Evaluation of an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre in the North-West Province

by

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DECLERATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own original work. I understand that plagiarism is wrong. The work of other people, both from a printed, electronic or any other source, have been appropriately acknowledged and referenced.

SIGNATURE: ....

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ABSTRACT

EVALUATION OF AN EMOTIONAL AWARENESS PROGRAMME FOR CHILDREN IN MIDDLE CHILDHOOD IN A CHILD AND YOUTH CARE CENTRE IN THE NORTH-WEST PROVINCE

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The focus of this study was to evaluate an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood in a school setting developed by Dr JS Knoetze. This research measured the effectiveness of the emotional awareness programme (EA Programme) in a different context, a child and youth care centre. The goal of the EA Programme is to cultivate children's emotional awareness. The Gestalt theoretical approach rendered itself pragmatic to this study as various key concepts of this theory was integrated into the academic underpinnings.

Emotional awareness benefits children in the sense that they are more equipped to handle stressful events. Children with emotional awareness demonstrate introspective skills and have a better understanding of emotions in their social contexts. They are better able to apply functional emotional regulation strategies which in turn nurture personal goal attainment and positive relationships with others.

The advances in terms or their cognitive skills of children in middle childhood allow a better understanding of emotions and create an ideal platform for socio-emotional learning. Children in this phase of development have mastered the skills of reading, writing and reasoning, which are necessary to understand and participate in the EA Programme.

Emotional awareness is specifically important for children who reside in a child and youth care centre. These children were exposed to some degree of trauma and experience the placement in alternative care in itself as disruptive. The literature describes the challenges children in a child and youth care centre face, which supports the assumption that interventions are needed to assist these children to develop effective emotional regulation strategies. The EA Programme is regarded as such an intervention.

This investigation was executed from a quantitative research approach as the relationship between two variables was measured. The data was collected by using a standardised measuring instrument, the Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale for Children (LEAS-C). The researched is catagorised as applied research as it focused an issue in practice, namely emotional awareness of children in alternative care.

The quasi-experimental design that was followed was the comparison group pre-test, post-test design. This entailed that both groups completed the pre-test after which the experimental group was exposed to the EA Programme, then both groups completed the post-test. The availability sampling method was applied to select the respondents who were children in middle childhood residing in a child and youth care centre in the North-West Province.

The LEAS-C is a standardised questionnaire that was developed by Dr. Jane Bajgar and Dr. Richard Lane (2003). The questionnaire is suitable to be completed by children as the questions are formulated in understandable language.

The main conclusions drawn from this study are:

- Emotional awareness forms a central building block of the development of emotional intelligence, emotional competence and emotional regulation. Emotional awareness is regarded as a cognitive ability that can be learnt in order to develop other emotional abilities.
- Children placed in a child and youth care centre are specifically at risk to develop impaired emotional functioning as a result of trauma, maltreatment and the care-giving environment. Their disorganised emotional experiences translate into complex behavioural issues. Children placed in a child and youth care centre could specifically benefit from a programme, such as the EA Programme, that focus on nurturing skills that enhance emotional awareness.
- The research findings suggest that the EA Programme increased the experimental group's ability to be in contact with own emotions, their emotional vocabulary and emotional expression skills as well as their levels of emotional awareness. The EA Programme can be delivered as an effective intervention within the context of a child and youth care centre.
- The findings and conclusions derived from this study made a meaningful contribution to the field of social work as it focused on evaluating an intervention. This research specifically contributed to social work service delivery to looked after children in institutional settings.

- It can be valuable if more extensive research studies are conducted to evaluate the EA Programme within different child and youth care centres to serve as comparative studies.

KEY TERMS

- Emotional awareness programme
- Emotional awareness
- Emotional intelligence
- Emotional regulation
- Middle childhood
- Child and youth care centre
- Child in the child and youth care centre
- Gestalt theory
- Emotional expression
- Emotional vocabulary

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Caring for children who cannot be cared for in a family set-up has been researched by pioneering theorists such as John Bowlby and Anna Freud since the 1950's (McCall, 2011:224). Early studies describe the severe deprivation and adverse effects children in institutions suffer as compared to adopted or fostered children (Cameron & Maginn, 2009:2; Music, 2011:93).

Institutions in South Africa that provide alternative care for children without family-based placement options, are referred to as child and youth care centres. The Children's Act 38 of 2005 (hereafter referred to as the Act) describes a child and youth care centre in Section 191 as "a facility for the provision of residential care to more than six children outside the child's family environment in accordance with a residential care program suited for the children in the facility." The child and youth care centre is one of the alternative care options for children who have been found in need of care and protection according to Section 150 of the Act. Sections 191 and 197 in the Act stipulate that such a centre should render therapeutic programmes and should be registered at the Department of Social Development. For the purpose of the study a child and youth care centre is defined as an institution that, in accordance with Chapter 13 of the Act, provides alternative care for more than six children placed in the centre by an order of the Children's Court.

Children in child and youth care centres mostly have a history of trauma prior to their placement in alternative care, while the placement in itself can cause further trauma. Children who experienced trauma tend to block awareness of their emotions in an effort to cope, and often do not know how to express emotions (Oaklander, 2006:50). They are therefore more likely to experience problems related to emotional expression and emotional competence (Howe, 2005:147; Otto, 2006:78; Van Wyngaard, 2009:5). Emotional awareness is a fundamental skill required for the regulation of one's emotions and behaviour, as well as to demonstrate appropriate social skills and nurture positive interpersonal relationships (Lane in Bajgar, Ciarriochi, Lane & Deane, 2005:569; Blom, 2006:15; Geldard & Geldard, 2008:48; Knoetze, 2012:3; Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2168, 2216).

In a doctoral study, Knoetze (2012) developed an Emotional Awareness Programme for children in middle childhood in an educational context. The programme consists of seven

modules with the overarching objective of increasing knowledge about emotions and enhancing the levels of emotional awareness of children in this developmental phase (Knoetze, 2012:142). The author (Knoetze, 2012:212) found that the levels of emotional awareness of the experimental group significantly increased after being exposed to this programme. As this programme might be an appropriate programme to enhance the emotional competencies of children in institutional care, the study was undertaken to evaluate the effectiveness of the Emotional Awareness Programme (Knoetze, 2012) to enhance the emotional awareness of children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre.

Emotional awareness is defined as the extent to which an individual demonstrates knowledge about emotions and how emotional experiences influence thoughts and behaviour (Knoetze, 2012:105). Emotional awareness implies developing an emotional vocabulary and identifying the exact effects of specific emotions on one's body and one's thoughts (Blom, 2006:123; Oaklander, 2006:41). Within the context of this study, emotional awareness is described as the identification and comprehension of various emotions and their effect on how one acts and thinks.

The programme developed by Knoetze is specifically designed for children in middle childhood; meaning children between the ages of six and twelve years (Charlesworth, Wood & Viggiani, 2011:181; Knoetze, 2012:19). This developmental phase entails mastering abilities pertaining to language, physical control, and cognitive advances (Knoetze, 2012:19). For the purpose of the study, middle childhood refers to the developmental phase of children between the age range of six and twelve years.

The researcher implemented and evaluated the Emotional Awareness Programme developed by Knoetze (2012), hereafter referred to as the EA Programme, with children in middle childhood placed in a child and youth care centre. The following section includes a brief literature overview, the rationale and problem statement for the study, a summary of the research methodology, followed by the limitations of the study and the outline of the chapters.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The ability to identify, comprehend and regulate one's emotions forms a central part of mental well-being and of children's ability to express and respond constructively to emotions (Howe, 2005:14; Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2233). The development of emotional competencies in middle-childhood is seen as a prerequisite for optimal functioning in adulthood (Louw & Louw, 2007a:244). A core developmental attainment during middle

childhood is the increased recognition and understanding of emotions experienced by the self and others (Otto, 2006:75). Emotional awareness forms a central part in the development of emotional competencies, while it is also argued that it plays an undeniable role in the development of emotional intelligence (Bajgar et al., 2005:569; Charlesworth et al., 2011:193; Lantieri & Goleman, 2008:17; Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2214).

An overview of emotional awareness as a core aspect of emotional intelligence, the advantages of emotional awareness, emotional development during the developmental phase of middle childhood, and the relevance of emotional awareness with regards to children placed in a child and youth care centre, is provided in the following sections.

