need to work on to become more knowledgeable. The fourth factor is, the need to develop a moral compass which is a crucial component of development. Adolescents need to distinguish between right and wrong and establish an understanding of the culture and norms of different individuals. Role models form an important part of this moral compass and active recreation staff can become these role models for adolescent.

Active recreation can assist adolescents in learning different ethical issues and what the consequences of one's actions in situations might be and lastly the need to develop close relationships, intimacy and become comfortable with one's sexuality, Adolescents have the desire to feel that they belong. The feeling of belonging to a group can assist an individual to develop and maintain close relationships. Active recreation provides an opportunity for adolescence to interact with other individuals.

Danish, Forneris, Hodge and Heke (2004) emphasise that by participating in active recreation adolescents can learn core life skills and morals that can assist them in their futures. However current active recreation programs do not consist of the appropriate characteristics of the framework required to learn the life skills that they could later apply outside a sporting context.

Participating in recreation activities holds a number of physical and mental health benefits for an individual. It is, therefore is important that activities that meets the needs and captures the attention of adolescents are provided. Danish and Hale (1981) have indicated that active recreation on its own cannot teach adolescents life skills, but by making life skills the goal within active recreation it can act as a basis or foundation through which life skills can be acquired. Active recreation and life skills both have similar characteristics in that both can be learned through the skill being demonstrated to the individual and then by the individual practicing that skill. The life skills learned in the active recreation environment can then be transferred to other areas in the individual's life outside an active recreation context (Gould & Carson, 2008). An example is teaching an individual the life skill of staying calm and taking deep breaths during a friendly game of street soccer. This will be the framework for teaching that skill in. Thus assisting the individual to be able to use that skill in a situation outside the sport context, like staying calm and taking deep breathes during a test situation. Recreational providers must emphasize that it can only be seen as life skills once the individual makes an attempt to uses it outside the active recreation context and in an situation outside that the active recreation environment (Gould & Carson, 2009).

1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1. Research design

The study used an exploratory qualitative research design with a case study approach. Creswell (2013:300) defined qualitative research as *"an inquiry process of understanding based on a distinct methodological approach to explore a social or human problem"*. Exploratory research was used by the researcher to explore the use of active recreation in the facilitation of life skill development during adolescence – a phenomenon that has a limited amount of awareness (Gratton & Jones, 2010). Case

studies are part of a qualitative research approach in which the researcher investigates a specific research topic in-depth to collect information to understand a certain problem associated with a particular group of individuals. Both time and the activity involved have a restriction on the case study (Creswell, 2009; Gratton & Jones, 2010).

1.5.2. Demarcation of the research area

The study focused on the lower socio-economic community of Eersterust. Eersterust is part of the Tshwane Metropolitan and is situated in the East of Pretoria. Eesrterust has a population of 29,676 (Statistics South Africa, 2011) and is part of a previously disadvantaged, coloured community in Tshwane. Adolescents in Eersterust do not only have to deal with the developmental challenges of adolescence but are often faced with adult responsibilities, for example taking care of siblings, preparing meals and running a household.

1.5.3. Research population

For purposes of this study the research population included high school adolescents in the Eersterust community between the ages of 14 and 17. Research participants reside in the Good Hope government housing project and are involved in a community engagement project run by the University of Pretoria. The adolescents have for the past 3 years been part of a recreation program.

1.5.4. Sample

Sampling for the study occurred at one venue namely Eersterust. For the purpose of the study the researcher made use of voluntary participants aged 14 to 17 to participate in the study. The study made use of a non-probability sampling technique known as '*typical sampling',* a method in which the typical is illustrated and it provides in-depth information on how the topic effects individuals everyday life (Gratton & Jones, 2010).

1.5.5. Research instruments

The study made use of focus groups and participant observation as qualitative research instruments.

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1.5 5.1. Focus groups

Focus groups are an interviewing method which allows the researcher to interview a group of individuals simultaneously rather than one-on-one. Individuals may be more willing to talk and share ideas if they are in their own environment where they feel comfortable and in a group with individuals that they know and trust. Focus groups consisted of 5-8 individuals (Gratton & Jones, 2010).

The focus groups will provide the researcher with more in-depth answers to the questions being asked and share their experiences on the situation.

1.5.5.2. Participation observation

Participation observation was completed by implementing the observer as participant, in which the researcher takes part in the activity and records what is happening (Creswell, 2013). The researcher made use of a tape recorder to record the information required as it happens in the participants' natural environment. Participation observation was conducted in a semi-structured manner.

1.6. TERMINOLOGY

The following concepts are used throughout and therefore need to be classified:

Active recreation

Active recreation activities are those engaged in for the purpose of relaxation and wellbeing or enjoyment with the primary activity requiring physical exertion, and the primary focus on human activity (National Sport and Active Recreation Policy Framework of Australia, 2011:7).

Adolescence

According to Louw and Louw (2007) "*adolescence is the period of transition between childhood and adulthood" (*Louw & Louw, 2007). Adolescence according to Casey, Jones and Somerville, 2011 can be described as the developmental period in which the adolescents participate in more risky activities which includes substance abuse, teenage pregnancies and violent behaviour.

Developmental challenges

Santrock (2005:327) defines developmental challenges as *"the pattern of change in human capabilities that begins at conception and continues throughout the life span"*.

Life skills

The world health organization defines life skills as *"abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life"* (World Health Organization, 1997). Danish, Forneris, Hodge and Heke (2004) defined life skills as the skills that enable individuals to succeed in the different environments in which they live, such as school, home and in their neighbourhoods.

1.7 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Chapter one introduced the aim and methodology of the study and provided a brief literature review. Chapter two will examine the development of adolescents in the lower socio economic community.

1.8. FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Chapter one provides an introduction to the study and is titled, Introduction, Aims and methodology of research. This Chapter provides the framework in which the problem statement is stated and the chapter ends of with the terminology used during the study. Chapter two is titled adolescent development in lower – socio economic community. This chapter discussed the different developmental challenges that adolescents face during adolescence and examines adolescent development in lower – socio economic communities.

Chapter three examines life skills and active recreation. The chapter is tiled life skills development through active recreation. The chapter starts off by examining the ecological theory as the theoretical framework. The chapter defines life skills and discusses the core life skills. Active recreation is defined and it looked at the current approaches through which life skills can be taught in active recreation. Chapter

discussed the methodology used during the study. The chapter is titled, research methodology. The study made use of focus groups and participation observation.

Chapter five, analysis and interpretation of results, summarizes the results obtained during the study. Chapter six, conclusions, recommendations and implications, present the recommendations and implications for further research. Chapter six ends of with the final conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER TWO
ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT IN LOWER SOCIO - ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Chapter two provides an overview of adolescent development and how development is affected by residing in a lower socio-economic community. The chapter starts by elucidating adolescent development, and then describes the period of adolescence and the developmental challenges faced during this time. Challenges include physical, socio-emotional, cognitive and behavioural developmental challenges. The chapter concludes by defining lower socio economic communities and by examining the impact that living in a lower socio economic community has on the adolescent and how it effects their participation in active recreation activities.

2.2. ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

The period of adolescence is generally known as a difficult developmental period in which adolescents are faced with numerous challenges (Louw & Louw, 2007). Adolescence is a turbulent time during which adolescents exhibit an increase in the desire to participate in risk taking and sensation seeking activities which include substance abuse, promiscuous sexual and violent behaviour which strongly influence the adolescents future (Casey, Jones & Somerville, 2011; Gardner & Steinberg, 2005; Steinberg, Albert, Cauffman, Banich, Graham & Woolard, 2008).

The concepts of adolescence and puberty are often used interchangeably. Although the timing of these two periods does indeed overlap, the concepts are, however not similar. Where puberty refers to the attainment of sexual maturation, adolescence refers to the gradual period of childhood to adulthood. Adolescence is therefore a process of events rather than one discrete event (Spear, 2000). The age period that is linked to adolescence is between the age of 12 and 19 where after the adolescent will enter adulthood. Louw and Louw (2007: 278) define adolescence as *"the period of transition between childhood and adulthood"*.

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Duncan and Raudenbush (1999) stated that for an adolescent to make this transition successful, the adolescent must develop the skill of participating in activities within different social environments. Witt and Caldwell (2010) stated that when adolescents go through this period they will develop the desire to develop their ability to do things on their own and to become more independent from their parents. It was also found that adolescents experience a change in interest in activities as they go through the different stages of adolescence. Adolescence is composed of three different stages namely "early adolescence" (12-14 years), "middle adolescence" (14-17 years) and "late adolescence" (17-19 years) and during each of these three stages the adolescent will face a different level of challenges that they will need to deal with (Witt & Caldwell, 2010).

The framework below is a guideline to assist adults in understanding the developmental process of adolescence. The framework indicates the adolescent's interpersonal context, for example the social support group. Demographic and intrapersonal moderating variables, for example family structure, gender neighbourhood and socioeconomic status have an effect on both the adolescent's developmental outcomes and primary developmental changes. Developmental outcomes include identity, autonomy and achievement and the primary developmental changes include physical, cognitive and socio-emotional changes. It must be borne in mind that the framework model is developmental as well as contextual (Holmbech, Friedman, Abad & Jandasek as cited in Wolfe & Mash, 2006).
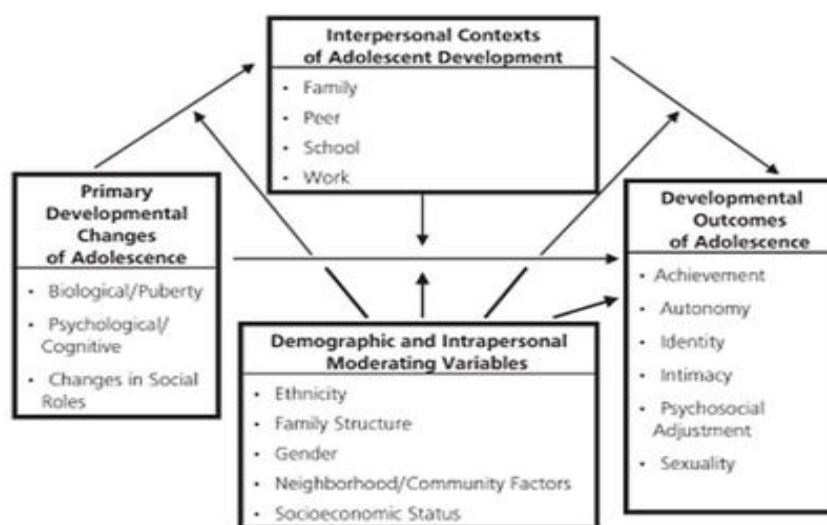
Figure 2.1: Developmental framework

Development during adolescence takes place in interaction between the adolescent and the social environment (Francisco, Perkins, Borden & Keith, 2003). Adolescent development is defined by Steinberg, Vandelle & Bornsten (2011:10) as being *"relatively enduring growth and change that makes an individual better adapted to the environment, by enhancing the individual's ability to engage in, understand, and experience complex behaviour, thinking, and emotions"*. Successful transition to adulthood therefore implies that an adolescent has gained the necessary skills that will enable adaptation to the environment as well as the ability to function within a given environment.

Development during adolescence can be viewed as either positive or negative (Francisco *et al.*, 2003). In positive development the adolescent is able to overcome developmental challenges, whereas in negative development the adolescents cannot accomplish this. Hamilton & Hamilton (2004) stated that adolescents who follow the positive developmental path will increase their chances of having a healthier and more fulfilling life during adolescence and as adults.

During the transition from childhood to adulthood the adolescent will also be faced with numerous developmental challenges that they will need to deal with, and it is therefore important that the adolescent develop the required core life skills during the period of adolescence that will assist the adolescent in becoming a fully functional adult within society.

2.2.1 Developmental challenges

Santrock (2005:327) defines developmental challenges as *"the pattern of change in human capabilities that begins at conception and continues throughout the life span."* Developmental challenges during adolescence include physical, socio-emotional, cognitive and moral development. This section will explore the developmental challenges that adolescents have to achieve.

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2.2.1.1 Physical Development

Steinberg *et al.,* (2011) defines physical development as the inner and outer changes in an individual's body, as well as changes in the individual's brain and physical ability. Physical development during adolescence starts during the early stage of adolescence and ends during the late stage of adolescence and consists of both growth spurt and sexual maturation (Louw & Louw, 2007).

The onset of the growth spurt which includes change in the adolescent's weight and height will vary between boys and girls. Growth spurt in boys starts between the age ages of 12 to 13 until their late 20's and in girls between the ages of 10 to 11 and ends during late adolescence.

The process of sexual maturation, known as puberty, plays a contributing role in the development of an adolescent's self-esteem (Tobin-Ricards, Boxer & Petersen, 1983). Puberty in girls starts two years before puberty in boys. Puberty initiates when the brain stimulates hormones that activate the primary sex characteristics to develop. It ends when females reach menarche and males semenarche. Hormones are secreted by the endocrine glands and passes through the bloodstream to different organs. This process is regulated by the endocrine system in the body (Steinberg *et al.*, 2011). A variety of hormones are involved in the physical development of adolescents. In males the sex hormones include androgens called testosterone and androsterone whilst the female hormone oestrogen is also produced in males, only in smaller amounts. The hormones somatotrophin and gonadotrophin are produced in both male and female adolescents (Burgess Chamberlain, 2009). The hormones androgen and oestrogen is accountable for the primary and secondary sex characteristics that develop during adolescence. Both of these hormones are responsible for stimulating puberty (Steinberg *et al.*, 2011). Primary sex characteristics include the sex organs with secondary sexual characteristics in male adolescents for example body hair and in female adolescent's breasts and body hair (Louw & Louw, 2007; Marti-Henneberg & Vizmanos, 1997).

Adolescents can either mature early or later, and the timing of maturation has a tremendous effect on the adolescent. This tends to differ between boys and girls.

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Characteristics of early maturing in boys include the adolescent being more confident about themselves and having a higher self-esteem. It results in the adolescent being better equipped in controlling emotions and tends to increase performance in sport. Boys that mature later tend to be more emotionally unstable and prone to depression. Academically these boys perform poorly and they also tend to be more 'childish' (Louw & Louw, 2007).

Girls that mature early tend to show poor performance on an academic level. Early maturation also affects peer group association as the early matured individual may struggle to fit into a peer group. They tend to be more interested in having a relationship with boys that are older than what they are, but they are emotionally not ready for the relationship and they are also more likely to become pregnant during their teenage years (Louw & Louw, 2007). Adolescent girls that mature later have characteristics that include them having high levels of self-confidence, being socially acceptable and to have better control over their emotions (Williams & Currie, 2000; Louw & Louw, 2007).

2.2.1.2 Socio-emotional Development

Socio-emotional development can be defined as changes that occur in an individual's relationship with family and peer groups, becoming emotionally intelligent and establishing an identity (Steinberg *et al.,* 2011). During socio-emotional development the adolescent is faced with the challenge to develop skills that allow them to control their emotions in different situations, to handle stress, conflict and to develop relationships. This is known as becoming emotionally intelligent (Goleman, 2005) Adolescents also have to develop an identity in which they need to accept who they are; their perception of how they are seen by others; and, develop a set of morals and beliefs. Erikson (Louw & Louw, 2007) stated that during the process of developing one's identity, which consists of self- esteem and self-concept, a moratorium must be acknowledged as one of the key aspects. The moratorium can be defined as a time in which the adolescent will explore with different types of morals and beliefs and will engage in different types of relationships. One of the characteristics of the moratorium is the adolescent experiencing an identity crisis in which the adolescent will make critical decisions aspects regarding their lives. Decisions may include if

they want to become intimate with their relationship partner and making the choice if they want to pursue further education (Rathus, 2013). Being faced with these life changing decisions can put a sustained amount of pressure on the adolescent (Crain, 2013).

The emotional support provided by the peer group and family will have an effect on the development of the self-esteem. During late adolescence the support from the peer group will, however, outweigh the support of the family. Adolescents that receive the required amount of support from these groups are more likely to develop a positive image about themselves (Costigan, Cauce & Etchison, 2007). According to Erikson this is one of the most important aspects during adolescent development, as an individual with a low self-esteem indicates that there may be a gap between the individual's self-concept and self-esteem (Harter, 1990; Santrock, 2005; Louw & Louw, 2007; Goleman, 2005; Witt & Caldwell, 2010).

Moral development according to Molchanov (2013:616) can be viewed as "*the process of development of behaviour regulation on the bases of interiorized system of norms*" during which the adolescents will develop a set of norms and values that will assist the person in making a decision between right and wrong in different situations. According to Molchanov (2013) an adolescent's morals plays an essential part in their social life and the adolescent's family and peer group therefore have an influence on the adolescent's moral development.

Rathus (2013) stated that the ability to initiate a decision is considered as one of the most important aspects for an adolescent to ensure effective social development and active recreation are voluntary and therefore the ideal environment for adolescents to develop this skill. Lawrence Kohlberg, an American psychologist, well known for his theory on moral development, identified three levels of moral development. The three levels include pre-conventional, conventional and post-conventional morality and each of these levels consists of two stages each through which each individual will progress. See table 2.1 for an outline of the levels of development according to Kohlberg (Woolfolk, 2010).

Level one, the pre-conventional level in which the child tries to avoid being punished by thinking of the consequences that he will bare if they disobey the rules set by their parents or school (Fleming, 2006).The first stage in level 1 is called heteronomous morality and punishment orientation and states that the child sees their parents as powerful authorities who's rules that consists of right and wrong needs to be obeyed in order to avoid punishment (Podolskiy, 2007; Fleming, 2006). The second stage, the pre-conventional level, focuses on individualism and exchange. In this stage it becomes clear to the individual that by following the rules they will be rewarded with benefits (Podolskiy, 2007). During this stage it becomes known that each person will have their own perspective of what is right and wrong. The second level is known as the conventional level and is characterised by the individual becoming more familiar with the rules in a social context and being able to distinguish more effectively between right and wrong (Fleming, 2006; Louw & Louw,2007). The third stage is known as interpersonal relationships. During this stage the individual sees social acceptance as highly important and therefore take what other people approve of as appropriate behaviour into consideration (Fleming, 2006; Louw & Louw, 2007). Stage four is the morality of social system in which it is required for the individual to obey the rules of authority (Louw & Louw, 2007). The third and last level of Kohlberg's theory is the post-conventional level. At this level the individual base their moral reasoning values on the principles. In stage five of the moral development theory the individual is aware and understands that they need to obey the laws and regulations of the country and individuals in this stage are generally more open to democracy (Fleming, 2006; Podolskiy, 2007). Finally in the sixth stage the individual does not determine what right and wrong is by concerning it to rules, but rather by what they perceive as proper behaviour according to their moral values (Fleming, 2006). Most individuals only reach stage four in this developmental theory and rarely advance to the third level (Louw & Louw, 2007).

Table 2.1 Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Reasoning (Woolfolk, 2010: 99)

Level 1: Pre-conventional Moral Reasoning Judgement is based on personal needs and other's rules.	
Stage 1	Punishment-obedience orientation Rules are obeyed to avoid punishment. A good or a bad action is determined by its physical consequences.
Stage 2	Personal reward orientation. Personal needs determine right and wrong.
Level 2: Conventional Moral Reasoning Judgement is based on other's approval, family expectations, traditional values, the laws of society and loyalty to country.	
Stage 3	Good boy – Nice girl orientation Good means 'nice'. It is determined by what pleases, aids and is approved by others.
Stage 4	Law and order orientation. Laws are absolute. Authority must be respected and the social order maintained.
Level 3: Post-conventional Moral Reasoning	
Stage 5	Social contract orientation. Good is determined by socially agreed-upon standards of individual rights.
Stage 6	Universal Ethical Principle Orientation. Good and right is a matter of individual conscience and involve abstract concepts of justice, human dignity and equality.

During adolescence there is a clear shift in the adolescent's relationship with their parents to the adolescent's relationship with their peer group. Regardless of this shift in relationship, the adolescents still value their parents as an important part in their lives. Adolescents, however, seem to be more comfortable to talk to their peers about personal problems that they are facing (O'Koon, 1997). The type of peer group relationships will, however, vary between the three stages of adolescence.

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During early adolescence it is important for the adolescent to be accepted into a group in which they feel they belong. This peer group normally consists of one group which is usually of the same gender (Savin - Williams & Berndt, 1990). In middle adolescence, peer groups consist more of different genders and the adolescent is also more aware that individuals are different in appearance, values and opinion. During late adolescence, an individual is more matured and becomes more interested in having a romantic relationships or a special friendship with one person (Micucci, 2009).

2.2.1.3. Cognitive Development

Steinberg *et al.,* (2011:5) defines cognitive development as *"development that involves changes in intellectual abilities, including memory, thinking, reasoning, language, problem solving, and decision making"*. Characteristics of cognitive development include changes in problem solving, emotions, memory, thinking rationally, learning and motivation (Berg & Theron, 2004). The adolescent therefore undergoes numerous cognitive developmental changes that will impact their logical thinking ability, problem solving when difficult situations arise as well as an improvement in their ability to communicate (Santrock , 2005). It is important that adults are aware of cognitive changes. Cognitive changes must be considered as the adolescent is only now becoming familiar with new skills. Over-expectation regarding development and skills can put unnecessary stress on the adolescent (Burgess Chamberlain, 2009).

Jean Piaget (as cited in Berg & Theron, 2004) stated that the process through which an individual develops their cognitive abilities consist of four stages. Every individual's cognitive composition is qualitatively alike, however, each individual will move through these stages at a different pace (Keenan & Evans, 2009). Piaget also identified two characteristics that are associated with these stages. The first characteristic is that the stages are fixed and the individual will move through them in the correct order and that a stage cannot be missed. The second characteristic alludes that all the stages involved in cognitive development are universally applicable for all cultures and races (Keenan & Evans, 2009). The four stages that Piaget suggested include sensory (birth to two years); pre-operational (two to seven

years); concrete operational (seven to eleven years) and formal operational (eleven throughout adulthood). Piaget believed that an individual reaches their full cognitive potential during the formal operational stage in adolescence (Singer & Revenson, 1996). During the formal operational stage the adolescent should develop the necessary cognitive skills to allow rational and logical decision-making when faced with situations consisting of multiple aspects and choices available (Pressley & McComick, 2007; Simatwa, 2010). The stages of Piaget's cognitive development are illustrated in table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development (Woolfolk, 2010: 34)

	Approximate age	Characteristics
Sensorimotor	0 to 2 years	Begins to make use of imitation, memory and thought. Begins to recognise that objects do not cease to exist when they are hidden. Moves from reflex actions to goal-directed activity.
Preoperational	2 to 7 years	Gradually develops use of language and the ability to think in symbolic form. Able to think operations through logically in one direction. Has difficulties seeing another person's point of view.
Concrete operational	7 to 11 years	Able to solve concrete problems in logical fashion. Understands laws of conservation and is able to classify and seriate. Understands reversibility.
Formal operational	11 years to adulthood	Able to solve abstract problems in logical fashion. Becomes more scientific in thinking. Develops concerns about social issues and identity.

Even though Piaget's stages of cognitive development provide a general guideline, cognitive development during adolescence tend to be more complex. A variety of factors impact on the adolescents' cognitive development which, in turn result in an impact on the adolescents' thought processes and ability to solve abstract problems in a logical fashion.

Burgess Chamberlain (2009: 24) explains this adolescent behaviour by comparing the adolescents' brain to a car with a good accelerator but a weak brake as the adolescent brain undergoes major changes of which several will not be complete until they reach their early to middle 20's. Physiological explanations of adolescent behaviour highlight that the adolescent lacks a mature frontal cortex to suppress the 'just do it' impulses resulting in actions being taken without consideration of possible consequences. A decrease in the level of the 'feel good' neurotransmitter, dopamine, add to the complexity of this developmental period (Burgess Chamberlain, 2009). In addition to various changes in the brain that occur during adolescence, massive surges of hormones worsen the situation. Hormonal surges are associated with gender-specific changes in the adolescent brain, providing a partial explanation of gender-specific behaviour such as the need for risk-taking and sensation-seeking associated with the male adolescent (Burgess Chamberlain, 2009; Dahl, 2004).

The limbic system, consisting of the hippocampus and amygdale, undergo various changes in adolescence (Spear, 2000). This system plays an important role in the emotions and long term memory of the adolescent. (Burgess Chamberlain, 2009; Saladin, 2007). The hippocampus in the brain is sensitive to the hormone oestrogen while the amygdale is more sensitive to the male sex hormones (Burgess Chamberlain, 2009) thereby contributing to the differences between the male and female adolescent development.

The prefrontal cortex is responsible for decision making and rational thinking and will only be fully matured when the adolescent enters their early 20's. The phase in which the prefrontal cortex is still maturing leads to the adolescent participating in risk taking situations without thinking what the consequences will be (Crone & Van der Molen, 2007; Burgess Chamberlain, 2009).

An additional potential contributor to the stressfulness of adolescence according to Spear (2000) is the age-associated transformation in sleep. The phase-delay in the adolescent's sleep onset leads to an amount of sleep deprivation. This is a crucial element to consider, especially during the school week when the adolescent is required to start school earlier than over weekends. The loss of sleep may, in turn, affect the adolescent's stress recovery process as the increase in delay of sleep onset increase the levels of the stress-related hormone, cortisol.

2.2.1.4. Behavioural Development

Changes occurring within the adolescent brain directly impact age specific characteristics. Behavioural change characteristics of adolescence include the attainment of skills necessary to gain independence which may present as risk taking and sensation seeking, and heighten level of independence of the family structure. Behavioural changes, although influenced by cognitive development, are not deterministic and are also influenced by social and environmental factors (Spear, 2000). Spear (2000) asserts that adolescent development must provide the necessary skills for independence in order to successfully negotiate the developmental transition from childhood to adulthood. The adolescent-associated increase in risk taking and sensation seeking provide the opportunity to participate in new behaviours, however a lack of skills to negotiate independence, may prove problematic (Spear, 2000).

Well known behavioural characteristics of adolescents include a change in social behaviour as well as in increase in risk taking and sensation seeking behaviour.

2.2.1.4.1 Social behaviour

Spear (2000) emphasises that social interaction and group association are of particular importance during adolescence. In a study done by Spear (2000) it was shown that the adolescents peer group provide a significant source of positive experiences for adolescents, during this study adolescents reported that they are most happy when they could interact with their peer group. Social interactions with peers may facilitate both positive social behaviour and antisocial behaviour.

2.2.1.4.2 Risk taking and sensation

Dahl (2004) argues that although adolescents are more mature and better at decision-making than young children, they are nonetheless prone to erratic and impulsive behaviour and fluctuations in emotions. Burgess Chamberlain (2009: 24) explains this adolescent behaviour by comparing the adolescent brain to a car with a good accelerator but a weak brake as the adolescent brain undergoes major changes of which several will not be complete until they reach their early to middle 20's. Spear (2000) stated that this period can be seen as being both dangerous and consisting of opportunities to develop once self-esteem.

Risk-taking is defined in developmental literature as the *"engagement in behaviours that are associated with some probability of undesirable results"* (Boyer, 2006: 298). Britton (2007) and Spear (2000) describes risk-taking as the performance of actions with the possibility of loss or injury and includes a wide range of activities, for example, alcohol consumption, tobacco use, unsafe sexual activity and dangerous driving. Sensation-seeking behaviour are associated with risk-taking during adolescence (Rodham, Brewer, Mistral & Stallard, 2006) and is defined as *"the eliciting of behaviours on the part of the self or others to amplify stimuli for the production of an exciting experience"* (Britton, 2007:9) as well as *"the desire to seek out novel experiences and taking risks in order to achieve them"* (Casey, Jones, & Somerville, 2011:30). Donohew, Zimmerman, Cupp, Novak, Colon & Abell, (2000) add that sensation-seeking is the search for not only novel experiences, but experiences which are complex resulting in intense sensations. Sensation-seeking behaviour does not include any forced behaviour and is done voluntarily, even though peer pressure does strongly impact on decisions made by the adolescent and that they feel more accepted by the peer group if they participate in these activities it remains voluntary (Spear, 2000).

Spear (2000) stated that there is a positive side to risk taking and sensation seeking behaviour as an increase in risk-taking and sensation seeking behaviour may provide an opportunity to socialise with individuals outside their normal environment. According to Britton (2007) and Boyer (2006) sensation-seeking and risk-taking behaviour appear to function collectively during development, with many of the risk-

taking and sensation-seeking behaviour emerging, increasing and peaking in adolescence and that the level of satisfaction of this risk taking will vary between each adolescent (Spear, 2000). Spear (2000) further hypothesised that risk taking involved during adolescents may be linked to coping with stress in addition to satisfying the need for novel and intense stimuli.

2.3 ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT IN LOWER SOCIO – ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES

Socio-economic status (SES), commonly measured by household income, educational attainment, or occupation, is a major source of health and developmental inequalities. Neighbourhood socio economic status measuring area level variables, for example percentage unemployed and median household income, may also affect the development of younger residents (Cerin & Leslie, 2008). Research in social sciences has long been concerned with the effects of residence in lower socio-economic status communities on youth development.