1.2.1 Emotional awareness as a skill in emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence is described as the skills a person demonstrate to act upon one's own experiences and the behaviour of others in a manner that is empowering to the self and others (Knoetze, 2012:106). A pioneering researcher on emotional intelligence, Daniel Goleman, found that emotional intelligence is a requirement for optimal cognitive functioning (Lantieri & Goleman, 2008:17) while Lemerise and Harper (2014:2168) point out that if emotions are comprehended, this understanding can be applied on a cognitive level to direct behaviour in order to reach an objective.

Emotional intelligence encompasses aspects of social and emotional learning and acquiring emotional intelligence is regarded as important as mastering numeracy and literacy skills (Lantieri & Goleman, 2008:14). Although there are differing views on whether emotional intelligence enhances cognitive functioning or vice versa, it is argued that emotional competence is a capacity that can be acquired by learning certain skills or competencies (Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2168).

Two of the five core competencies identified to make up emotional intelligence (Goleman in Lantieri & Goleman, 2008:18) are self-awareness and social awareness. Self-awareness entails that individuals are conscious of their own emotions and opinions as well as the manner in which these can influence their behaviour, while social awareness involves the skills to recognise and react appropriately and empathetically to the emotions of other people. Lane and Schwartz (1987 in Bajgar et al., 2005:569) incorporate the competencies of self-awareness and social awareness into a single term, namely emotional awareness.

Despite philosophical differences in different theories on emotional intelligence, most theories state that emotional awareness is central to emotional intelligence and emotional abilities (Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2191). Emotional awareness implies that emotions are

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explored in a manner that allows people to integrate new concepts of emotions on a cognitive level and encourage them to contextualise these feelings and to act appropriately in social situations (Blom, 2006:39; Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2216). Emotional awareness directly precedes emotional expression and entails general knowledge about emotions, physical experiences of certain emotions, and the identification of triggers of emotions (Blom, 2006:125; Otto, 2006:70).

Emotional awareness is regarded as the most central skill in acquiring emotional intelligence (Bajgar et al., 2005:569). Emotional awareness and emotional intelligence are considered inseparable concepts, emphasising that emotional intelligence develops from the presence of emotional awareness (Otto, 2006:72). Emotional awareness assists children in understanding their own feelings and the reactions of others, and increases the extent to which they are able to act on their own emotions (Blom, 2006:125; Geldard & Geldard, 2008:48).

Emotional awareness is a skill that can be acquired or learned on a cognitive level (Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2165), thus supporting the relevance of a programme to enhance the emotional awareness of children. Research points to numerous advantages related to emotional awareness.

1.2.2 Advantages of emotional awareness

Emotional awareness is regarded as a central part of a person's total emotional composition and is therefore essential to a person's well-being (Knoetze, 2012:86). Enhanced emotional awareness is regarded as a fundamental foundation for emotional intelligence and is associated with improved self-understanding, emotional regulation, appropriate social skills and nurturing relationships (Lane in Bajgar et al., 2005:569; Blom, 2006:15; Geldard & Geldard, 2008:48; Knoetze, 2012:3; Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2216). Emotional intelligence is related to improved performance at school and increased self-confidence, and acts as a protective factor against substance dependence and mental illness (Lantieri & Goleman, 2008:17).

Emotional intelligence enhances the integration of the right and left brain hemispheres, enabling people to process emotional experiences in such a manner that they become more capable to make responsible choices, exert control over their own bodies and emotions, experience enhanced self-awareness, and develop empathy towards other people (Siegel & Bryson, 2012:52). The EA Programme that was evaluated in this study was developed according to principles that encourage brain integration (Knoetze, 2012:80).

Emotional awareness is seen as a core component for effective emotional self-regulation. The enhancement of children's levels of emotional awareness contributes to more effective emotional functioning and emotional regulation (Knoetze, 2012:212). Further, children that have the ability to be aware of their own emotions and the emotions of others are better equipped to contemplate appropriate behavioural choices in provocative situations (Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2216). Emotional awareness improves a person's ability to adjust behaviour and cope with emotional distress, and contributes to the realisation of inter- and intrapersonal goals and needs (Music, 2011:107).

1.2.3 The child in middle childhood

Initially, Sigmund Freud viewed the phase of middle childhood as an uneventful period of development, but more recently it was accepted that important developmental milestones in terms of cognition and socio-emotional functioning are achieved in this phase (Charlesworth et al., 2011:185; Louw & Louw, 2007a:214). Piaget's theory on cognitive development outlines that children in middle childhood demonstrate the skills to conceptualise and solve problems which enhance their abilities to comprehend social situations (Charlesworth et al., 2011:187). This growth in cognitive abilities allows children to understand that certain emotions are experienced in specific situations, resulting in certain behaviours (Crowley, 2014:3790).

Children in middle childhood acquire the skills to translate emotional experiences into logic thoughts and actions (Siegel & Bryson, 2012:29). They develop the ability to understand that more than one emotion can be experienced at the same moment, gain a better understanding of complex emotions that they experience on an internal level, and assume personal responsibility for these feelings (Beck, Kumshick, Eid & Klann-Delius, 2012:505; Louw & Louw, 2007a:244). In middle childhood children are able to develop more complex coping skills to respond to stimuli that provoke emotional reactions (Charlesworth et al., 2011:193).

Their increased language proficiency enable children in middle childhood to adopt functional emotional regulation skills, as they become able to verbally communicate their internal states and are able to internalise verbal responses from care-givers (Crowley, 2014:3822). A study that examined the interplay between language and emotional competencies of children in middle childhood revealed that knowledge about emotions and emotional awareness are interrelated aspects of emotional development (Beck et al., 2012:512).

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1.2.4 The child in the child and youth care centre

Children who are placed in institutional care because of exposure to traumatic experiences such as abuse, neglect or loss are at risk for developing psychosocial problems that can last into adulthood, for example substance dependency, unemployment, psychiatric disorders and relationship difficulties (Cameron & Maginn, 2008:1152; Howe, 2005:26; Music, 2011:207). Research indicates that a child who was placed in an institution, even only for a limited period, has a significant higher risk to display mental health problems (Cocker & Allain, 2013:131; Stanley, Riordan & Alaszewski, 2005:239-240). These children not only experienced trauma prior to their care in the institution, but also as an effect of the placement in alternative care.

Children who have experienced trauma often block their emotions and do not know how to express emotions (Oaklander, 2006:50). Research indicates that, for children placed in institutional care, the part of the brain that responds to emotional understanding is almost non-functional as a result of their exposure to trauma (Brendtro, Mitchell & McCall, 2009:108; Music, 2011:93). The neurobiological aspects related to trauma have an effect on the emotional processing of children, with a result that children exposed to trauma display a dire need to acquire constructive emotional regulation skills.

A recent study on the state of children placed in child and youth care centres in South Africa confirmed that children in these settings experience various emotional difficulties (Willis, 2011:179-180). The study specifically noted that children in residential care settings presented with inhibited awareness of more complex emotions, experienced challenges related to the appropriate expression of emotions and as a result, these children were perceived as difficult and impulsive (Willis, 2011:180).

The significant advances in the domain of emotional development during middle childhood, as well the as challenges in terms of the emotional functioning experienced by children placed in child and youth care centres, support the possible advantages of an intervention focused on emotional awareness of children in middle childhood in the context of a child and youth care centre. The EA Programme can be considered as such an intervention.

1.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is based on the Gestalt theoretical approach, first developed by Fritz Perls (Thompson & Henderson, 2007:183). The Gestalt approach was also utilised for the development of the EA Programme that was evaluated in this research (Knoetze, 2012:24).

The following key concepts and philosophical underpinnings of the Gestalt theory support this framework as the most suitable for the study:

1.3.1 Holism

Holism or wholeness is a key concept in the Gestalt theory and regards an individual as a whole entity consisting of interrelated parts, without restricting the totality of an individual to the sum of its components (Blom, 2006:22). The Gestalt perspective views a child as a holistic entity consisting of various parts such as emotion, cognition and body. Holism implies that if one part of the organism changes, the other parts will be influenced in some manner (Blom, 2006:23). In line with the concept of holism, the introductory literature review indicates the advantageous effects of improved emotional awareness on other areas of a person's functioning. This concept of the Gestalt theory is thus applicable to the study as it views children as holistic entities and entails that a change in one aspect of development will influence other parts. The enhancement of emotional awareness and emotional functioning can thus have an impact on the child's holistic development and functioning.