The Social Disorganisation Theory theorises that structural neighbourhood factors, such as poverty, residential instability and single parenthood are of prime importance in explaining behaviour through their ability to promote neighbourhoods organisation, including formal and informal institutions, which maintains public order (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan, Klebanov & Sealand, 1993). In a research article by Brooks-Gunn *et al.,* (1993) the question relating to the influence of the neighbourhood on adolescent development is conclusively shown to be relevant. Neighbourhoods are a part of what ecological models, for example Bronfenbrenner, describe to be the context of a series of ecological systems, or environments, in which the adolescent reside. The authors utilise a diagram (see figure 2.2) to illustrate the important environmental factors that impact on adolescent development.

An interesting finding in the abovementioned study is that the impact of neighbourhood characteristics differ between early childhood and later adolescence as adolescents have a more direct and immediate interaction with institutions outside the family structure. In the diagram these two types of relationships are illustrated as

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continuous lines for early childhood and continuous as well as dotted lines for adolescence.
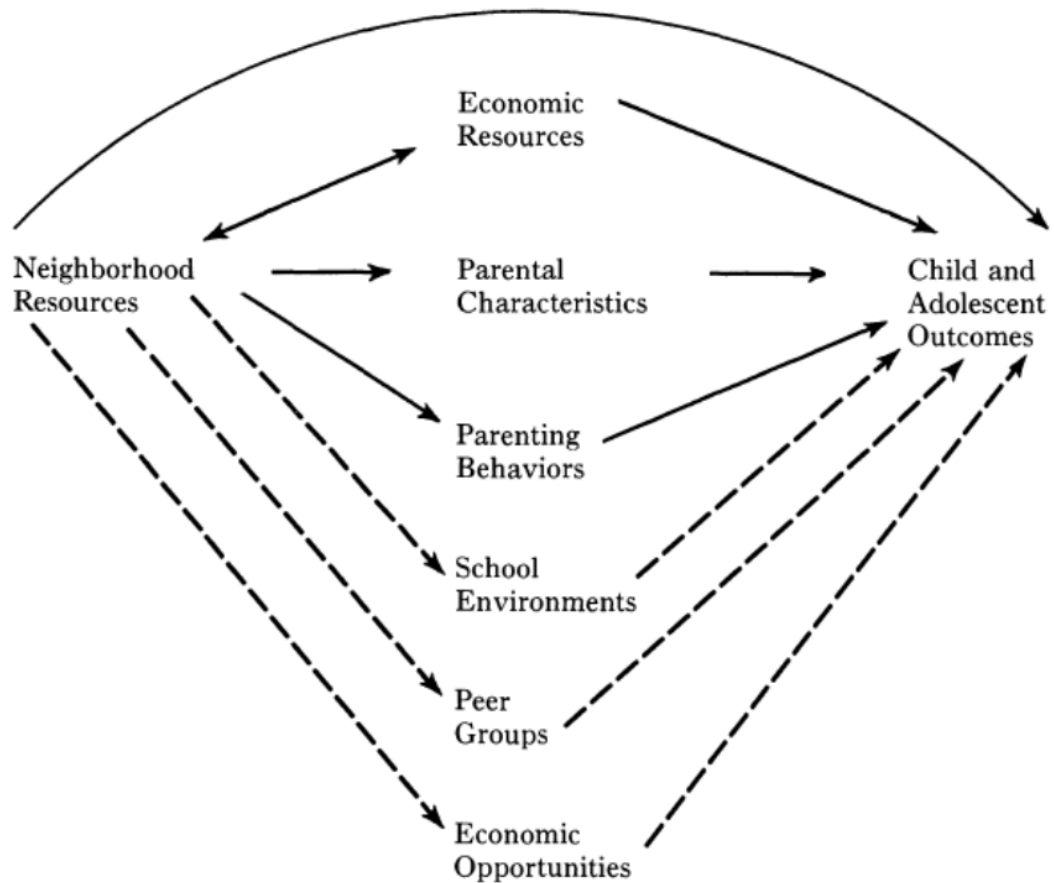
Figure 2.2 neighbourhood impacts on development

The social cognitive theory as posited by Albert Bandura confirms the impact of the environment on an individual's development. An individual's life is therefore shaped by a reciprocal interplay between personal factors and diverse influences in changing situations and environments. Adolescents growing up in lower socio-economic status communities and marginalised neighbourhoods are therefore undoubtedly influenced by the constraints and challenges within the environment as illustrated in figure 2.3 (Bandura, 2006). Bandura argued that a stronger perceived self-efficacy will contribute to strengthening an individual's commitments to tasks and changes. This

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is an important element in the theory that contribute to the importance in providing active sport and recreation opportunities in which adolescents can obtain crucial life skills that will contribute to strengthening self-efficacy and ability to exercise control over the course of their lives (Haudenhuyse, Theeboom and Skille, 2014). The sport and recreation provider consequently play a crucial role in impacting on the lives of adolescents in lower socio-economic and marginalised communities.
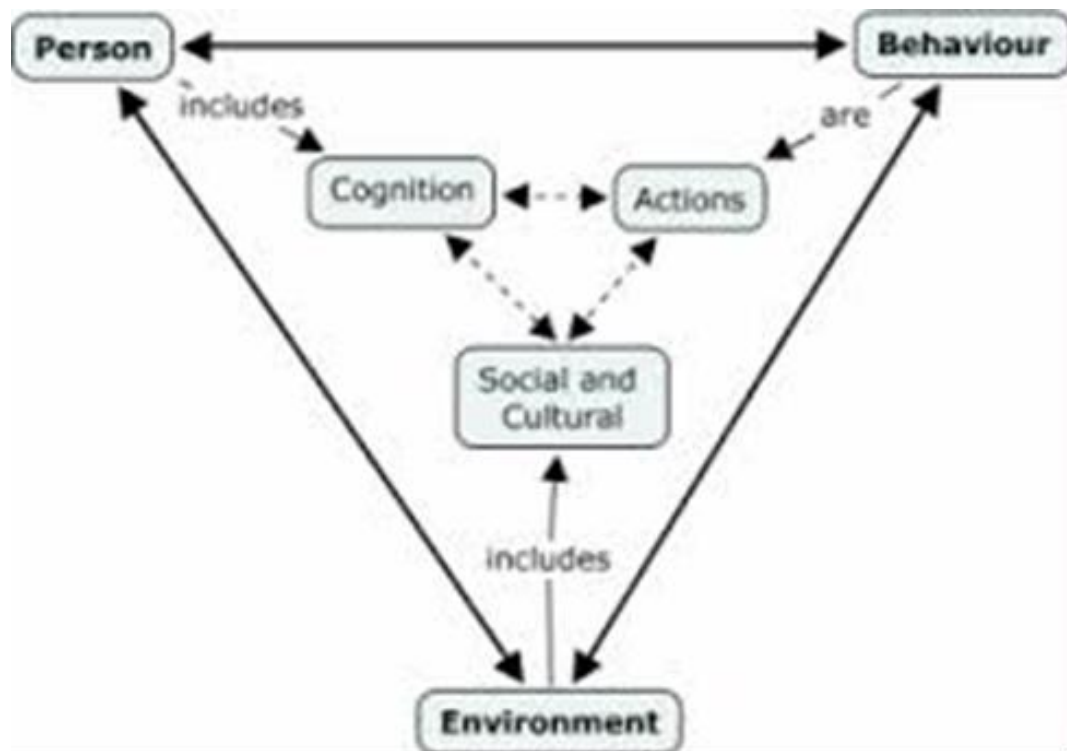
Figure 2.3 Albert Bandura Socio-cognitive Theory

A phenomenon called deprivation amplification (Estabrooks, Lee & Gyurcsik, 2003) emphasise that neighbourhoods in which residents have fewer personal resources often have fewer public resources that can buffer individual deprivation. This resulting lack in public resources coincides with a lack in physical activity resource availability. The resources that are available are often ill-maintained or inaccessible to residents in the neighbourhood. Functional sport and recreation facilities are significantly less available in lower socio-economic status communities. Even though a linear causal relationship cannot be confirmed between a lack in resources

and a low level of physical activity in lower socio-economic communities, it is a proven fact that residents in lower socio-economic status communities are less likely to engage in physical activity compared to residents in middle to higher socio-economic status communities. Haudenhuyse, Theeboom and Skille (2014) suggest that the Model of Social Vulnerability should be utilised as foundation when working with adolescents in lower socio-economic communities. This model allows the sport and recreation provider to focus on actions and interactions when working with socially vulnerable adolescents in a sport and recreation context as it provides a broader view of the social context in which the adolescent is situated. Interactions with coaches and recreation providers influence the extent to which adolescents experience the potential positive aspects of sport and recreation participation.

Socially vulnerable adolescents are more prone than their peers to be confronted with feelings of incompetence, failure, rejection and a lower self-image. The concept of social vulnerability (see figure 2.4) denotes the fragmented and weak relationship that marginalised adolescents may have with the institutions within society. Institutions include the family structure, school and justice system. A contributing factor to the weakening of these relationships often derives from a progressive accumulation of negative experiences with societal institutions. This can ultimately lead to a perception of social disconnectedness, therefore sport and recreation opportunities provide a lifeline to marginalised, vulnerable adolescents. Haudenhuyse *et al.,* (2014) assert that, in comparison with other socio-cultural practices, for example youth centres, sports and recreation based practices are more capable in attracting adolescents independently of their socio-economic background. Sport and recreation opportunities also seem to provide an ideal context to reach the harder-to-reach adolescents.
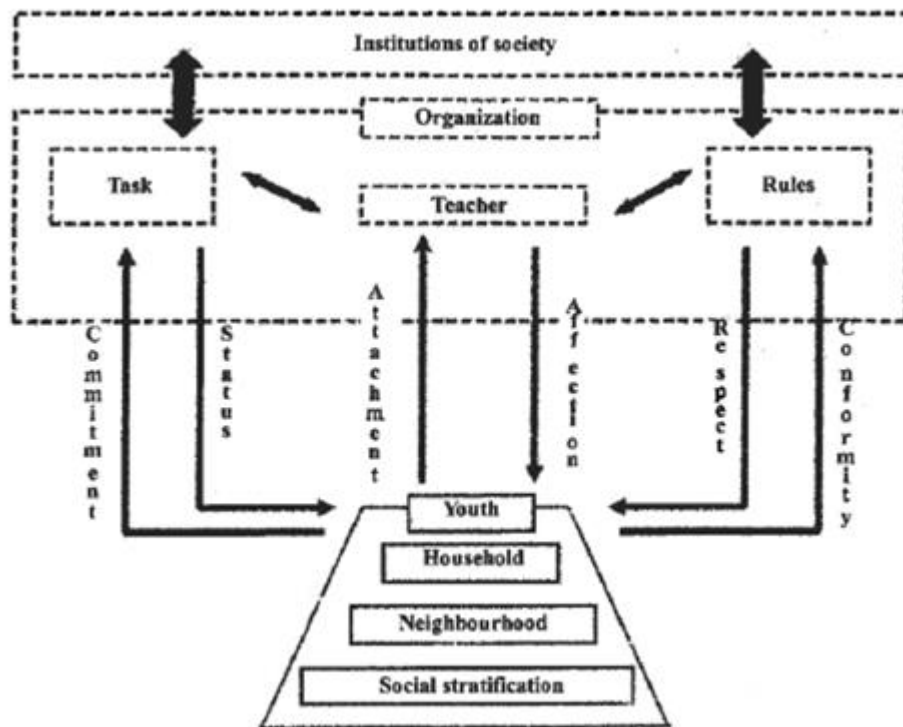
Figure 2.4: The social vulnerability model

Adolescence is a stressful time period in an individual's life. Living in a lower socio-economic area will impact on the level of stress experienced and also how it is controlled and given resolve. A lack of family and community support will, in addition, exacerbate the situation. Spear (2000) emphasises that a number of potential sources of stress exist for the adolescent. During the transition from childhood to adulthood, the adolescent is confronted with numerous developmental changes and challenges associated with puberty, changing socio-environmental contexts and the gradual move toward independence. Seeking out and learning from novel stressors and challenges is crucial for emotional and intellectual growth and development. These challenges, however, also have the potential to overwhelm the adolescent and lead to significant stress. Due to the number of transitions and stressors faced by adolescents it is often said that adolescents are in a chronic state of threatened homeostasis. The adolescent requires adaptive processes to restore and sustain this equilibrium thereby necessitating the development of life skills that will assist in facing daily and future stressors.

2.4 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Chapter two focused on adolescent development with an emphasis on developmental challenges. The chapter concluded with an explanation of adolescent development in lower socio economic status communities. Chapter three will introduce the topic of life skill development through active recreation.

CHAPTER THREE
LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ACTIVE RECREATION

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In chapter three the Ecological theory of Bronfenbrenner (1979) which will be utilised as a theoretical lens for this study will be discussed. In the subsequent paragraphs the definition of life skills and active recreation is provided and the ten core life skills as identified by the World Health Organisation (WHO: 1997) are discussed. A discussion of the two current approaches namely the GOAL program and SUPER through which life skills could be developed are discussed followed by a discussion of what active learning is.

3.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The ecological model was developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner in 1979 and was extended numerous times over the years (Bjorklund & Blasi, 2012) for the purpose of investigating an individual's developmental processes within different environments (Rew, 2005; Brownrigg, 2006).The ecological theory assists researchers in answering the question of how a child's development is effected by their social relationships and the world around them (Johnson, 2008).

Bronfenbrenner believed that a person's development can be effected by everything in their surrounding environment. He divided an individual's environment into five different levels (Shaffer & Kipp, 2014). The model demonstrated how these systems relate with both the individual as well as with each other, and how this can affect the individuals' development (Shaffer, 2009). The levels include the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and chronosystem (Watts, Cockcroft & Duncan, 2009). Bronfenbrenner's systems will be explained in more detail in the following paragraph.

The Microsystems is the most influential level of the ecological theory. It is the innermost circle of the model and is described by Bronfenbrenner as the individual's immediate environment as it is the system that is the closest to the person and which they have direct contact with (Martin & Fabes, 2009). The microsystem is described by White, Hayes & Livesey (2013) as the most proximal level and consists of the individuals direct and closest social group for example school, family and peer group).The relationship in this level is described as being bio-directional, which implies that one's actions towards others in your Microsystems will affect how they treat you in return .Both Martin and Fabes (2009) and Kail and Cavanaugh (2014) describe this system as having a strong influence on an individual's development. Shuffer (2009) also supports this fact by stating that the individual can be influenced by any member of their social group or the individuals can have an influence on them. The mesosystem is described by Bronfenbrenner as the interaction between a persons' microsystems (White *et al.*, 2013) through which different settings in the adolescents life becomes connected (Shuffer, 2009). It can also be described as were a persons' individual microsystems do not function independently but are inner connected and starts to influence one another.

These interactions have a direct impact on the individual's development. This can be demonstrated by explaining the example of an adolescent experiencing a bad day at school. This can result in having a 'bad mood' in their home setting. In this manner it carries over to different environmental settings which in this case shows a connection between the school and home setting (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014; Martin & Fabes , 2009). Adolescents' parents are actively involved in their school environment such as attending parent teacher meetings and volunteering in extracurricular school activities. This is seen as having a positive effect on their development due to the fact that all the aspects in the microsystem worked together. If the adolescents' aspects in their microsystem work against each other it will have a negative effect on their development (White *et al.*, 2013).

The exosystem consists of the changes that occur in a social setting that the adolescent is not involved in, but these changes still has an influence on their development even though they have no contribution in the decision making process (Shaffer, 2009). An example is aspects that occur in the parents working

environment. For instance the parents getting a promotion or losing their jobs will have an effect on the adolescents life even though they may never have been in their parents working environment (Levine & Munsch, 2013).

The macrosystem is the outer most layer of the model and consists of the cultural environment in which the person lives. It also includes the other systems that affect them, for example the economy, political values and cultural values (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014). Bronfenbrenner also states that this system dictates two aspects: firstly the manner in which each child should be treated and taught, and secondly, goals that they should have in mind to accomplish (Shaffer, 2009).

The chromosystem is described as the time in relation to a person's development. Time could be relevant in different ways and can be divided into two parts. Firstly is the importance of the timing of an event during a person's development (figure 3.1). An example is the death of a parent will have a different effect on a three year old than on a teenager. Secondly are the events that are unique to particular generation. This indicates that time could also be an influence because of conditions that exist during a person's life for example technology is an important part of the current generation adolescents chromosystem. Current adolescents grow up using computers, cell phones, iPads' or playing video games. This can have a developmental impact on their learning style and social skills in comparison to adolescents growing up twenty years ago.
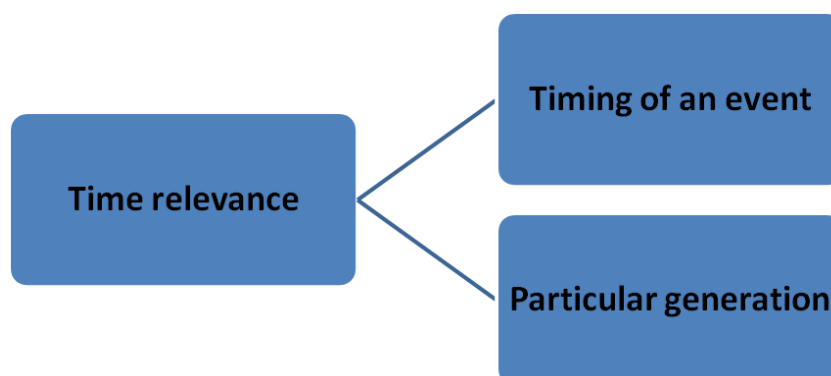
Figure 3.1: the time in relation to an individual's development

Each of these levels includes systems that influence the development of an individual in some way. As the individual moves through the different stages of life (childhood, adolescence and adulthood) the types of environments as well as the amount of environments that they need to be successful in will differ, for instance an adolescent needs to be successful in their family, school and neighbourhood environments. Baring in mind that each individual's environment will vary from each other, the form of what is seen as being successful will also vary (Danish & Nellen, 1997). Figure 3.2. provides a visual explanation of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of human development.
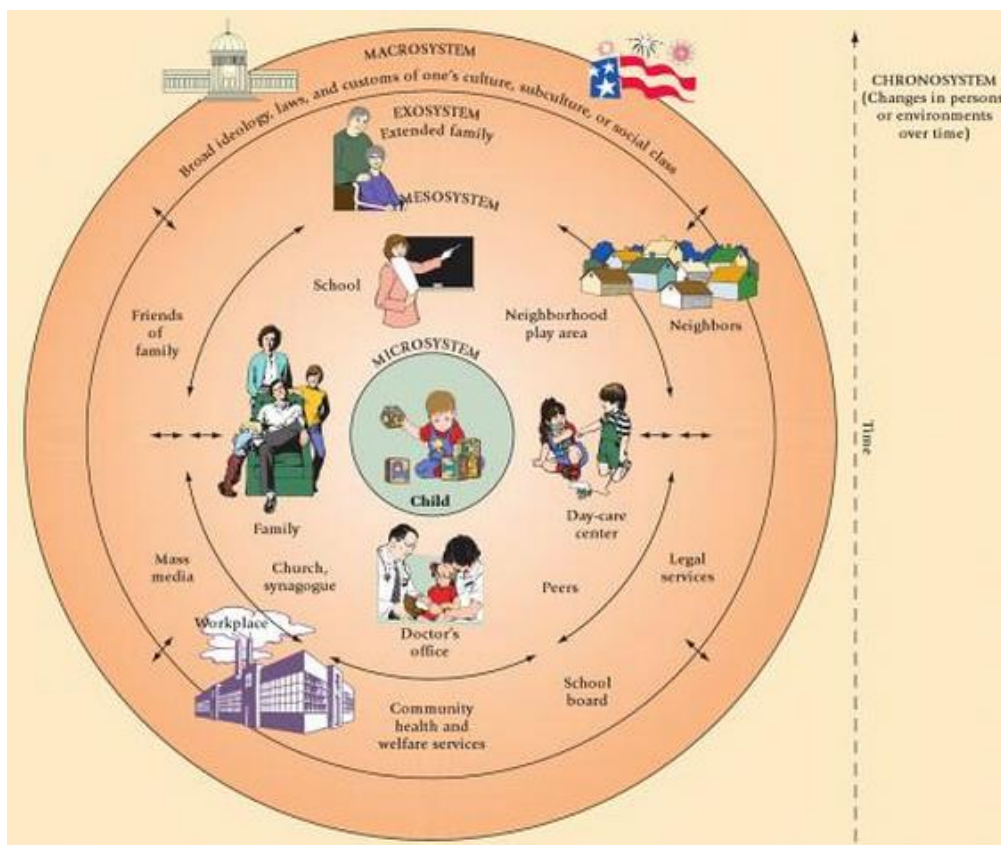
Figure 3.2: Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of human development

3.3. LIFE SKILLS DEFINED

Theokas, Danish, Hodge, Heke & Forneris (as sited in Holt, 2008:72) defined life skills as *"skills that enable individuals succeed in the different environments in which they life in such as school, home and their neighbourhoods and with their peer*

groups" Life skills are essential behavioural, cognitive, interpersonal and intrapersonal (Danish, Forneris & Wallace, 2005) skills that an adolescent needs to consist of to enable them to face day to day challenges that may occur in their life's and later in becoming successful adults. Mahmoudi and Moshayed (2012) stated that culture will have different perceptions as what they perceive as life skills components, but that previous studies suggested that the ten life skills identified by the World Health Organisation (1997) are the foundation to ensure that adolescents become fully functional adults.

Mahmoudi and Moshayedi (2012) describe adolescence as a phase in which the adolescent will have the desire to experiment different aspects and then build up experience from those situations and learn from it. They stated that it is therefore important that the adolescents receive guidance in the form of life skills. They acknowledged that, because adolescence is a period in which individuals focused on sensation seeking, it makes it more challenging for parents to provide them with guidance as the adolescents dislike the fact that their parents want to provide them with advice. It is therefore important that they receive this guidance from an external person.

3.3.1 Core life skills

The World Health Organization (WHO 1997:1) defined core life skills as *"the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life."* This definition suggests that each day the adolescent will be faced with new demands and challenges that may be more challenging than the previous day and that adolescents must develop and master the skill to adapt and take control of the situation that they find themselves. They also have to remain motivated, positive and believing in themselves when they are faced with difficult and demanding situations.

The World Health Organization (WHO: 1997) identified ten core life skills that can assist and support the adolescent in these difficult situations in which they must make decisions that may provide them with a better change in life. The ten core life skills include; *"decision making, coping with stress, problem solving, coping with*

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emotions, creative thinking, self-awareness, interpersonal relationship skills, critical thinking and effective communication" (World Health Organization, 1997).

The ten core life skills identified will be described in more detail in the following paragraphs.
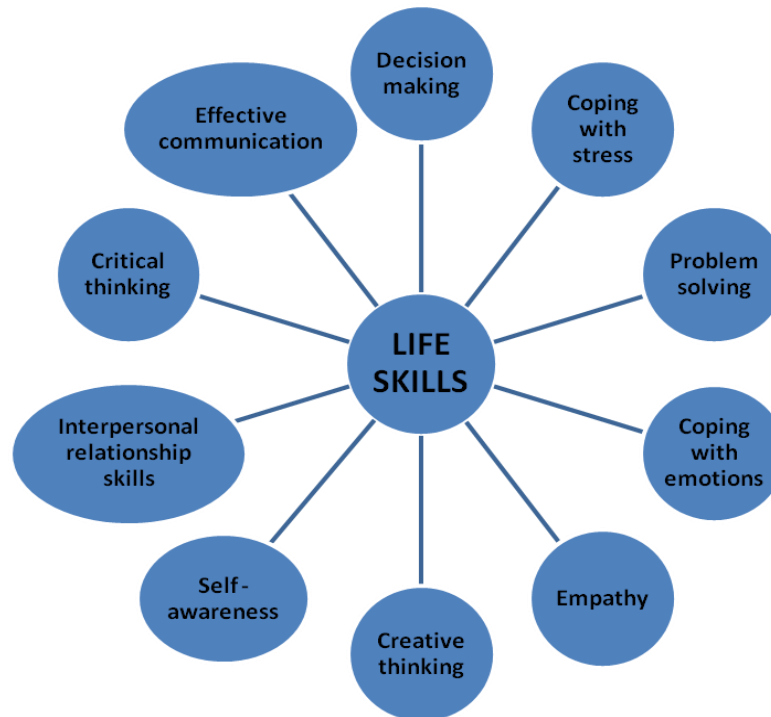
Fig 3.3: The ten core life skills

3.3.1.1 Decision making

Barraclough, Conory and Lee (2004:404) defined decision making as *"an evaluation process of selecting a particular action from a set of alternatives"* During adolescence the adolescent will be faced with the challenge of making their own decisions. They need to take responsibility for those decisions and the consequences that may arise from their choices, adolescents need to develop the skill to choose the more rational option when faced with a decision (World Health Organization, 1997; Barraclough *et al.,* 2004).Decision making can include anything from social to cognitive aspects in the adolescents life and the adolescent may also base their decisions on what motivates them (Mann, Harmoni & Power, 1989).There are

numerous decision making models of which one is the Rational Decision Making model. This model states that the individual does not only think about what option they want to choice when faced with a decision, but also at the same time keep in mind what the consequences of each decision will be (Creasey & Jarvis, 2013). Another normative model suggests that there are five stages of decision making namely, identifying all the option available, recognising all the consequences that will associated with each option, the adolescent must then weigh up each consequence to determine which one will be the best. The adolescent must then determine what the changes are for those consequences to occur and lastly they should apply the above to information and apply it to a decision algorithm to insure that they can make the best possible decision (Furby & Beyth-Maron, 1992 ; Albert & Steinberg, 2011).

Adolescents participate in risk taking activities like promiscuous sexual behaviour, substance abuse and belonging to a gang. They are therefore classified by the social community as individuals who lack the ability to make the right decision (Jacobs & Klaczynski, 2002). Although the decisions that the adolescent make will have an impact on their futures and well being (Mann, Harmoni & Power,1989), it is of importance that the social community bear in mind that the prefrontal cortex of the adolescent which is the section of the brain that is responsible for decision making is still being developed and will only reach it full maturation when the adolescent enters their early 20's (Burgess Chamberlain, 2009).

3.3.1.2. Coping with stress

Plowman and Smith (2008:43) defines stress as being *" The state manifested by the specific syndrome that consists of all the nonspecifically induced changes within a biological system; a disruption in body homeostasis and all attempts by the body to regain homeostasis"*. Stress is part of our everyday lives and therefore critical to cope with. In order to cope with stress the adolescent needs to develop the skill to identify the cause for them to stress and to find alternatives to assist them in handling the stress before it has fatal physiological effects on their lives (World Health Organization, 1997).

During the adolescence period, the adolescent will encounter numerous stressful situations in which they need to consist of the ability to manage these skills and prevent them in leading to behavioural implications or even having an impact on their health (Grant, Copas, Stuhlmacher, Thurm, McMahon & Halper, 2003).

It is during this time that the adolescent turns to their support system which consists of family and friends for advice or support to cope with the stressful situation they are faced with (Baron, Branscombe & Byrne, 2009). One of the implications that is associated with stress during adolescence is that the adolescent participates in risky activities such as the use of substances at a very early age and the over use of substances (Udry, Li & Hendrickson, 2003).Adolescents needs to identify these sources of stress that leads to this type of behaviour, understand the impact that these behaviours will have on their lives and they should make an effort to act upon reducing their stress levels by participating in positive activities of which one can be to participate in active recreation (Baron *et al.*, 2009).

Spear (2000) stated that most of the stressful life events that adolescents' experience can be perceived as being normal as all teenagers experience them for example the onset of puberty, but some stressful life events can be perceived as being abnormal as not all adolescents will experience them, for example experiencing major family changes like the parents divorcing.

3.3.1.3 Problem solving

Procuring problem solving as a life skill allow the adolescent to deal with everyday problems that may arise (Mahmoudi & Moshayedi, 2012).There is a clear link between problem solving and interpersonal and creative thinking and the steps an adolescent will go about to in solving problems include (Berg & Theron, 2004):
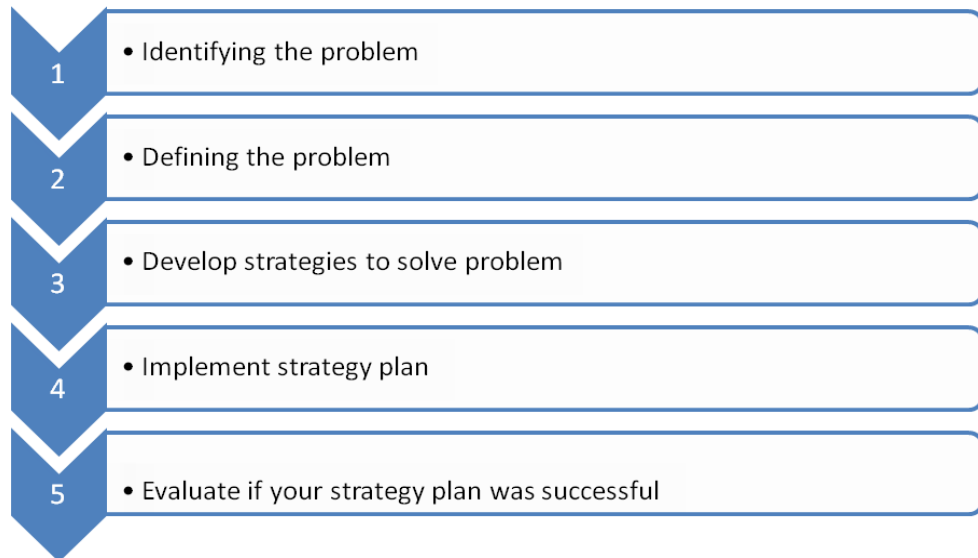
Figure 3.4: Steps for problem solving

Choosing the most efficient problem solving strategy is complex. In addition there are also barriers that the adolescent must face in order to solve the problem in the most effective manner possible. Berg and Theron (2004) stated that there are two main barriers involved in problem solving, the first one is functional fixedness in which commonly occurs due to the lack of skill to identify that the object in the problem has more than one function. It is therefore important that the adolescent explores all the characteristics involved and not only one characteristic that will limit them in solving the problem. The second barrier is the mental set, which gives a description of the characteristic of the problem solver and states that even though there are easier methods in solving the problem, they will still choose the same approach in solving the problem that they used in previous problem solving situations.