1.3.2 Awareness

Gestalt theory emphasises awareness in the present point in time, or in the here and now, and focuses on enhancing levels of awareness in terms of the whole person, namely on physical, sensory, affective and cognitive states (Geldard & Geldard, 2008:35). This study evaluated the effectiveness of an emotional awareness programme (Knoetze, 2012) to enhance children's awareness in relation to emotional experiences, which is concurrent with the philosophical assumption of enhanced awareness. Awareness of emotions is a prerequisite for children to be in contact with their emotions.

1.3.3 Contact and the contact boundary

Contact refers to the way in which a child interacts with the self and the environment. The contact boundary is the distinction between a child and his or her surroundings. The inability to make appropriate contact with the environment, also described as a contact boundary disturbance, leads to ineffective ways of functioning and meeting one's needs (Blom, 2006:31-38). The term contact is concurrent with one of the main objectives of this study, namely to make contact with one's own emotions by means of enhanced awareness of emotions (Knoetze, 2012:31-33). When children are able to meet their needs by the means of appropriate contact and awareness, they have a higher capacity for organismic self-regulation and healthy functioning.

1.3.4 Organismic self-regulation

Organismic self-regulation is described as the process that occurs naturally and internally, by which an individual identifies a need and uses interaction with the environment and the self to satisfy the need and achieve a state of homeostasis (Blom, 2006:24; Thompson & Henderson, 2007:185). All living organisms desire to be in a state of homeostasis. The process of self-regulation commences when a child experiences a sensation or becomes aware of an environmental change, which is experienced as a need. Behaviour or action takes place and the child mobilises a resource within the self or the environment to address the need; in other words making contact (Blom, 2006:30; Thompson & Henderson, 2007:185). A state of homeostasis is then acquired and the need or figure no longer exists. A child experiences this state of balance or homeostasis until a new figure arises, whereby the process repeats itself (Blom, 2006:28).

Children are born with the capacity for contact, thus to make full use of their senses, emotions and body to satisfy their needs and thus self-regulate (Blom, 2006:28). Children gradually learn to satisfy their own needs as attentive parents nurture awareness of own needs, including emotional needs. However, circumstances in the environment can interrupt internal self-regulation and negatively affect the holistic functioning in a child (Blom, 2006:28). Children that receive the message that it is unacceptable to express anger can suppress the emotion and as a result direct the emotion onto themselves; manifesting as psycho-somatic symptoms or disruptive behaviour. A child exposed to traumatic experiences often suppresses emotions and applies disruptive behaviour in an attempt to satisfy his or her needs (Blom, 2006:29; Oaklander, 2006:50). The persistent experience that a need is unsatisfied interrupts the process of self-regulation and normative functioning and often manifests as unfinished business (Thompson & Henderson, 2007:188).

The Gestalt theoretical framework upholds the aspect of self-regulation. One of the objectives of Gestalt therapy is to promote awareness, which Perls saw as noticing what happens inside or around the self, including awareness of emotions, senses and thoughts (Blom, 2006:52-53). Awareness is thus a fundamental requirement for contact, self-regulation and holistic functioning. Emotional awareness and contact making can have a positive effect on the holistic functioning of the child and support self-regulation. Emotional self-regulation is the main purpose of emotional intelligence and socio-emotional competencies (Lantieri & Goleman, 2008:135). This purpose holds true to the core of the Gestalt theoretical framework, which is to encourage individuals to become aware of and satisfy their own needs in a healthy manner. Enhancing children's ability to self-regulate by enhancing their emotional awareness also underlies the rationale of the study.

1.4 RATIONALE AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

The enhancement of children's levels of emotional awareness can contribute to their emotional well-being and consequently improve their ability to adjust their behaviour and cope with emotional distress (Knoetze, 2012:212; Music, 2011:107).

Two South African studies recognised the importance of emotional awareness in children. A study conducted by Otto (2006:18) measured the effects of Gestalt play therapy group work on the levels of emotional awareness of children in middle childhood placed in child and youth care centres. The researcher (Otto, 2006) found that the levels of emotional awareness of the respondents increased after they were involved in Gestalt play therapy group work. The other study, whereby a structured emotional awareness programme was developed and implemented with children in middle childhood in a school setting, found that children's levels of emotional awareness increased by approximately 20% after they have been exposed to the programme, in contrast to the comparison group that scored an approximate 5% increase in emotional awareness levels (Knoetze, 2012:208). Both studies were conducted from a Gestalt theoretical framework and utilised the same standardised measuring instrument, namely the Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale for Children (LEAS-C), to measure the levels of emotional awareness. Both studies thus provide evidence of interventions that enhanced the emotional awareness of children.

The EA Programme that was developed by Knoetze has only been tested once in an educational setting. One of the recommendations made by Knoetze (2012:234) in her study was that the EA Programme needs to be evaluated in other areas of South Africa and with children from other backgrounds.

Research indicates that the emotional functioning of children cared for in child and youth care centres is negatively affected, compromising their ability for emotional expression and emotional and behavioural self-regulation (Brendtro et al., 2009:108; Cameron & Magin, 2009:15; Howe, 2005:99; Music, 2011:93). It is important that children who experienced multiple traumas be assisted to recognise and express emotions appropriately (Blom, 2006:138). Emotional knowledge can empower these children to recognise emotional triggers and develop better control over their emotions and behaviour. The development of children's skills to link words to internal states and express emotional distress is an integral part of assisting young children to reach their capacity for self-regulation (Blom, 2006:138). In other words, the development of emotional awareness is an intervention that could assist children placed in child and youth care centres to achieve better functioning and outcomes in later life. An emotional awareness programme could therefore enhance the well-being of the child placed in a child and youth care centre.

The goal of the research was therefore to evaluate the effectiveness of the EA Programme, that was developed by Knoetze (2012), for children in middle childhood in the context of a child and youth care centre. The study was also intended to contribute to the research gap identified by two recent local studies that recommended that further research be conducted into the emotional states of children placed in child and youth care centres (Swart, 2008:108; Willis, 2011:80). In a literature search the researcher found that, despite numerous literature sources available on emotional intelligence, minimal literature seemed to be available on the specific topic of emotional awareness. The researcher conducted an electronic literature search, using the key terms "emotional awareness" on electronic journal platforms accessed through the University of Pretoria library, namely Sabinet, Sage Journals, and Ebscohost. This study could also contribute to research specifically on the topic of emotional awareness.

This study formed part of a number of follow-up studies to evaluate the effectiveness of the EA Programme developed by Knoetze (2012) for children in an educational setting and in other settings. This research was conducted in the setting of a child and youth care centre.

The main hypothesis that guided the study is as follows: If an EA Programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, then the level of emotional functioning of the children will be enhanced.

The sub-hypotheses formulated for the study are as follow:

- If an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, their ability to be in contact with their emotions will be enhanced.
- If an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, their ability to discriminate between different emotions will increase.
- If an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, they will gain the ability to verbalise and "own" their emotions.

The main and sub-hypotheses for the study are aligned with the goal and objectives that were formulated for the study.

1.5 GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

The goal and objectives for the study were as follows:

1.5.1 Goal

The goal of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre in the North-West Province.

1.5.2 Objectives

The objectives of the study were:

- To conceptualise emotional awareness theoretically with specific emphasis on children in middle childhood within a child and youth care centre;

- To evaluate whether an emotional awareness programme will enhance the ability of children in middle childhood to be in contact with their emotions;

- To evaluate whether an emotional awareness programme will increase the ability of children in middle childhood to discriminate between different emotions;

- To evaluate whether an emotional awareness programme will enhance the ability of children in middle childhood to verbalise and 'own' their emotions;

- To draw conclusions about the applicability of the EA Programme within a child and youth care centre.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was executed from a quantitative method of enquiry, as the study evaluated the effect of an emotional awareness programme on the levels of emotional awareness of children in middle childhood placed in a child and youth care centre based on numerical data (Rubin & Babbie, 2011:67). For this purpose, a standardised measuring instrument, the *Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale for Children* (LEAS-C) (Bagjar et al., 2005:569) was utilised to gather the numerical values.