3.3.1.4 Coping with emotions

White *et al.,* (2013) defines emotions as feelings that adolescents experience during different situations that will guide them their feelings and actions at that moment. Adolescents must learn to control their emotions in different situations and also to develop the ability to cope with other individuals emotions that may occur. This is called being 'emotionally intelligent. It's an important characteristic which, if developed, can assist them throughout every aspect of their life (World Health

Organization, 1997; Berg & Theron, 2004). Emotions can include anything from fear, anger, sadness or happiness (Berg & Theron, 2004).

3.3.1.5 Empathy

Baron *et al.,* (2009) defines empathy as the process in which the individual reacts in an emotional manner towards other individuals. Empathy, as a skill will assist the adolescent to understand and show tolerance towards others for who they are, even though their beliefs and values may differ from theirs (Mahmoudi & Moshayedi, 2012). Characteristics associated with empathy include sympathy, feelings of concern and consideration (Baron *et al.*, 2009).

3.3.1.6 Creative thinking

Creative thinking skills allow the adolescent to think innovatively and in terms of different alternatives. Creative thinking is linked to both decision making and problem solving and assists the adolescent in thinking in a more flexible manner (Mahmoudi & Moshayedi, 2012).

The stages for creatively solving problems include (Berg & Theron, 2004):
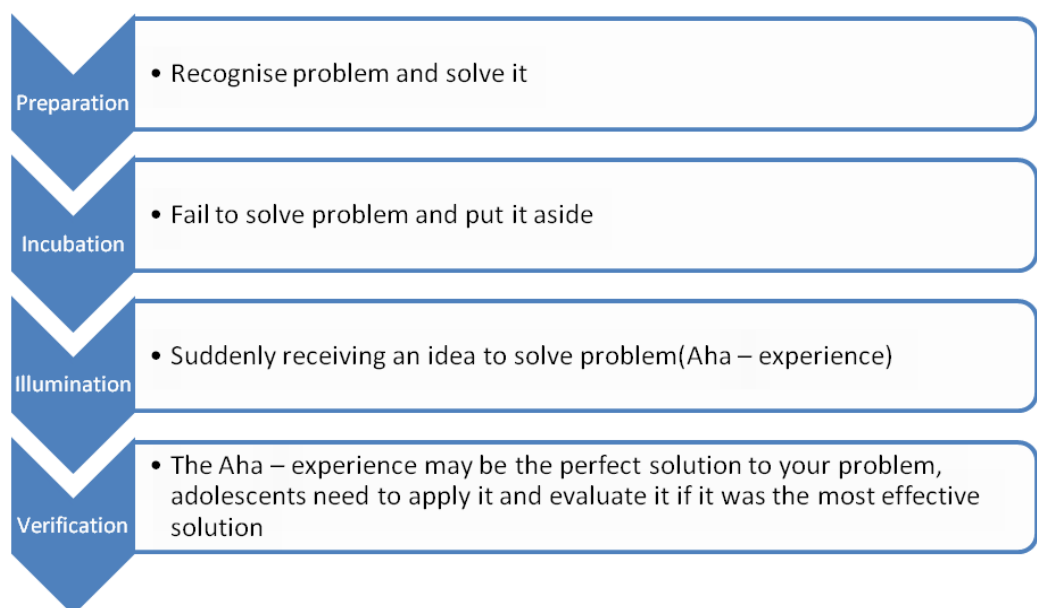
Figure 3.5: Stages for creative thinking

3.3.1.7 Self – awareness

Self awareness can be explained as how we see ourselves and how we think other people see us. Developing self-awareness can assist the adolescent in identifying what triggers stress reaction as well, as what their strong and weak points are. Adolescents learn about what their characteristics are and things that we prefer and things that we dislike doing. Consisting of a positive self- awareness can assist the adolescent in being confident when communicating with other individuals (Mahmoudi & Moshayedi, 2012).

3.3.1.8 Interpersonal relationship skills

Interpersonal relationships include the adolescents' social support group, for example family, peer group, school and work. It is furthermore important for the adolescent to consist of these skills in order to communicate effectively with these groups, which in return is important for socialising. Adolescence is perceived as a period in which the interpersonal relationship between the parents and the adolescent decreases and shifts to an increase in the interaction between adolescents and their peer group (Mahmoudi & Moshayedi, 2012).

3.3.1.9 Critical thinking

Paul and Elder (2007:4) defines critical thinking as *"the art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improving it."* Critical thinking allows the individual to think about problems/ situations in a meaningful way.

Paul and Elder (2007) developed a six stage scale of critical development as is illustrated in figure 3.6. Stage one represents the unreflective thinker. In this stage the individual is still unaware of the importance of thinking and therefore are uniformed of the fact that this lack of ability to think can lead to problem development in their lives. They also have to tendency to perceive information as either to be right or wrong. Stage two is the challenger thinker. The individual recognises that every idea does not only have different sides to it , but also that it can

lead to conflict and that their lives will be effected in the manner in which they think and that this whole processes makes thinking very complicated. Step three involves the beginning thinker. The individual becomes aware of the importance of becoming a critical thinker and that they may not always be on the right track in terms of thinking and therefore they start taking steps in the direction of developing this technique. Step four consists of the practicing thinker. They are now capable of criticising their own thoughts and to identify what their weak points are and work on them to improve them. Step five includes the advanced thinker. The well structured thinking plans are well developed and assisting them significantly and they can control any selfish thoughts that may occur, and in the last stage involves the master thinker. The individual is now in full control of their thoughts.

Master Thinker
(Good habits of thought are becoming second nature)

Advanced Thinker
(We advance in keeping with our practice)

Practicing Thinker
(We recognize the need for regular practice)

Beginning Thinker
(We try to improve but without regular practice)

Challenged Thinker
(We are faced with significant problems in our thinking)

Unreflective Thinker
(We are unaware of significant problems in our thinking)

Figure 3.6: Stages of critical thinking development

Duron, Limbach & Waugh (2006) identified a 5 step framework model to assist adolescence in learning to think more critically. Duron *et al.,* (2006) stated that teachers are involved in the framework while the researcher in this study suggests

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that adults involved in the life skills program for adolescents should all be considered in this framework.
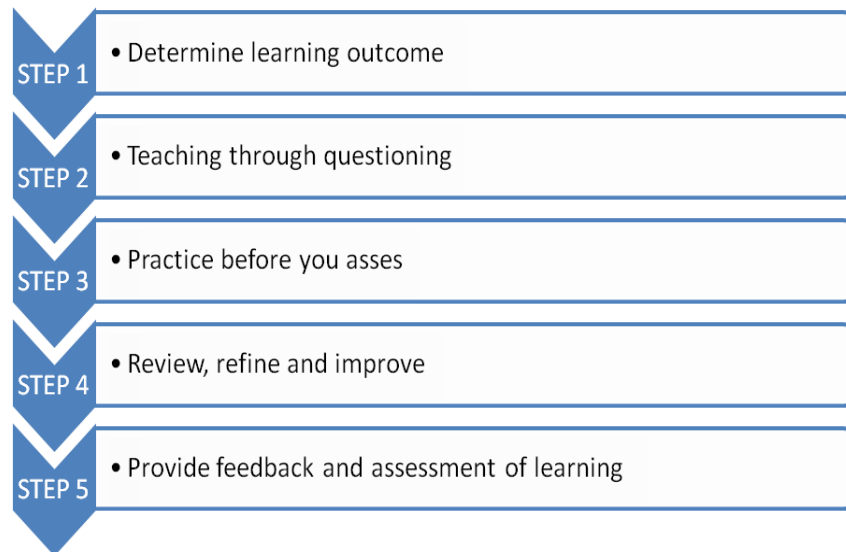
Figure 3.7: The 5 step model for critical thinking

Step 1, determine learning outcome, state that objectives that should be acknowledged by students when they are outside the class environment should be identified by the teacher and must be implemented in a program to make higher thinking possible. Step 2, teach through questioning, this states that questioning is important in the learning process and to encourage students to think critically. Teachers should put a lot of planning into the questions to ensure that the questions asked correspond to the level at which the student is thinking and it is important that the teachers keep in mind that once the student is comfortable with the topic a higher level of questions should occur. Step 3, practice before you assess, indicates that in the process of learning how to master any skill it is essential for the student to practice that skill. Teachers must emphasise to students that it is important in order for them to move towards critical thinking that they are able to state their own opinions, argue facts and analyse and evaluate primary and secondary data. Step 4, review, refine, and improve, states that an important step in improving critical thinking is that the teachers should create an environment in the classroom that insures each student is comfortable in participating in discussions. Teachers should also constantly improve their programs to insure students are indeed moving towards critical thinking and this can be achieved by observing class activities, which in

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return also teaches the student to take responsibility for their own learning. Step 5, provide feedback and assessment of learning indicates that feedback from peers and teachers should be provided to the student on regular bases. It is of most important that the teacher spends a great quality of time explaining to the students what is expected of them and how they will be evaluated during assessments.
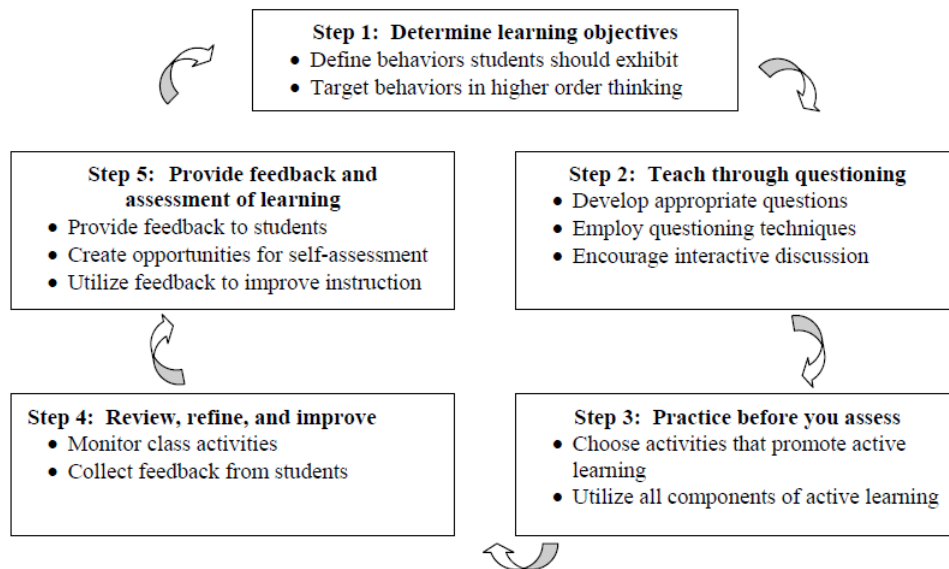
Figure 3.8: The 5 – step model to move students towards critical thinking

3.3.1.10 Effective communication

Berg and Theron (2004) described communication as social interaction that occurs between two or more individuals who are exchanging information. In order to communicate effectively an adolescent needs to develop both interpersonal and intrapersonal skills (Arnold & Boggs, 2011).Interpersonal communication skills consist of non-verbal and verbal communication. Non-verbal communication refers to the body language of the individual and the skill to maintain eye contact with the individuals involved in the conversation (Baron *et al.,* 2009), whereas verbal communication involves words being spoken. The second form of communication, Intrapersonal communication on the other hand takes place within the person themselves.

Effective communication consists of developing the ability to start and maintain social conversations with other individuals and therefore can be seen as being important for socialising, to express one self freely and to understand and recognise other individual's non-verbal expressions (Bedell, 1997).Attainment of communication skills will assist the adolescent in effectively working with other individuals. Effective communication involves a speaker and a listener and therefore goes hand in hand with listening and language skills (Patrick, 2008).

3.4 ACTIVE RECREATION

Active recreation forms part of the physical activity pyramid along with active sport (Corbin, Le Masurier & Lambdin, 2007). This study will only direct their attention to defining and explaining active recreation. Haider, Aeschbacher and Bose (2011) stated that active recreation can occur in any environment that consists of settings like sports fields, open fields and buildings that are structured for active recreation activities.

Roberts (2001) defines active recreation as activities that capture the attention of the participant and is composed of characteristics that challenges the participant both mentally and physically and in the end is found rewarding by the participant. Roberts (2001) also provide examples in the form of participating is sports, performing in drama classes, playing musical instruments, doing arts and crafts, working in the garden and any other hobbies. As noted sport is an example of active recreation and occurs if a person pearly participates in the sport to have fun rather that for completion purposes (Corbin *et al.*, 2007).

3.5. LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ACTIVE RECREATION

Active recreation and sport interaction are often used as platforms to enable adolescents to develop critical life skills. Researchers (Witt & Caldwell, 2010) have found that active recreation provides the adolescent with the ideal environment in which the adolescents have the opportunity to develop their self-esteem and social skills. This includes communication skills, empathy and self-control. In order to

make these skills an integral part of the adolescents' life that will allow a carryover process to occur to other areas outside the active recreation environment it is crucial to provide each individual the opportunity to select and participate in an activity that best suits their personality and interests.

3.5.1. Current approaches

Active recreation is often used for its ability to serve as an environment in which life skills can be learned and practiced and that it is only seen as being life skills once the adolescent makes an attempt to use this skills learned in an environment outside the active recreation environment and to assist the adolescents in achieving this life skills need to become the goal within active recreation programs (Gould & Carson, 2008).With the importance of this goal being highlighted , Danish, Peptitas & Hale (1992) developed the program Going for the goal (GOAL).

The researcher identified two current programs available that is best associated with this study and, the first one being the GOAL program and the second one the SUPER program (Danish & Nellen, 1997).

3.5.1.1. The GOAL program

The GOAL program is presented by high school students who received training on three different occasions, during school, after school and lastly during special events and is available to all fellow high school students. The program consists of ten sessions and each one hour long (Danish & Nellen, 1997).All of the workshops start of by providing the participant with a review of what was done in the previous workshop, further more the goal program makes use of skirts to introduce new materials that will be used in the workshop. The participants take on the following roles "goal seeker", "goal keeper", "goal buster" and "goal shooter" during skits (Danish & Nellen, 1997).

 During the first workshop, known as "dare to dream", the leaders involved are introduced to the participants an information regarding the program is provided. The participants discuss the statement that it is important to dream and lastly they practice dreaming about their future. In the second workshop called "setting goals", the

participants discover the importance of goal setting and that they will need to identify and practice reachable goals in order to reach their dreams. The participants are also taught that, in order for this goal reaching to occur, they must be aware of the four characteristics of reachable goals which includes, stated positively, and is specific, important to the goal setter and under the goal setters' control.

Workshop three, "making youth goal reachable", the most important characteristic of this program. It must be kept in mind that adolescents struggle to apply the process and therefore during this workshop the participants indentify a goal that they what to reach in the upcoming two months, keeping in mind what they have learned in previous workshops. During workshop four , "making a goal ladder", the participants are learned how to go about in identifying the required steps that they need to take and to place them in the correct rung of the ladder in order for them to reach the goal that they have set in the previous workshop.

In Workshop five, "roadblocks to reach goals", the participants are taught that in the process of reaching their goals they will be faced with numerous roadblocks (substance abuse, teenage pregnancies or dropping out of school) that can prevent them from reaching their goals. It is important that the adolescents identify what roadblocks there are in their lives and how to avoid them in order to reach their goals. In workshop six, "overcoming roadblocks", the problem-solving technique STAR (stop and chill out, think of all your choices, anticipate the consequences of each choice, respond with the best choice) is introduced to the participants. During workshop seven, "seeking help from others", the leaders emphasise the importance of having a social support group and the participants are asked to identify ten individuals known as the "dream team" who can assist them in reaching their goal. This "dream team" can consists of peers, family, teachers or youth workers.

Workshop eight, "rebounds and reward", going about reaching one's goal will not always be easy and may at some point become too difficult for the participant to achieve. In this workshop the participant is taught how to rebound when this situation occurs and that they also must reward themselves if they achieve certain goals or steps in the goal ladder. In workshop nine, "identifying and building on your strengths", the participants are asked to identify their strong and weak points, they

then identify ways in which the strong points can further be developed and how they could go to work in order to turn their weak points in to strong points. During the last workshop, "going for your goal", the participants engage in a game called "know–it-all-basketball" during which they can practice and apply the information that they have learned during the course of the workshop.

The overall aim of the goal program is that when the participants have completed the workshops that they are capable of making better decisions regarding their futures and that the participants also have a better self-image with a great amount of confidence (Goudas, Dermitzaki, Leondari & Danish, 2006).
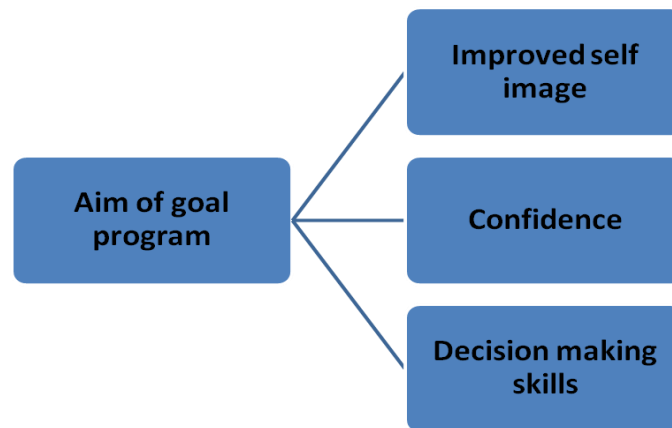
Figure 3.9: The overall aim of the goal program

3.5.1.2. SUPER (sport united to promote education and recreation)

Super is adapted from the goal program and is a more sport-based orientated program, linking sport and life skills together (Danish & Nellen, 1997; Goudas *et al.,* 2006). A sport clinic approach is used to present the program in which the participants are involved in three sets of activities, learning physical skills related to sport, learning general life skills related to sport and participating in the sport (Danish & Nellen, 1997; Danish *et al.,* 2005 ; Goudas *et al.,* 2006).

The program consists of 18 workshops of which each workshop is between 20-30 minutes long and is presented to adolescents by trained collage athletes (Goudas *et al.,* 2006; Danish, Forneris & Wallace, *2005*). This approach in which peers teaches

peers is called the educational pyramid. This pyramid begins at the life skill staff providing training to individuals in the community who are responsible for selecting the SUPER leaders, guidance is provided on how to go about selecting and training these leaders. The trained SUPER leaders then implement the program and provide the knowledge they had obtained with their fellow peers (Danish *et al, 2005*; Danish and Nellen, 1997).

A brief description of the 18 different workshops as stated in Danish *et al.,* (2005) is provided in the subsequent paragraphs. In workshop 1, called "developing a team", the participants are introduced to the leaders and to what they can expect from the program. The participants also take part in team –building activities provided with the purpose in mind to become aware of the other participants strong and weak points and to improve the communication between them.

In workshop 2, "known as dare to dream", the participants are informed of how important it is for them to have dreams and they are asked to identify dreams that they want to accomplish in the next ten years both in the school, work and sport context. In workshop 3 , "setting goals part 1", the leaders stipulate to the participates that there is a difference between goals and dreams .The participants are then asked to firstly identify individuals who will support them in achieving their goals and then those who will prevent them from achieving them. In workshop 4," setting goals, part 2", and the four characteristics associated with reaching one's goal is presented to the participants, it includes, the goal being positively stated, specific, important the participant and the participant must have control over their goal. Workshop 5, "setting goals part 3", as stated in the previous workshop it is important that the goal is specific and that   the participant has control over it and during this workshop the participant will learn how to make a distinction between specific and non-specific goals and from ones they can control and those that they can't.

During workshop 6, "making your goals reachable", the participant develops two goals (a personal goal and one is their sport) that needs to be accomplished in six weeks, and in developing these goals they must take in account the four characteristics of a reachable goal and apply them to their goals. In workshop 7, "making a goal ladder", the participants must develop at least six steps which they

plan to take in order to reach the two goals that they have set for themselves and the importance is placed on how important it is for planning to occur in reaching one's goal. Workshop 8, "identifying and observing roadblocks to reaching goals", the participants are made aware and identify possible roadblocks for example substance abuse , lacking confidence, that may prevent them from reaching their goal and they practice using STAR which is a problem-solving strategy which can assist them in dealing with these roadblocks. In workshop 9, "seeking help from others", the participants must develop a "dream team" which they view as the people who would provide support to them in achieving their goals. Workshop 10, "using positive self-talk", here the participants identify the differences between positive and negative self-talk and is informed that positive self-talk is an important factor for them to reach their goal. In Workshop 11, "learning to relax", the participants need to learn the skill in order for them to remain calm; they need to learn to take deep breaths to assist them to relax. During workshop 12, "managing emotions", the participants are informed that controlling their emotions in situations is an important factor in becoming a successful individual, participants are further made aware of the four R's to assist them in controlling their emotions, Replay, Relax, Redo and Ready. Workshop 13, developing a healthy lifestyle), in this workshop the participants are made aware of the importance of their health and learn how to create and maintain healthy environments to live in.

During workshop 14, "appreciating differences", the participant learns to recognise and identify what the differences are between each individual in the workshop group. In workshop 15, "having confidence and courage", emphasis is placed on the importance of having a good self-confidence and strategies are discussed on how to improve one's self-confidence. Workshop 16, "learning to focus on your personal performance", the participants are informed why it is important to complete against yourself and how it can improve one's performance. In workshop 17 , "identifying and building on your strengths", the participants become aware of their strengths, the life skills associated with them and how to use these skills as well as the ones that was learned in the program throughout their lives, and in the last Workshop, "goal setting for life", the participants are made aware that they will set goals throughout their life and is required in the program to set two goals, one must hold relation to

their school while the other one to their community or home environment (Danish *et al.*, 2005).

SUPER developed five goals that they wish to accomplish at the end of the program with each participant, these goals include (Danish & Nellen, 1997; Danish *et al.*, 2005):

1 • They must be aware that there are student role models that can assist them

2 • It is essential to develop both metal and physical skills to assist them in life

3 • They are aware of the importance of goal-setting in life and sport

4 • Roadblocks that they may be faced with can be overcome

5 • Effective participation in sport requires them living a healthy live
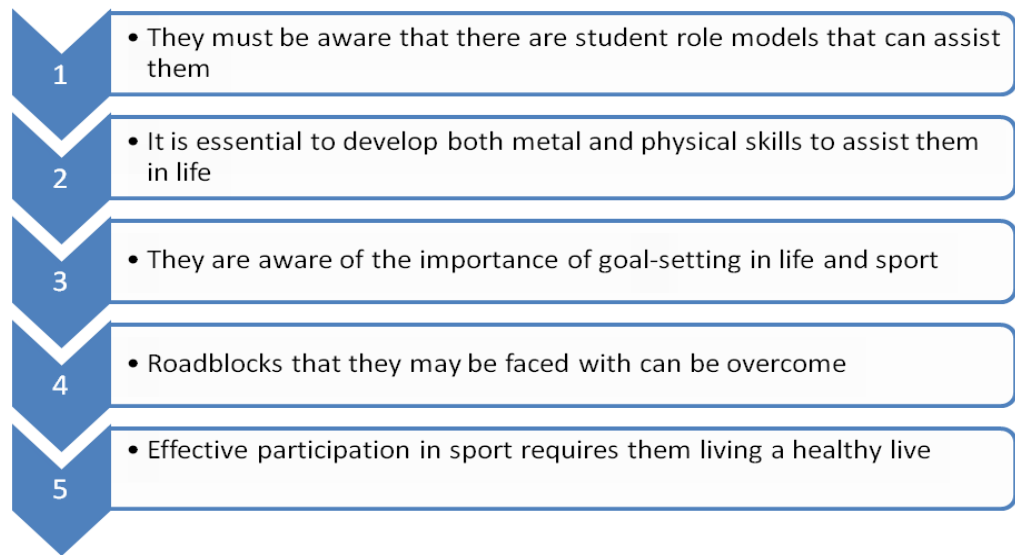
Figure 3.10: Five goals SUPER wishes to accomplish

3.5.2. Active learning

Prince (2004) defines active learning as the process in which learners participate in activities that serve as a tool in assisting them on a learning basis and Bonwell and Eison (1991) added that by engaging in active learning activities can improve the individuals thinking and writing skills. Burgges Chamberlain (2009) stated that adolescents found it more convenient and easier to study if they had a great amount of physical space in which they could move around while learning. Two elements that can assist with active learning were identified and will be discussed in the following paragraph (Prince, 2004).

3.5.2.1. Introducing student activity into the traditional lecture

This element suggests that lectures are paused and time is provided to the student to go over and explain their notes to fellow students, where after the class will continue again. Ruhl, Hughes & Schloss (1987) developed a study to support the fact that active learning has an effect on students. The study involved two separate 45 minute classes that took place over the duration of two courses in each of the two semesters, where after both classes long and short term memory of the notes gathered in the lecture. The one class was observed by interrupting the students three times during the 45 minute class and providing them with two minute breaks in which they consult and clarify their notes with their fellow students. The second class proceeded as a normal lecture. The short term retention was measured by providing the students with three minutes after each lecture in which they had to write down everything that they could remember of the lecture. The group that received the two minute interruptions showed greater scores than those who did not receive an interruption. The long term retention was tested by providing the students with multiple-choice exam consisting of sixty five questions and took place one and a half weeks after the last of five lectures received; the results also showed a higher score in the students who received the interruption class. Wankat (2002) and Hartley and Davies (1978) stated that this results can be due to the fact that students attention span approximately lasts fifteen minutes, were after their attention span starts to drop and by interrupting them they are provided the opportunity to regain their attention.

3.5.2.2. Promoting student engagement

The type of activity the facilitator decides to use will determine how much information the individual will receive. Therefore activities cannot simply just be brought into a classroom, a lot of thought must go into developing activities that will enhance the individual's ability to engage unselfishly and enlightens them on the ideas that must be learned. The importance of students participating in student engagement activities is emphasised by Prince (2004) and Astin (1993). Hake 's (1998) study on student engagement revealed that students who took part in engagement methods showed an increase in their performance , and Prince (2004) indicated that this improvement was not due to the students putting extra hours into a specific section of the work , but rather due to the students actively engaging. Both of these authors provide evidence that supports the active learning methods in order to

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minimize students misunderstanding which is of the key factors effecting learning. There is a substantial amount of support for active learning by means of implementing either activity into the lecture or through student engagement active recreation provides adolescents with the opportunity to actively acquire life skills (Prince, 2004).

3.5.3. The approach through the ecological model

In active recreation opportunities, the microsystem will consist of the participant, active recreation activity and the location. The mesosystem indicates the interpersonal relationships between two or even more Microsystems involved in the developing adolescent. An example is the relationship between the active recreations provider and the participant. The exosystem symbolises the conditions that occur within the setting and affects the developing person eventhough the participant is not included in this system. An example is the interaction between the active recreation provider and the facility manager. The mesosystem consists of all the cultural and social factors that have an effect on the adolescents' development (Côté, Stachan & Fraser – Thomas, 2008).

Bronfenbrenner combined these systems to form two propositions that are known as the process-person-context-time (PPCT) model. His first proposition suggests that development in an individual numerous 'proximal processes' between the developing individual and other aspects in their direct environment. The second proposition suggests that human development will be affected systematically by the power, direction, content and form of the proximal processes as a joint unit of developing individual characteristics, environment in which activities are occurring, the developmental outcome, the changes that takes place during the time the processes occur (Côté *et al.*, 2008).

The process-person-context-time model consists of four components namely the process, person, context and time (Côté *et al.*, 2008).This is illustrated in table 3.1and figure 3.11.

Table 3.1: Components of the process-person-context-time model

Components	Description
The Process	Processes acts as instruments of the interactions between individual and their environment
Person	Concepts have been related to the person by means of the 40 developmental assets which is viewed as building blocks during the developmental phases of an individual. The assets are divided into two categories namely, external and internal assets.
Context	Bronfenbrenner (1978) stated that this component includes the environment of the developing individual and of the other individuals in that environment that forms relationships with the developing individual. The following guidelines are required for positive youth development according to this approach: ➢ Physical and psychological safety: this emphasise the importance of positive interaction between peer groups when participating in activities. ➢ Appropriate structure: the structure highlights the important that active recreation activities occur within certain boundaries. ➢ Supportive relationships: this illustrates the impact that the activity provider can have on the participant and that positive communication plays an important role in development. ➢ Opportunities to belong: creating a feeling of belonging plays an important part in ensuring the

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	participant stays interested in the activities.
	➢Positive social norms: adolescents should rather focus on developing values that will lead to positive socialising rather than risk taking behaviours.
	➢Support of efficacy and mattering: it is important that adolescents are provided the opportunity to choose on what level they want to be involved in the activities and providing them with support in playing a role in the building of their community.
	➢Opportunities for skill building: through participating in activities the adolescent is provided the opportunity to develop a variety of life skills and to socialise with other individuals.
	➢Integration of family, school and community efforts: different components such as family and the environment play an important role in the adolescents' determination to stay involved in the activities.
Time	A very important component in the study of human development and therefore needs to be conducted over a long period of time to fully understand.