This study is described as applied research as the research entailed recommendations following the evaluation of the effectiveness of an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, which could enhance services to children placed in such institutions. The research could therefore address an issue in

practice (Fouché & De Vos, 2011:94). The evaluation of the effectiveness of an emotional awareness programme links the study to evaluation research (Rubin & Babbie, 2011:135).

The research aimed to determine the impact of an emotional awareness programme on the levels of emotional awareness of children in middle childhood placed in a child and youth care setting. The quasi-experimental design that rendered itself pragmatic to this study was the comparison group pre-test, post-test design; a design similar to a true experimental design, lacking only the random selection of participants (Fouché, Delport & De Vos, 2011:150). Two groups, the comparison group and the experimental group, completed a pre-test and post-test at the same point in time (Grinnell, Gabor & Unrau, 2012:222).

Both groups completed the pre-test, after which only the experimental group was exposed to the EA Programme, and both groups subsequently completed the post-test (Fouché et al., 2011:150; Grinnell et al., 2012:222). The dependent variable, emotional awareness, was measured during the pre-test and was measured again in the post-test, after the experimental group was exposed to the programme, which represents the independent variable.

The LEAS-C standardised measuring instrument (Bajgar & Lane, 2003) was utilised for the pre-test and post-test. The research design allowed the researcher to compare the pre-test and post-test measurements between the respondents in the experimental group and comparison group. After the completion of the post-test, the EA Programme was also presented to the comparison group as an ethical obligation.

The study population were children in the developmental phase of middle childhood placed in a child and youth care centre in the North-West Province. Purposive sampling was utilised to select the respondents according to key characteristics relevant to the study (Grinnell et al., 2012:274-275; Strydom, 2011a:231-232).

A sample of 18 respondents residing in the child and youth care was selected based on the following sampling criteria:

- Language: The respondents were Afrikaans speaking.
- Developmental phase: They were between the ages of seven and twelve years.
- Education: Children in Gr. 3 to 6 in a mainstream Afrikaans medium school.
- Programme: They were not involved in any programmes that had the same objectives as the EA Programme during the time of the research.

Data was collected by the means of a standardised measuring instrument, namely the "Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale for Children" (LEAS-C). This instrument was

developed by Dr Richard Lane and Dr Jane Bajgar and has been effectively utilised to quantify levels of emotional awareness in children in other studies (Bajgar et al., 2005:569; Knoetze, 2012:175; Otto, 2006:128). It is an age-appropriate instrument relevant to the age of the respondents in this study. The LEAS-C was translated into Afrikaans by Knoetze (2012) and could thus be used with the respondents, who were Afrikaans-speaking.

The researcher analysed the data with SPC XL Software for Microsoft Excel according to the glossary of words and the scoring manual provided with LEAS-C. The computer programme and scoring manual, that forms part of the LEAS-C, were used to convert the data into understandable values and figures. The findings of the study, based on the pre-test and post-test of the comparison and experimental groups, are presented in Chapter three and illustrated with graphs, diagrams and tables and interpreted within the literature review and theoretical framework of the study.

An in-depth description of the research methodology, as well as a discussion of the ethical considerations relevant to the study, is provided in Chapter three.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

During the execution of the research, the following limitations were identified:

- The generalisation of the research results is unrealistic as the EA Programme was only evaluated once within the setting of only one child and youth care centre with only a single and small sample of respondents. Despite the singular evaluation and small sample size, valuable conclusions about the EA Programme could still be made.
- The language in which the programme was presented limited the population size and thus also limits the scope in which the results are applicable. The sampling criteria required that respondents were enrolled in a mainstream Afrikaans medium school, while there were children residing at the child and youth care centre who met the age and schooling level requirements of the selection criteria, but were enrolled in schools catering for English or Sotho speaking children.
- The administering of the questionnaire in a group setting proved challenging as the respondents tended to display challenging behaviour. The researcher made sure to stipulate boundaries before the completion of the questionnaires and a child and youth care worker was requested to be present to add a sense of control to the environment. The researcher's experience in working with children placed in a child and youth care centre contributed to the completion of the questionnaire in a constructive manner.

1.8 CHAPTER OUTLINE

The research report consists of four chapters:

Chapter one provided a general introduction to the study and a brief literature review, the theoretical framework, the rationale and problem statement, the goal and objectives of the study and a summary of the research methodology were also discussed shortly. The limitations of the study were indicated.

In Chapter two a literature review of relevant theory and research about emotional capacities with specific emphasis on emotional awareness, middle childhood and the unique context of a child placed in a child and youth care centre is presented.

Chapter three reports on the research methodology that were followed, the ethical considerations of the study and the research results obtained from the collected data.

Chapter four finalises the research report by providing a summary of the key findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the empirical results of the study.

1.9 SUMMARY

This chapter briefly introduced the relevant concepts of the study, namely emotional awareness, middle childhood and the child and youth care centre. The Gestalt theoretical framework was described, as well as the motivating factors and research gap underlying the rationale and problem statement relevant for this study. The main hypothesis and sub-hypotheses and the goal and objectives of the study were stated. A summary of the research methodology was provided, followed by the limitations that were identified during the execution of the research.

The next chapter will provide a literature review, with a comprehensive description of the main concepts relevant to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

EMOTIONAL AWARENESS OF THE CHILD IN MIDDLE CHILDHOOD IN A CHILD AND YOUTH CARE CENTRE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the past, emotions were regarded as of secondary importance to understanding how the human brain functions, holding the view that "humans had evolved to become rational, logical beings somehow above emotions" (Zillmer, Spiers & Culbertson, 2008:259). In contrast to this view, emotional competence is currently regarded as one of the most important aspects of a person's psychosocial functioning. As humans, we live within a social context that requires self-understanding and the ability to relate to others (Zillmer et al., 2008:259), thus emotions play a vital role in everyday life. Despite technological and modern advances, people are required to interact with others on a daily basis. This interaction is guided by one's emotions (Howe, 2005:11-12).

Children in middle childhood are in the process of acquiring the skills to translate emotional experiences into logic thoughts and actions that will assist them to become emotionally competent adults (Siegel & Bryson, 2012:29). Children in this developmental phase who are placed in child and youth centres are at risk of not optimally developing normative emotional competencies and often exhibit various emotional challenges (Willis, 2011:179-180). The emotional functioning, or malfunctioning, of these children can thus be regarded as an important issue in social work service delivery. Section 191(2) of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 stipulates that child and youth care centres must provide therapeutic and development programmes to children, including children with behavioural, psychological and emotional difficulties. The emotional capacities of these children are therefore an imporant target area.

The importance of emotional awareness for optimal psychosocial functioning will be discussed in this chapter. An overview of middle childhood, with emphasise on the development of emotional capacities, is provided to understand the general functioning of a child in this developmental phase. A theoretical underpinning of the child placed in a child and youth care centre, or the looked-after child, provides the context in which the EA Programme relevant to the study (Knoetze, 2012), was presented.

2.2 EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

Emotional awareness will be conceptualised in this section. A discussion of emotions in general, as well as the neurobiological and cognitive processes related to emotional processing and awareness, will be presented first. Thereafter, emotional awareness, its relation to emotional competence and its role in the capaticities for emotional regulation and appraisal of emotions will be dicsussed. The section will be concluded with a discussion of the advantages of emotional awareness for a person's psychosocial functioning.

2.2.1 Emotions

Emotions are defined as the physical, cognitive and affective manner in which people act when exposed to emotionally stimulating events (Howe, 2005:11). Functional and evolutionary theorists concede that emotions are "biologically prepared adaptive processes" (Hastings, Kahle & Han, 2014:612). An individual's behaviour and cognition are in constant reciprocal interaction with his or her emotions. Emotions can change the way one thinks and physically feels while in turn, cognitive processes can have an impact on one's emotions (Hastings et al., 2014:623). Emotions are regarded as central to human life and have an effect on other domains of functioning. This interrelatedness was outlined in Chapter one as a rationale to conduct the mentioned study from the Gestalt theoretical approach and holds true for the Gestalt concept of holism (Blom, 2006:23).

Emotions originate from the interaction between neurological, perceptual, intellectual and behavioural functions and emotional experiences stimulate the nervous system to excrete hormones that initiate physical and psychological reactions (Hastings et al., 2014:623). Emotions are experienced subjectively, guide the person to reach individual objectives within a specific context, and are expressed through facial expressions or physical gestures. A person's social interactions are basically guided by his or her emotions (Howe, 2005:11-12).

The concept emotion is described by LeDoux in Zillmer et al. (2008:25) as "a subjective state of awareness." It is stated by Zillmer et al. (2008:25) that an affective state can only be named an emotion because humans have the cognitive ability to process a physical experience, in contrast to animals who tend to instinctively respond to physical sensations.

For the purpose of this study, emotions are defined as physical or psychological responses to stimuli that is subjectively processed based on the interaction between neurological, perceptual, cognitive and behavioural systems. The cognitive component of emotions is exceptionally individual; a person's emotional response to stimuli is unique and each person is cognitively highly involved in his or her reactions. A central point that relates to the study

is to promote a persons' consious awareness of their subjective emotional experiences. Increased awareness to assist in self-regulation is one of the main objectives of therapy conducted from the Gestalt theory (Thompson & Henderson, 2007:185), the theoretical framework for the study. Awareness of emotions is influenced by the presence of primary and secondary emotions.

2.2.2 Primary and secondary emotions

Primary emotions such as fear, disgust, anger, sadness, surprise, and joy are regarded as an automatic and pre-determined reaction to sensory information. These basic emotions are considered universal across diverse cultures and play a role in human survival (Berk, 2013:406). The automatic reaction to sensory information is triggered when the limbic system, also referred to as the emotional brain, is activated by information from the amygdala, which is the brain area that controls the body's fight or flight response, resulting in the limbic emotional response occurring concurrently with the conscious awareness of the emotion (Coates, 2010:395; Zillmer et al., 2008:260).

Secondary emotions are processed by more complex cortical processes. These emotions are described as more socially related processes and are constructed from prior learning experiences and socialisation. Each individual experiences such emotions distinctively different. Both primary and secondary emotions are processed by the limbic system, but secondary emotions are firstly processed by the cortex; the part of the brain that assigns meaning to specific information (Holodynski & Friedlmeier, 2006:47). This means that more complex cognitive processes are involved and the limbic system generates a more considered and controlled reaction with regards to secondary emotions (Zillmer et al., 2008:260).

Primary emotions are thus similar to reflex reactions as a person responds almost simultaneously when perceiving stimuli, while secondary emotions entail greater involvement of cognitive processes.

It is confirmed that emotions interact and influence people's physical sensations, cognitive processes and their behaviour to assist them to reach personal objectives (Hastings et al., 2014:622). These complex interactions take place between various sub-systems involved in the processing of an emotional experience.

2.2.3 Sub-systems involved in the processing of emotions

One of the debates regarding emotions, relates to whether emotions are primarily processed on a cognitive level, or if an emotion is physically experienced first and then analysed on a

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cognitive level (Zillmer et al., 2008:259). According to the latter authors two main theories originating from the 1920's, suggest how humans experience emotions:

- The James-Lang theory proposes that a person experiences an emotion as a physiological reaction to sensory stimuli. This theory acknowledges that the physical reaction experienced when stimuli is perceived, actually distinghuishes it as an emotion.
- The opposing theory, the Cannon Bard theory, postulates that emotions are experienced or expressed as a result of cognitive processes.

More recently, scientists have confirmed that a person's cognitive and physical reactions are interrelated (Zillmer et al., 2008:259). The interaction between mental and physical processes in experiencing emotions are emphasised by these theories. Thus, the description of primary emotions is viewed as concurrent with the James-Lang theory, and the experience of secondary emotions is related to cognitive processes after a stimulus is experienced, thereby reflecting the Cannon Bard theory.

The researcher is of the opinion that both theories are relevant to explain the experience of a variety of emotions in different circumstances. In other words, emotions can be a rapid response to external stimuli, or a respons to a cognitive state without observable stimuli from the environment. The statement that emotions are a subjective experience is emphasised; secondary emotions are subjected to a persons' unique interpretation of a situation (Zillmer et al., 2008:260). The relevance of these processes in emotional awareness is the fact that, irrespective of whether an emotional response occurs simultaneously or prior to the conscious attentiveness of a person, the processing of the emotional experience requires an extent of cognitive awareness.

Holodynski and Friedlmeier (2006:33) emphasise the integrated role of both internal processes and external stimuli by stating that the processing of emotions are "based on the dynamic interplay of a number of system components ranging from internal processes to the interaction with the social context." The attributes and assumptions about emotions in general are highlighted by the description of a complex psychological system that is composed out of the following interactive subsystems which are embedded in the brain (Holodynski & Friedlmeier, 2006:45-47):

- The *appraisal system* is concerned with the subjective appraisal of the person's own action goals, outcomes and consequences in a specific situation as compared to his or her expectations. This process does not entail reflexive reactions but is concerned with personal expectations after a stimulus is perceived.

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- The *motor system* involves the expression of emotions and preparedness to act, as for example to flee. The motor system initiates an expressive action that may be followed by a coping action. The coping action, which can either focus on the self or on another person, is influenced by prior learning experiences as well as the context in which the emotion is experienced. This distinguishes an emotional reaction from a reflex, as coping strategies are actions that are executed out of free will.

- The *bodily regulation system* consists of the physical reactions caused by the autonomic nervous system and physical processes that produce endocrines and hormones. These physical responses are involuntary reactions to the stimulus from the environment and have an impact on physical functioning, such as a person's heart rate.

- The *feeling system* is responsible for the internal sensation when exposed to a stimulus. Feelings involve an introspective state, are experienced subjectively and act as an evaluative tool to allow emotions to function effectively. Emotional experiences require interaction within the feeling system for a person to be aware of the trigger for an emotion, generate physical and expressive responses and consider viable regulation strategies.

The above authors (Holodynski & Friedlmeier, 2006; Zillmer et al., 2008) highlight the complex interaction between the sensory modalities, cognitive reasoning and physical responses in terms of emotional responses. Zillmer et al. (2008:260) recognise the human brain's ability to experience certain emotions by only thinking about them and not necessarily being exposed to a stimulus. These intrinsic processes are embedded in the human brain, as will be discussed in the following section.

2.2.4 The neurobiological structures related to emotional processing

Research involving neuroimaging has found that emotional processing occurs in extensively different areas in the brain (Hastings et al., 2014:655). In agreement with this view, Zillmer et al. (2008:260) postulate that some emotional processes occur in the cortex and that other emotional reactions are executed by sub-cortical regions of the brain. The advances in research on and techniques of neuroimaging allow for more detailed explanations of emotional processing in the brain. The purpose of this section is to provide only a general outline of the various systems in the brain and their main functions.

The emotional functioning of a person involves complex neurological processes and one area of the brain cannot be studied in isolation; the focus must be on the integrative way in which different areas form a network of emotional neurophysiology (Hastings et al.,

2014:655). The main intersecting areas of the brain executing emotional functions involve the limbic system, also known as the emotional brain, and the cortex, which is the part of the brain that interprets specific information (Coates, 2010:395; Holodynski & Friedlmeier, 2006:47). Some of the areas of the brain primarily concerned with emotional regulation are the hippocampus and amygdala in the limbic system, the prefrontal cortex, and regions of the striatum (Hastings et al., 2014:655; Zillmer et al., 2008:260). The cerebral cortex, amygdala and hippocampus are the areas of the brain that were considered relevant to the study and their functions with regards to emotional processing will be briefly outlined. These brain areas are visually presented in Figure 2.1.
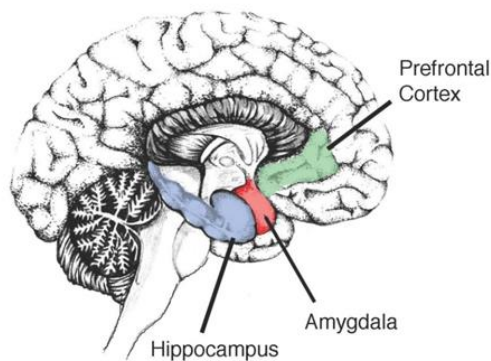
Figure 2.1: Brain areas primarily concerned with emotional processing (Brendtro et al.,   2009:30-31).