Figure 3.11: Components of the process-person-context-time model

3.5. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Chapter three examined the ecological theory of human development and how this can be linked to adolescents in an active recreation environment. The chapter discussed the ten core life skills and how they can be developed through active recreation. Chapter four will describe the research methodology of the study.

CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the research methodology used in this study. Methodology can be described as the overall framework within which research is conducted (Gratton & Jones, 2010). Creswell (2013) describes research methodology based on the ability of the researcher to collect and analyse the data during a study.

The overall aim of this study was to explore how active recreation opportunities can be utilised to develop life skills in adolescents in a lower socio economic community. To achieve this overall aim the researcher made use of an exploratory qualitative research design with a case study approach and using focus groups and participation observation as a method for data collection.

The study's objectives include:

➢ To demonstrate how active recreation can contribute to life skill development of adolescents in lower socio communities.

➢ To identify how adolescents in Eersterust perceive current active recreation opportunities in the community.

➢ To investigate possible active recreation opportunities for adolescents in the Eersterust community and adolescents perception of the connection to life skills.

This chapter includes information on the research design, data collection and data analysis as well as information on the population, sampling techniques and research instrument used to collect data during the course of the study.

4.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

To demonstrate the importance of research Thomas, Nelson & Silverman (2011:3) quoted Albert Szent-Györgyi in saying that "*research is to see what everybody else*

has seen, and to think what nobody else has thought." Research is defined as a *"scientific and systemic search for permanent information on a specific topic"* (Kothari, 2004:1). Research design is defined by Gratton and Jones (2010:287) as *"the overall blueprint that guides the researcher in the data collection stages in terms of what data to collect, from whom, and when".* The function of the research design according to De Vaus (2005), is to ensure that the data collected during the duration of the study will assist the researcher in answering the research question posted in the study as clearly as possible.

This study adopted an exploratory qualitative research design with a case study approach. Qualitative research can be defined as *"an inquiry process of understanding based on a distinct methodological approach to explore a social or human problem"* (Creswell, 2013:300). Robson (as cited in Maxwell, 2012) stated that qualitative research is flexible and therefore this study made use of qualitative research to provide the researcher with the opportunity to be more flexible during focus groups and participant observation. Exploratory research is very flexible (Damon, Pederson & McEvoy, 2011) and will be used in this study as a tool in obtaining as much information as possible from a small group of participants on a topic that needs attention during a diminutive period of time and can also be referred to as pilot studies (McNabbe, 2010).

Exploratory research is used in determining how and why there is a connection between certain attributes. Exploratory research is inexpensive and according to Hakim (2012) and Damon *et al.,* (2011) exploratory research can occur in the following ways, through focus groups, case studies and literature reviews. This study made use of exploratory approach to investigate why adolescents are in need of life skills and to determine how the core life skills that are required can be developed through participating in active recreation.

Case studies are part of a qualitative research approach in which the researcher investigates a current real life situation in-depth to collect information to understand a certain problem associated with a particular group of individuals (Yin, 2009). Both time and the activity involved have a restriction on the case study (Creswell, 2009;

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Gratton & Jones, 2010). Case studies are used researchers when a how or why question is being investigated (Yin, 2009). This study made use of a case study in exploring the question of how adolescent life skills can be developed through active recreation and to investigate how adolescents in the Eersterust perceive current recreational activities in their community.

4.2.1. Research population

Oliver (2010) defines the research population as the group of individuals who are being investigated for the purpose of the research study. For purposes of this study the research population refers to voluntary high school adolescents between the ages of 14 and17 in Eersterust and who reside in the Good Hope government housing project. They are involved in a community engagement project run by the University of Pretoria.

4.2.2. Research sample

The research sample is composed of a group of components which can include the participants or situation of a certain group of people (Thomas *et al.*, 2011).

4.2.3. Sampling procedure

For this study the researcher made use of a non-probability sampling technique known as '*typical sampling',* a method in which the typical is illustrated and it provides in-depth information on how the topic effects individuals everyday life (Gratton & Jones, 2010). Typical sampling is a method used during Qualitative non-probability sampling research (Marlow, 2010). Typical sampling makes use of literature reviews, previous studies and data collected from discussions with the participants of a typical case with the purpose of providing detailed information about the research topic to the population (Marlow, 2010 ; Shi, 2007).

Qualitative research designs mostly make use of the non-probability sampling technique as this allows them reveal information that was obtained about a phenomenon (Gerrish & Lacey, 2010). During non- probability sampling not all the individuals in the surrounding environment have an equal change of being selected,

but participant are selected based on their experience (Hall, 2008) and in the case of this study non-probability was used to investigate how adolescents in Eersterust experience current active recreational activities in their community. The researcher will make use of non-probability sampling if they intend to make use of an exploratory sampling technique. Sampling of the study occurred at two venues namely Eersterust and the University of Pretoria. Voluntary participants aged between fourteen and seventeen participated in the study.

4.3. DATA COLLECTION

Data collection will assist the researcher in finding an answer to their research question and to accomplish the objectives of the study (Pawar, 2004). The study will make use of focus groups and participant observation as qualitative research instruments. The researcher made use of multiple data sources that are qualitative in nature and included a tape recorder to record discussions taking place during focus groups. Notes were also taken during participation observation and documentation for data collection.

4.3.1. Focus groups

Focus groups can be described as an interviewing strategy used by the researcher to collect data from a small group of selected participants that has a relation to the topic (Litosseliti, 2007). Gratton and Jones (2010) stated that although the sizes of focus groups differ, focus groups typically consist of five to eight participants.

The researcher made use of semi-structured focus groups which provided the researcher with a more flexible approach than the structured focus groups and allowed the researcher to formulate where appropriate, new questions during the focus group discussions, in response to answers provided by the participants (Gratton & Jones , 2010) .This study made use of focus groups to establish what the opinions of the adolescents in the Eersterust community are in relation to current active recreation activities available to them because focus groups are used by researchers to determine how the participants feel and think about a certain topic (Krueger & Casey, 2014).

Focus groups provide a number of advantages to the researcher. Holloway and Wheeler (2010) identified some of these advantages and include providing the participants with the opportunity to interact with fellow participants and through this they might be reminded about feelings related to the topic. Another advantage is that both the researcher, as well as the participants have the opportunity to ask questions and through this the researcher may come across new ideas that can be related to the study.

Focus group participants met twice with the researcher and the ages of the participants ranged from fourteen to seventeen. The participants knew the researcher from being involve in the community project run by the University of Pretoria, and was therefore not perceived as an outsider by the participants.

4.3.2. Participant observation

Participation observation was conducted in a semi-structured manner and was applied by implementing the observer as participant, in which the researcher is known to the participant as being the researcher. The researcher takes part in the activity and events that occur in the participants daily lives and records what is happening (Creswell 2013; De Walt & De Walt, 2011).This opportunity in which the researcher can participate in with the group being observed is an advantage of making use of the technique participation observation, another advantage is that the researcher can record things as they occur during the duration of the study (Cotterrell & Russel,1988; Gerrish & Lacey, 2010).

Adolescents in the Eersterust community were observed during their participation in active recreation activities presented at the University of Pretoria. The participation observation section of the study made use of a tape recorder to record the information required as it happens in the participants' natural environment.

4.4. DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher made use of the qualitative research software program *Atlas ti* to apply codes to all the data that was collected (Creswell, 2009).

4.4.1 Focus groups

Discussions that were conducted during the focus group sessions were recorded by using a tape recorder. The focus group method was conducted by using a semi-structured interview technique and included the following discussions:

➢ The adolescents' perception of active recreation opportunities in the Eersterust community.

➢ Adolescents' perception of important life skills.

➢ Activities that can be used within the community of Eersterust to develop life skills in.

4.4.2. Participation observation

Participants were observed by the researcher whilst participating in active recreation opportunities. Notes were taken throughout the activities and were coded according to the focus group discussions.

4.5. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Chapter four provided a specified description of the research methodology used in the study. The research design, research population, research sample, sampling procedure, data collection and data analysis were discussed in-depth. Chapter five will offer an interpretation of the results of the analysed data.

CHAPTER FIVE
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the analysis and interpretation of the study's results. The overall aim of the study was to explore how active recreation opportunities can be utilized to develop life skills in adolescents in a lower socio economic community. In order to achieve this goal the study explored the relationship between adolescents, life skill development and active recreation in the Eersterust community.

5.2. RESULTS

This study's results were obtained by means of data collected through focus groups and participant observation. The results will be presented according to the study's objectives.

5.2.1 Description of the identified active recreation activities

The concept active recreation was introduced to the participants. Participants were asked to identify and provide a description of what they perceive as active recreation activities. The results of this discussion are provided in table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Identified active recreation activities and their discribtion

Identified active recreation activities	Description of activity
Soccer	*"Soccer consist of 11 players of each team on the field"* *"You cannot be offside in soccer"* *"Your team scores if the ball goes pass the goalie into the goals"* *"The goalie is wears gloves and stands in front of the goal, and they are the only player that may stop the ball*

	with their hands or pick the ball up, but this is also only allowed in their circle" *"to play soccer requires that you consist of excellent footwork"* *"You may also use your head to play the ball , this is usually called a header"*
Street soccer	*"Street soccer also have two teams, but have less players per team than normal soccer"*
Netball	*"Netball has two hoops in a circle area , and this is where the teams score the points"* *"you may not run with the ball in your hands, you have to stand still and through the ball to a team member "* *"Netball is a very fast game"* *"The centre is the person that starts the game at the beginning and after each goal is scored, this is my favourite position"* *"Netball has four quarters in which it is played, and it's about 10 – 15 min long"* *"The court is divided in to areas and not all the players may play in all the areas, so each position has a area that they are allowed to play in"*
Action netball	*"Like netball , in this game you also have two circles with hoops in them and points are score by throwing the ball through* the net" *"It is a lot faster and more intense than normal netball"*

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Cricket	*"With the cricket world cup that took t place in 2015, it makes me keen to try harder , so that one day I can also play for the South Africa team"* *"Cricket is played with two teams, one team batting and one team bowling"* *"The batting team can hit a six, four or take single runs in scoring points"* *"A six is when the ball goes over the boundary in the air, so without touching the ground, and a four is when the ball goes over the boundary but touches the ground"*
Swimming	*"swimming can be done in form of competition or fun"* *"swimming in competitions consists of different styles for example back stroke or butterfly"* *" In swimming competitions you have to stay in your lane"* *"Swimming for fun is when you are just relaxing in the pool with your friends and you can play games like ,marco – polo"*
Lifesaving	*"Lifesaving is when you have to watch the swimming pool or sea and if someone is in trouble you need to go and assist them"*
Dance	*"We are more into hip-hop dancing , because it allows us to express our feelings and also challenges us to do better"*

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Wall climbing	*"The wall has handles that stands out and you need to use your hands and feet to climb to the top"* *"In wall climbing you have safety ropes around your middle and a person that stands on the floor and assist you when you fall or if you coming down from the top"*
Bike riding/MBX biking	*"Requires discipline to perform tricks"* *Bikes are different that normal riding bikes"* *"There are numerous categories of BMX riding, for example street, flatland or vert"* *"For the vert one we need a stunt ramp. This is a ramp that looks like a half circle"* *"flatland can be performed in a parking lot"* *"Street bmxing includes doing tricks in stairs, handrails or benches, basically any obstacle available "* *"My favoured stunt is the wheelie, this is when a ride only on my back wheel"*
Handball	*"There are two goal areas , like in soccer, with a goalkeeper of each team in front of it"* *"When moving you must dribble the ball"* *"You can though the ball to your team members"* *"I will say it's basically like soccer , but with your hands"*
Recreational games	**Description**
Rounders	*"Rounders is a game played between two teams, a batting team and a fielding team. The field is in the form of a circle and consists of about four bases, which the batting team needs to run through"*

	"If the batting team runs around all four bases , without the player being out , they score points" *"In the bases the individual is safe and cannot be run out, but if the person runs towards the bases and the fielding team throws the ball towards the base they are running to the person is out"*
"Blikkies"	*"The game is played with two teams"* *"the tins are stacked on top of each other"* *"The one team has the tennis ball and tries to throw the tins over"* *"If they miss the other team gets a turn"* *"If the team throwing knocks down the tins, they must try and restack the tins, while the other team tries to tag them"* *"If you are tagged and the tins are not on top of each other it means that you are out"* *"If the team that needs to stack the cans do so succefully they get a point, but if all their members is tagged the other team scores"*
Rope jumping	*"Rope jumping can be done with one or two ropes"* *"It can be done with only one person jumping or there can be two or even more"*

The participants had an idea of what active recreation opportunities are and provided a sound description of each of them.

5.2.2 Adolescents perception of current active recreation activities

Participants' perception on the current active recreation activities that is available to them in the Eersterust community. Results are provided in table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Adolescents perception of current active recreation activities

Perception of current active recreation activities	Data example
Non-existent	*"There is no activities that are only for the teenagers"*
Fragmented provision	*"I feel that the current active recreation opportunities available to us, do not meet our need"* *"The current activities that are available are not on a constant basis and is also only available to us once a week, when the tuks students come"*
Not age appropriate	*"We don't want to participate in activities are for small children we want activities that will appropriate to our age like street soccer that will challenge my skills"* *"We as adolescents do not want participate in activities with the smaller children, we want to participate in activities with individuals of around our age group"*
Inappropriate time	*"Programs need to be presented at a time that suites us, as we only get home from school at around 3 o'clock "*

Activity related to gender	*"The street soccer is only applicable to the boys"* *"In mix activities it is easier for us to participate if there is equal gender"*
Boring	*"The same programmes are presented each year, we would like more of a variety of programmes to develop our skills"*

5.2.3 Participants identified activities and associated life skills with them

Participants were asked to link the identified active recreation activities with life skills that they perceive to be associated with the given activity. The results are provided in table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Active recreation activities and life skills associated with them

Activity	Life skills linked to activity as participants perceive it
Soccer Street soccer	Decision making, coping with stress, self-awareness, critical thinking, effective communication, sportsmanship, commitment, respect for other people, team work, discipline and patience
Netball Action netball	Coping with stress , coping with emotions, decision making, communication, critical thinking ,improving self image, sportsmanship, commitment ,respect for other individuals , team work and discipline
Cricket	Decision making, coping with stress, self-awareness, critical thinking, effective communication, sportsmanship, commitment, respect for other people, team work, discipline

Swimming	Enjoyment , relaxing, fun , socializing with friends
Lifesaving	Decision making, coping with stress, problem solving, coping with emotions, self-awareness, critical thinking and effective communication
Dance	Self-awareness, decision making, commitment, patience , coping with stress
Wall climbing	Decision making, coping with stress, critical thinking, problem solving, fun
Bike riding /MBX biking	Concentration, discipline , commitment, decision making
Handball	Decision making, coping with stress, self-awareness, critical thinking, effective communication, sportsmanship, commitment, respect for other people, team work, discipline
Recreational games	**Description**
Rounders	Patience , fun with friends, decision making critical thinking, self-awareness, communication
"Blikkies"	
Rope jumping	

5.2.4. Availability of identified active recreation activities and if unavailable activities can be applied

The participants were asked to identify active recreation activities that are both available and not available in the Eersterust community. The results are presented in table 5.4.