- **The cerebral cortex**

The cerebral cortex is the region in the brain that is responsible for rational and logical thought (Coates, 2010:396). The appraisal system that involves the processes whereby a person assigns meaning to a specific event that will cause the experience of an emotion, is situated in the cortex and sub cortex (Holodynksi & Friedlmeier, 2006:47). The cortex is divided into a left and right hemisphere (Music, 2011:91). The right hemisphere is responsible for processing emotions and the left hemisphere is concerned with logic reasoning and language (Siegel & Bryson, 2012:16-18).

A key aspect of emotional wellness is that the right and left hemispheres are sufficiently connected to perceive and then process emotional experiences (Music, 2011:92; Siegel & Bryson, 2012:28). The cerebral cortex is thus concerned with the regulation of emotions in terms of higher order reasoning processes. The cortex is seen as the brain area concerned with logical emotional processing (Brendtro et al., 2009:32).

- **The amygdala and hippocampus**

The amygdala is the brain area that controls the body's fight or flight response (Coates, 2010:395). The amygdala executes responses towards fear arousal and is responsible for early emotional learning experiences with specific attention to fear reactions that are important for the survival of a person (Hastings et al., 2014:643; Music, 2011:84; Zillmer et al., 2008:262). The learning of responses to fear occurs before conscious awareness is present (Music, 2011:84).

The amygdala and hippocampus function harmoniously and concurrently when stimuli are perceived. The hippocampus is concerned with remembering the details and content related to the situation that provokes various emotions, in other words the context, while the amygdala is associated with immediate emotional responses to incoming stimuli (Coates, 2010:395; Zillmer et al., 2008:260). The harmonious functioning between the amygdala and the hippocampus can be constrained if a person constantly experiences stressful situations, as chronic stress is associated with weakened memory recollection caused by the secretion of adrenocortical hormones released during stressful stimuli (Zillmer et al., 2008:260) as well as an overreactive amygdala that triggers the body's fight or fligt response (Coates, 2010:395). As emotional memory is situated in the area of the brain that is influenced by the senses, people's emotions from significant events in the past can affect their current emotional state, thoughts and ultimately their actions in their interaction with their surroundings in the present (Howe, 2005:12-13).

Siegel, in Music (2011:87) emphasises that mental health is promoted by the interdependence and intrinsic interaction between different brain regions. It is recognised that the neurobiological processes related to emotions are not only pre-determined by genetics, but is profoundly impacted by life experiences. These life experiences can be regarded as the contextual influences in the development of emotional processing (Hastings et al., 2014:827).

The focus of this study is on emotional awareness, in other words on the promotion of higher order reasoning about emotions, of children in middle childhood within the context of the child and youth care centre. Hastings et al. (2014:827) emphasise the impact of a person's surroundings and socialisation on the development of emotional processes. Child maltreatment and placement in alternative care can be considered as such contextual influences.

It is important to take notice of the functions of the amygdala and hippocampus as these regions play a significant role in the emotional processing of maltreated children. While

higher order reasoning occurs in the cortex, immediate emotional responses are processed by the amygdala and the hippocampus. Most children being cared for in child and youth care centres have been exposed to some form of maltreatment (Kjelsberg & Nygren, 2004:19). They therefore most likely experienced situations of chronic stress, which constrains the functioning of the amygdala and the hippocampus (Coates, 2010:395; Zillmer et al., 2008:260). Due to the interrelatedness of the different brain areas (Hastings et al., 2014:655; Siegel, in Music, 2011:87) constrained functioning of the amygdala and hippocampus could affect the cognitive awareness of emotions, the process of higher order reasoning, of the child placed in the child and youth care centre. The impact of maltreatment on the emotional processing of children will be addressed later in this chapter.

The next section will first focus on the relationship between cognitive awareness of emotions and the development of higher order reasoning in children, as related to theory of mind.

2.2.5 Theory of mind

Investigating children's interpretation of their own and the emotional processes of others were initiated in the 1980's by researchers such as Paul Harris, Susan Harter and Carolyn Saarni (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:271). Eventually this research correlated with a more substantiated body of research about theory of mind. The latter authors incidate that research on theory of mind and emotional awareness is intended to explain children's analyses and own interpretations of socio-emotional and cognitive experiences. Theory of mind is regarded as knowledge or awareness of one's own mental state that assists one to interpret and foresee behavioural outcomes, of which emotions form a fundamental part (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:271).

Theory of mind assumptions concede that one is consciously aware of one's own mental state and that one can acknowledge that another person has a unique state of mind (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:275). Theory of mind also includes a belief-desire component, according to which the person is able to comprehend that one's actions are determined by both beliefs and desires (Berk, 2013:452). Theory of mind with regards to emotional awareness thus entails that a child is able to acknowledge that diverse emotional reactions can be experienced by different persons in the same situations, as each person's emotions are influenced by their unique desires and beliefs (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:275). Theory of mind indicates that emotional awareness requires cognitive effort and introspection; skills that are not necessarily inherently possessed. Children should have achieved certain developmental milestones in order for theory of mind to be acquired (Louw & Louw, 2007b:163). These milestones include the achievement of self-awareness, the capacity for pretence and for distinguishing pretence from reality, understanding emotions, and

competence in executive functions such as an understanding of false belief tasks. During the middle childhood years children's theory of mind becomes refined and their higher-order cognitive skills improve (Louw & Louw, 2007a:220).

Theory of mind reasoning about emotional states starts with emotional awareness. Theory of mind rationale assists children to interpret external emotional expressions as related to inner experiences of the self and others. Children thus start to realise that emotional expressions can be adapted to hide inner feelings (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:276). Emotional awareness entails a deliberate attentiveness to one's own affective states and implies that awareness for each person is unique, as will be discussed in the next section.

2.2.6 Emotional awareness

Emotional awareness encompasses the extent to which one can be in contact with one's own emotions and distinguish between different emotions of the self and other people (Knoetze, 2012:18). Lane and Schwartz, 1987 in Bajgar et al. (2005:569) stipulate that emotional awareness is the combination of self-awareness and social awareness.

The concept of emotional awareness is deduced from a belief-desire theory which explains that people's interaction with their world originates from their mental interpretation and is not based on the outside environment as such (Berk, 2013:452). The recognition that people's actions are influenced by their state of mind, beliefs and desires allow children to understand that people respond differently to various situations. It also promotes a specific understanding about how a person might react emotionally in situations (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:274).

The researcher interprets emotional awareness as described by Knoetze (2012:18) as the extent to which a person is able to differentiate between emotions. Emotional awareness includes an interpersonal and intrapersonal component as it relies on the identification of emotions in the self and others. The belief-desire theory explains that emotional awareness is created through each person's unique experiences and interpretations thereof. The complexity of emotional awareness is emphasised as it encompasses the awareness of emotions in the self and also in other people according to each person's unique comprehension and responses towards emotions (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:274). Emotional awareness is based on a foundation of emotional knowledge.

Firstly, the multi-sensory intake and expression of emotional knowledge need to be recognised; implying that initially stimuli are observed and analysed as emotional sensations without the necessary emotional knowledge (Wranik, Barret & Salovey, 2007:397).

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Awareness of emotions is experienced as a progression through different levels, starting with physical sensations, action predispositions, single emotions, experiencing various emotions and then experiencing mixed emotions simultaneously (Bagjar et al., 2012:570). Even though young children do not yet necessarily demonstrate the cognitive abilities to analyse emotional situations, they are able to interpret emotional stimuli by utilising their senses and physical experiences. Blom (2006:91) states that: "[e]very emotion has a link with the body and children develop body patterns from a young age as their bodies' reaction to emotion." Stegge and Terwogt (2007:276) explain that children link an emotion directly to external circumstances as well as the manner in which the emotion is expressed. The cognitive analyses develops as children mature, but are interpreted against external prompts and physical sensations (Blom, 2006:91; Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:273). For example, children learn from early on that crying is an indication of some sense of unhappiness and that a certain tone of voice is associated with anger. The intellectual processing of these experiences is however necessary for children to make sense of their emotions.

The development of emotional knowledge in children occurs in a similar manner to which other information is analysed and memorised. Children analyse their environments and process situations, after which they evaluate new information against already existing memories and then organise and integrate new knowledge (Wranik et al., 2007:397). In this manner, children learn about emotions by firstly being introduced to an event in the environment that is labelled, for example as angry, after which a physical sensation is associated with the experience and lastly, the emotion then leads to specific actions or behavioural outcomes that will be stored in memory. In order for children to utilise their emotional systems optimally, it is necessary that they possess knowledge of emotions. This knowledge comprises of a comprehension of the attributes of specific emotional schemas and the realisation of how own regulation strategies can effect one's emotional functioning (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:282).

Gaining knowledge about emotions is therefore conceptual and depends on the environment. Stegge and Terwogt (2007:273) uphold that young children associate an emotional experience with an observable external indication, for example "I am happy because I receive a gift." The development of emotional knowledge does not only indicate the contextual and external influences on emotional awareness, but also indicates that emotional awareness is based on a learning process in which knowledge is obtained and memorised.

Secondly, emotional awareness occurs internally within a specific mind-set, as described by Stegge and Terwogt (2007:273): "a child needs to consciously reflect on his or her inner

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experience in order to be able to identify it as an emotional experience." This statement elucidates the importance of emotional awareness in order to recognise and label an emotional experience (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:273; Wranik et al., 2007:397).

Studies confirm that factors such as age and gender have an influence on emotional awareness. It was found that twelve/thirteen year old children's ability to be aware of their inner emotional states are more refined as compared to six/seven year olds (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:273). This progress in terms of knowledge and awareness of emotions during middle childhood, signifies the importance of developing emotional capacities in this developmental stage. Higher levels of emotional awareness in females than in males were consistently found. Research reports that females are more exact in recognising emotions in facial expressions and are more skilled at interpreting facial expressions (Bagjar et al., 2005: 570-571).

In conclusion, the development of an emotional awareness occurs internally and is subjected to situational experiences. This process entails that events in the environment influence children's development and interpretation of emotional knowledge. Children who are exposed to dysfunctional environments might develop misinterpreted assumptions regarding emotional meanings.

The comprehension of emotions in an intellectual context can be applied effectively to direct behaviour in order to reach an objective (Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2168). Children may find it difficult to identify and predict emotions, as indicated by Stegge and Terwogt (2007:275) who describe the child's emotional representations as "imaginative reasoning that has to be extended with an additional step, which makes it more difficult to predict emotions than behaviours." The importance of a well-developed emotional awareness is considered to be a central departure point for constructive emotional functioning and emotional regulation (Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2168; Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:276). The fundamental role of emotional awareness in the development of emotional competence is discussed in the following section.

2.2.7 Emotional awareness, emotional intelligence and emotional competence

People's ability to recognise, understand and contemplate their emotions offer insight into the self with regards to social relationships that assist them in consciously regulating their own affective states (Howe, 2005:13). This conscious ability is referred to as emotional intelligence (Goleman in Howe, 2005:13). Emotional intelligence is described as a social-emotional competency consisting of various skills that enable an individual to be aware of,

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interpret and respond to emotional events experienced by the self and others in such a manner that it facilitates effective outcomes (Wranik et al., 2007:394).

Pioneers in research on emotional intelligence include the following interacting set of skills that make up emotional intelligence (Wranik et al., 2007:394):

- Awareness of emotions in the self and in others.
- Analysing an emotional experiences of the self and/or the other person (i.e. appraisal), which involves prioritising relevant aspects of an event or within the processes in the self, which can then guide behaviour.
- Comprehending emotions in general and demonstrating an emotional knowledge base. This skill entails acquiring an emotional vocabulary and developing cognitive processes involving a hypothetical analysis of emotions in order to be more aware of general triggers of, responses to and the effects of emotions. This skill is impacted by the cognitive understanding of emotions which is subject to developmental progress in terms of age and exposure.
- Emotional regulation, which includes the ability to perceive emotional situations and respond in the most conducive manner possible. Even though this skill has the most observable and final outcome, the effective management of emotions is unattainable without applying the first three skill sets.

It is emphasised that the first three skills pertaining to emotional intelligence entail cognitive processes related to emotions. The first two skills focus on an awareness of emotions and the subsequent skill involves demonstrating basic knowledge about emotions. The central role of emotional awareness in developing emotional intelligence, is evident.

Developing a knowledge base and understanding of emotions is regarded as the most fundamental aspect of emotional intelligence (Wranik et al., 2007:395). A recent source (Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2191) indicate that despite philosophical differences in different theories on emotional intelligence, most theories state that emotional awareness is central to emotional intelligence and emotional competence. Emotional awareness is an irreplaceable component of emotional intelligence and efficient emotional regulation and some authors regard emotional awareness as the most central aspect of emotional intelligence (Bagjar et al, 2009:569; Blom, 2006:15; Geldard & Geldard, 2008:48; Lantieri & Goleman, 2008:18).

An organisation that focuses on enhancing social and emotional learning in schools identified five core competencies that make up emotional intelligence (Goleman in Lantieri & Goleman, 2008:18). The first two of these skills, namely self-awareness and social awareness, relate specifically to the research:

- Self-awareness entails that an individual is conscious of his or her own emotions and opinions as well as the manner in which these can influence his or her behaviour.
- Social awareness involves the skill to recognise and react appropriately and empathetically to the emotions of other people.

The mental processes related to emotional awareness contribute to emotional competence. Emotional competence is described as a form of intelligence that allows a person to utilise his or her comprehension about emotions to achieve interpersonal goals more successfully (Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2154). Some authors refer to this as emotional intelligence (Wranik et al., 2007:394). Emotional competence requires that a person is able to be aware of and recognise an emotion, and is able to regulate his or her emotions in order to act constructively in emotion eliciting events (Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2234).

Emotional competence is achieved by mastering various skills, of which the verbal expression of emotions is considered a core skill (Beck et al., 2012:503). A study on the relationship between language and emotional competencies of children in middle childhood suggests that emotional competence, just as language competence, develop in the same manner, in which children conceptualise and generalise emotional experiences (Beck et al., 2012:511). The study suggests that language supports the development of emotional competence, as both language and emotional competence are conceptualised through the same cognitive processes (Beck et al., 2012:511). Language is seen as a medium with a similar construct to which emotional competencies are constructed (Beck et al., 2012:511). These findings can be linked to the fact that emotional awareness is related to the ability to identify and conceptualise different emotions (Bagjar et al., 2005:570).

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that emotional awareness as a skill in emotional intelligence is not merely to be aware of one's own affective state. Emotional awareness entails that a person reasons about triggers and responses related to certain emotions, has a basic cognitive understanding of emotions, is aware of how emotions can influence behaviour and has the ability to recognise emotions and deduce various causes for emotional reactions in others. Emotional awareness occurs on a cognitive level and entails cortical processes that can guide behaviour. The imporant role of cognition in emotional awaress, implies that emotional awareness is a cognitive ability that can be learnt, as will be discussed at the conclusion of this chapter.

Emotional intelligence and emotional competence can equip a person to react to his or her own emotions as well as the emotions of others in such a manner that personal objectives are achieved and interpersonal relationships are nurtured.

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Emotional awareness and emotional competence play a central role in the child's capacities for secondary appraisal and emotional regulation. These two capacities will be discussed respectively in the following two sections.

2.2.8 The role of emotional awareness in secondary appraisal

Emotions are complex concepts, as the representation of how a specific individual will perceive the meaning in an emotion eliciting event and emotionally respond is subjected to their own unique cognitive processes. These thought processes refer to an appraisal process, which according to Wranik et al. (2007:397) "reflect the conceptual knowledge an individual has about the self, the context, and emotions in general, and at the self-reported level, to reflect the explicit knowledge he or she is willing or able to report." These appraisals will impact the individual's personal goals and the extent to which personal situations can be altered (Wranik et al., 2007:397-398).

The appraisal of emotions in the self and in others shows a link with development of the sense of self. Cowie (2012:8) suggests that "[t]he child's sense of self is closely related to the ways in which he or she expresses or interprets emotions." Hoffman (2000) in Cowie (2012:10) identifies four consecutive stages for children to attain a distinguished sense of self, with the final stage that involves attaining an awareness of the self and of others as each having unique experiences and thoughts. This process forms part the child's attainment of a sense of empathy; thus an awareness of and response to an emotion which another person experiences (Cowie, 2012:10).

Children's emotional functioning during middle childhood enable them to analyse circumstances, make assumptions about the origin of their emotions, the effects on their inner experience, and expression of a wide range of emotions (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:277). They develop the ability to cognitively alter their inner experiences and outer expressions of emotions (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:278). Children in this stage of development start to apply secondary appraisal with regards to emotional processing.