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Table 5.4: Availability of identified activities in the Eersterust community

Activity identified	Availability	Possibility to apply
Soccer	YES	
Street soccer	YES	
Netball	YES	
Action Netball	NO	YES – An adapted version is possible
Cricket	YES	
Swimming	NO	YES
Lifesaving	NO	YES
Dance	YES	
Wall climbing	NO	YES
Bike riding/ MBX	NO	YES
Handball	NO	YES
Recreational games	**Availability**	**Possibility to apply**
Rounders	NO	YES
"Blikkies"	YES	
Rope jumping	YES	

During the course of the study it became clear to the researcher that the Eersterust community consist of the available facilities to provide numerous active recreation activities for the adolescents, as there is a swimming pool, climbing wall and hall that is currently being used for dancing and can also be effective for presenting activities like handball and action netball.

5.3. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Results were interpreted according to the research objectives and will be presented according to the research objectives.

5.3.1. The contribution of active recreation on the life skill development of adolescents

Participants identified active recreation as, activities that they can enjoy with their friends in after school and on weekends and these activities are social, fun and enjoyable. Participants mostly associated active recreation with sporting activities and they were able to describe the identified activities.

The participants perceived activities such as soccer, street soccer, netball, action netball, cricket, swimming, lifesaving, dancing, wall climbing, bike riding/MBX biking, handball, rounders, "blikkies and rope jumping as active recreation activities. Participants stated that they perceive both blikkies and rounders as *"very nice"*.

Participants expressed the need for learning life skills through active recreation(see photo 5.1). The participants stated that active recreation opportunities provided them with the opportunity develop different aspects that can assist them in the future for example social skills (*"I like playing with my friends in a team and sharing the success we accomplish with them"),* self-awareness*("When I dance , I feel that I can accomplish anything"),* working under pressure *("We like games that are faster and more intense, street soccer presents us with that opportunity"),* consisting of the ability to relax*("Swimming is something I do for fun, just splashing around in the pool with friends")* and building up contacts in the outside world *("I see lifesaving as an future work opportunity, In which I can get paid for doing something I love").*

Photo 5.1: Adolescents' participating in an active recreation activity that can teach them life skill

5.3.2. Current active recreation opportunities that are perceived as available by the adolescents

Time, age and gender are important factors to consider when developing active recreation programs to adolescents. During the focus group discussion, participants identified various barriers to participating in current active recreation opportunities. The barrier identified includes:

The time that the active recreation activities are scheduled to take place also has a tremendous effect on their participation. Most of the adolescents only arrive home from school at 3' o clock and when keeping safety (Time when it is getting dark) issues and additional responsibilities (looking after siblings) in mind, the time that adolescents have available during the week to participate in active recreation activities becomes limited.

Adolescents are very aware of age differences and are not keen on participating in activities alongside non- adolescents.

Results showed that adolescents are very gender sensitive and during the study the researcher made the observation that adolescents are more likely to withdraw from activities if they are the only one of their gender in the group. After participation in active recreation activities such as illustrated in photo 5.2, participants affirmed that these activities can indeed be made available in Eersterust.

Figure 5.2: Adolescents participating in active recreation activities available in their environment

5.3.3. Adolescents' perception of how life skills can be achieved through active recreation activities is presented in table 3.

Participants were asked to identify life skills and link them to the active recreation activities as identified in table 1. The World Health Organisation (WHO) identified ten core life skills as mentioned in chapter two .The researcher concluded that the perception of life skills as perceived by the adolescents goes beyond those of the WHO as they identified the following also as life skills: Sportsmanship, respect, teamwork, commitment, discipline, patience, socializing and concentration.

The participants viewed life skills as important skills to consist of and agreed that these skills can assist them in successfully take on everyday challenges. The adolescents also acknowledged that through participating in active recreation they could learn the required life skills to be successful in school.

Photo 5.3 demonstrates the adolescents participating in an activity that required them to make use of a variety of life skills to ensure that the activity can be completed. Through participating in this activity, the adolescents released what their strong life skills are and which ones they still need to develop and improve.

Photo 5.3: Participants identifying active recreation activities and linked them to life skills

5.3.4. Active recreation activities that are available and unavailable in die Eersterust community and the possibility to apply them

Although soccer is perceived as available by the participants, it needs to be less fragmented in provision, the soccer field needs to be maintained, proper equipment is required, participants need to be divided into teams and officials should be present to ensure. In street soccer participants needs to form teams with equal amount of players, equipment needs to be present and the activity needs to be less fragmented.

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Participants stated the importance of netball being fragmented, due to the fact that if you are not selected to play for a school team, you are not provided with an opportunity to participate in the activity. The individuals need divide into teams and make sure officials are present even if their fellow adolescents volunteer to be the officials. Participants concluded that it is possible to provide an adaptive version of action netball to the individuals as there is a facility available.

Participants agreed that cricket should be less fragmented, to provide individuals who are not part of the schools team with equal opportunity to participate. Participants highlight the importance of maintenance of the cricket field in order for the activity to be successful. Individuals should divide in to teams, with two individuals volunteering to be umpires. The teams should consist of the required equipment like the helmet for the batting team to ensure that playing this activity is safe to the participants. Time plays an huge factor in this activity as it takes a long time to play and participants may not all have such time.

Participants reported that a swimming pool facility is available in Eersterust for recreational swimming to take place and for lifesaving to be provided, but it is not being maintained. An important factor to keep in mind is that some of the adolescents can't swim. This problem can be addressed by providing learn with swim courses for them. Participants stated that by providing the adolescents with the opportunity to complete the lifesaving course will lead to there being safe supervision at the swimming pool.

Participants' stressed the important role that dancing plays in their life's and that it is a very popular activity amongst the participants and therefore it is important that this activity will occur on n frequent basis. Coaches are required to teach the individuals the different techniques involved in dancing, and the time factor associated with dancing needs to be considered by recreational providers.

Participants reported that there is a wall climbing facility available in the Eersterust community but that it is currently not being used. Participants' stated that in order for them to participate in this activity the equipment needs to be provided along with supervision by a trained individual. The participants also indicated that an adolescent can receive training in order to act as the supervisor and can therefore be in charge of managing the equipment and climbing wall.

Participants emphasised that in order for BMX biking to occur in Eersterust, the adaptation of the parking area is required. Participants acknowledged that for them to participate in this activity, they will need to consist of the correct equipment like the specialized bikes, are used to ensure that stunts can be executed successfully. The participants also stated the importance of the supervision by a trained individual during the performance these activities.

The participants argued that handball should be provided on a regular basis to ensure that they have something to look forward to. The adolescents stated that they will need to form teams and that they will need officials even if it's their fellow adolescents that are willing to serve as officials are required to ensure that fairness occurs throughout the activity.

Participants stated that when providing rounders as an activity it is important to keep in mind that the playing field needs to be maintained and the correct equipment needs to be provided. The participants acknowledged that they will have to divide into two teams and individuals that could serve as officials should be present.

Participants' highlighted that even though recreational games like blikkies and rope jumping is available in Eersterust, recreational providers must still keep the following considerations in mind programming , it should be less fragmented, supervision at games are required, they need to get a group together in order for them to play these games, equipment and managing of equipment. The participants stated that they are currently playing blikkies, with their lunch boxes or with objects they collected from the trash cans.

5.4. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Chapter five provided the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained in both the focus groups and during the participation observation. Data obtained was categorised into the following categories: description of identified active recreation activities, adolescents' perception of current active recreation activities, participants identified activities and associated life skills with them, availability of identified active recreation activities and if unavailable activities can be applied.

Participants are well aware of the importance of life skills, but highlighted the fact that there are barriers like poor maintenance of facilities, lack of equipment, lack of

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supervision, time allocation, finding individuals to make up a team and being provided the change to participate even if they are not selected for the school team preventing them from participating in active recreation opportunities. It was concluded although the participants had an idea of what active recreation opportunities are and provided a sound description of each of them, the mostly thought of active recreation activities that are associated with participation in sport. Chapter six will focus on the study conclusions, recommendations and implementations for further research.

CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

6.1. INTRODUCTION

In chapter one the problem statement for this study was devised on the fact that adolescents are seen as a one of the most difficult developmental periods in an individual's life. It was established in both the literature review and data obtained that the current active recreation programs do not meet the needs of the adolescents. The advantages of life skills are firmly researched in this study. Participants that live in lower socio-economic communities face numerous barriers that are with holding them from participating in active recreation opportunities. . The research question for this study was formulated as: *"How can active recreation opportunities be utilized to develop adolescents life skills in a lower socio-economic community?"*

6.2 METHODOLOGY IN BRIEF

In chapter one the research methodology was discussed in full. In order to place the results in context, a brief summary of the research methodology are discussed again.

This study made used of an exploratory qualitative research design with a case study approach. Focus groups and participant observation was implemented as a method for data collection. The study focused on the lower socio-economic population of the Eersterust community and the participants were between the ages of 14 and 17 years.

In chapter one the aims of the study were:

➤ To identify how active recreation can contribute to life skill development of adolescents in lower social communities.

➤ To explore how adolescents in Eersterust perceive current active recreation opportunities in the community.

➤ To investigate adolescents in the Eersterust community and their perception of how life skills can be achieved through active recreation.

The final conclusions and recommendations will be presented according to the above three aims of the study.

6.3. CONCLUSIONS:

From the overall results of the study it can concluded that the aims of the study have been achieved. Conclusions will be presented according to the aims and objectives of the study.

6.3.1. The contribution of active recreation on the development of life skills of adolescents in lower socio communities

➢ Consisting of the necessary life skills contribute to the factor of developing into successful adults.

➢ They don't only perceive life skills as an important factor in overcoming challenges, but also as a contributing factor in developing social skills.

➢ Active recreation is mostly perceived as sporting activities

6.3.2. Adolescents perception of current active recreation opportunities in the Eersterust community

➢ Active recreation opportunities do not meet the needs of adolescents' in the Eersterust community.

➢ A low participation rate is caused by active recreation opportunities being boring not age appropriate, gender related and time inappropriate.

6.3.3. Adolescents perception of how life skills can be achieved through active recreation.

➢ Life skills play can play an important role in adolescents' ability in facing everyday challenges.

➢ Life skills can be learned through participating in active recreation opportunities.

➢ Adolescents in the Eersterust community went beyond the life skills provided by World health organisation which included: core life skills, decision making, coping with stress, problem solving, coping with emotions, empathy, creative thinking, self-awareness, interpersonal relationship skills, critical thinking and effective communication, The participants added skills like commitment, respect for others, teamwork, discipline, patience ,sportsmanship, enjoyment, relaxing, socialising and concentration that they felt were required to be successful in their environment.

➢ Adolescents understand the importance of active recreation in acquiring life skills. Barriers that need to be overcome in order for the participants in the Eersterust community to participate in active recreation opportunities are identified in the data analysis and included (see table 5.2):

Table 6.1: Barriers that adolescence experience in Eersterust

Barriers	Description
Lack of equipment	Equipment in the Eersterust community is not well maintained or absent. In order to participate in certain activities specialised equipment is required and the equipment is unavailable in the Eersterust community. Participant in the community are currently using their lunch boxes or objects retrieved from a trash can in order

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	to play "blikkies".
Lack of supervision	Without supervision it is difficult for participants to engage in certain active recreation opportunities.
Time	The times at which active recreation opportunities are presented are inappropriate.
Maintenance	Facilities within the Eersterust community are not well maintained and therefore makes it difficult for participants to engage in activities.
Equal chance to participate	Not all individuals are provided the opportunity to participate in their schools sport team and therefore fragmentation is important.
Teams	Certain activities require participants to divide into teams in order for them to participate, this can pose as a barrier as their needs to be quite a number of individuals that wants to participate and equal number of team members is required in each team.

6.4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS INVOLVING ADOLESCENTS

The recommendations are based on the results of the study and are consistent with the aims of the study, the following recommendations apply:

➢ The gender division should be considered and therefore it is recommended that there must be an equal amount of each gender in a group or that the groups consist of one gender only.

➢ Recreation providers must include adolescents in the design of active recreation programs as adolescents understand the importance of life skill

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development and to insure that the time allocation of the activities accompanies their schedule.

➢ Adolescents need to become familiar with presenters of activities. It is therefore recommended that test are done more than once to provide the adolescents with the opportunity to become familiar with the activity presenters and this provides the researcher with the opportunity to observe the results not only on their first meeting but also later on.

➢ Instructions must not be too difficult or take long periods to explain. Participants tend to get irritated and their mind wonders. It is therefore recommended that instructions are kept short and sweet

➢ Barriers for example the maintenance of facilities, lack of equipment and supervision should be taken into account when developing programs.

6.5. IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A more in-depth study should be conducted in order to obtain more information regarding the topic of life skills development through active recreation in adolescents. The following aspects require further investigation:

➢ Providers of active recreation programs should acknowledge that adolescence are affected by their environment.

➢ To explore the relationship between adolescents in marginalised communities and active recreation providers

➢ To investigate the influence on the involvement in participation when activities are presented and arranged by adolescents.

➢ To demonstrate the influence that participating in active recreation opportunities has on the development of the social skills of adolescents.

> ➢ To investigate the difference between male and female adolescents in the processes of learning life skills.

6.6. FINAL STUDY CONCLUSION

The study examined the life skill development of adolescents through active recreation. During the study the importance of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of development was highlighted and how it relates to the active recreation environment. Adolescents are aware of the importance life skills and that it can be taught through active recreation. However the study concluded that current active recreation activities that are available in the Eersterust community, does not meet the needs of the adolescents.

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