Enhanced awareness of their emotions allow children to gain a better understanding of a specific feeling, which will better equip them with the skill to act introspectively on their own emotional states. They become aware that emotional experiences are subjected to their own mental representation of events and that this representation can be reconstructed in their cognition to allow them to express and act on emotions in more appropriate ways (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:283). Stegge and Terwogt (2007:271-272) explain that the conscious awareness of the own affective state implies that a child is able to alter his or her automatic response and can intentionally modify his or her interpersonal interaction. This

emotional knowledge develops from language competencies and a cognitive knowledge base about emotions and is integral for a child to contemplate a constructive response to intricate social demands. Children's language and cognitive abilities about emotions serve as the conceptual framework through which they interpret and then respond to situations. The important role of secondary appraisal in children's behaviour is highlighted by Stegge and Terwogt (2007:272), stating that: "More differentiated and integrated knowledge helps the child to profit from the informational value of the feelings to a greater extent, so that emotions can become a useful guide in the service of adaptive behaviour."

In conclusion, secondary appraisal can be seen as the cognitive process that precedes a behavioural response to an emotion. Secondary appraisal involves an analysis of the event, of own feelings and of outward responses. It futher involves the awareness that other people have their own appraisal system and allows a child to consider the point of view of another person in a specific situation, that can facilitate more appropriate actions in emotional events. An important aspect in the secondary appraisal process is the ability to recognise that emotions which are experienced as automatic can be altered or controlled (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:282; Wranik et al., 2007:398). The cognitive nature of this process requires an extent of emotional awareness. Emotional awareness enhances one's ability to accommodate various appraisals within a situation and eventually conclude on a meaning that will guide action in a constructive manner. This process can be seen as an initial step for the healthy expression of emotions.

2.2.9 The role of emotional awareness in emotional regulation

Emotional self-regulation involves the strategies that people use to adjust their emotional state so that the intensity of emotions is maintained at a comfortable level (Berk, 2013:409). It entails spontaneous and premeditated strategies utilising internal and external sources to interactively alter the way in which emotions are experienced and expressed; the process can therefore postpone, speed-up, suppress, terminate, emphasise or sustain the physical, affective and cognitive experiences of an emotion (Hastings et al., 2014:623). Stegge and Terwogt (2007:283) state that "[c]hildren need to learn when and how to regulate their feelings, and the identification of their own feelings state takes a central role in this process" but at the same time these authors recognise that the experience that emotions can be controlled is dependent on the specific event as well as the unique meaning a child attaches to his or her experience.

Children either apply cognitive or behavioural strategies to regulate their emotions (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:277). Children are inclined to attempt to replace negative emotional thoughts with positive emotional thoughts and futher learn from an early age that emotions are not

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only related to an experience but are also expressed in a certain manner. As children get older, they increasingly develop the capacity to recognise inconsistencies between their emotional feelings and their external expressions thereof (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:276). They become more able to adapt their emotional expression to meet specific social demands. However, if children are not yet subjected to their own personal analysis of situations, this capacity is restrained in the sense that they only rely on a single interpretation of an event. The capacity of secondary appraisal can thus assist in internal emotional regulation. During the middle childhood years children develop an improved ability to appraise situations and use strategies to manage their emotions, and show rapid gains in their capacity for emotional regulation (Berk, 2013:412).

Emotional regulation is basically described as the steps taken by an individual to monitor a specific emotion being experienced in the present time and place, the expression of these emotions, as well as consideration of how others might observe them in the particular situation (Macklem, 2008:3). Macklem (2008:7) proposes that the following skills are applied to regulate one's emotions:

- Information processing that entails the identification of the facial and physical expressions of emotions.
- The ability of a child to express his or her emotions.
- Emotional knowledge, which involves the extent to which a child is aware of own emotions.
- The awareness of various emotional stimuli as well as the impact of the context when expressing an emotion.
- The skill to moderate the intensity in which the emotion is experienced and expressed.

The important role of emotional awareness, which refers to the person's ability to be in contact with one's own emotions and to distinguish between different emotions in the self and in other people (Knoetze, 2012:18), is evident in the above-mentioned skills. An enhanced awareness of own emotions can be applied to consciously alter outward emotional expressions. Children also become attentive to motivations to suppress certain emotions in different contexts and emotions are sometimes supressed to be accepted by others or for reasons to protect oneself (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:276-277).

The importance of each child's appraisal system is described by Stegge and Terwogt (2007:276): "The private character of inner processes has to be appreciated before it can be used in a deliberate and strategic way." The private inner process highlighted by Stegge and Terwogt (2007:276) encompasses an apprecation of the conscious experience of

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emotions that is is central to emotional capacities and emotional regulation. The enhancement of awareness of emotions in the here and now concurs with the concept of awareness in the philosophical underpinning of the Gestalt theoretical framework (Thompson & Henderson, 2007:188).

In this section, the important role of emotional awareness in the development of emotional intelligence and emotional competencies were highligthed. The advantages of emotional awareness for the child's psychosocial functioning will be discussed subsequently.

2.2.10 Advantages of emotional awareness

Emotional awareness is regarded as the most central skill in acquiring emotional intelligence (Bagjar et al., 2005:569) and a central component of children's emotional competence (Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2192). The advantages of emotional intelligence namely, an improvement in academic performance, self-confidence, mental well-being and pro-social behaviour, are generally recognised (Lantieri & Goleman, 2008:17; Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2216; Music, 2011:107; Siegel & Bryson, 2012:52). Children with skills of emotional intelligence have been found to generally have better physical health, do better at school, maintain positive friendships, have higher self-esteem and decision-making skills and are more resilient (De Klerk & Le Roux, 2003 in Louw & Louw, 2007a:245). The specific advantages of emotional awareness are subsequently outlined:

- **The ability to cope in stressful events**

Knowledge of emotions supports children to react more adaptively to emotional situations. Awareness of emotions allow children to re-organise pre-determined emotional responses in order to respond in a more socially acceptable manner. This skill is described as emotional regulation. Studies confirm that children who demonstrate the ability to regulate their own emotions are more apt to react constructively to stressful events (Macklem, 2008:8; Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:276)

- **Enhanced psychological well-being**

An understanding of emotions is seen as a core principle of psychological well-being. The ability to identify, comprehend and regulate emotions is regarded by Howe (2005:14) as an elementary principle of mental health. The latter author (Howe, 2005:14) states that the cognitive understanding of emotions precedes the actual process of emotional regulation, as constructive emotional regulation is subjected to a sound comprehension of emotions; an aspect of emotional awareness.

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- **Development of introspective and contemplative skills**

Enhanced emotional awareness creates more opportunities for introspection and secondary appraisal of emotional experiences (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:278). These skills are fundamental to emotional self-regulation, as the two general strategies for emotional regulation include the ability of children to appraise situations and to internally and privately contemplate their own emotions (Berk, 2013:412; Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:269). Introspection and contemplation skills are furhter involved in theory of mind reasoning. Theory of mind reasoning helps children to understand their own mental state, the role of beliefs and desires on actions, and promotes the recognition of other's unique state of mind (Berk, 2013:452; Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:275). Introspective skills thus encourage a deeper understanding of the self and other's reactions.

- **Enhanced understanding of emotions within the social context**

Perceiving and identifying emotions in the self and in others contribute to a greater comprehension of emotions and social situations in which emotions are experienced. Holodynski and Friedlmeier (2006:45-47), in their description of the brain areas involved in the processing of emotions, describe one of the components of emotional processing as the *appraisal system*, which is concerned with subjective appraisal of emotions within specific situations or contexts. The awareness of emotions and an emotional vocabulary can help children to express and receive feedback about their emotional experiences (Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2210). The social context, for example the home, school or peer group, will determine what is regarded as socially acceptable behaviour. A better understanding of emotions as well as the contextual influences on how emotions are experienced and expressed, provide children with the opportunity to learn acceptable emotional responses in their specific contexts.

- **Identification of emotional regulation strategies**

An increased awareness of emotions allows children to analyse triggers of and responses to emotions (Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2210). Knowledge of different stimuli that give rise to emotions, physical manifestations of emotions, the general impact of emotions on thoughts and behaviour, as well as the effect of the social context enable children to more accurately identify emotions within themselves with the intention to determine when regulation strategies are required (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:282). An increased awareness of emotions and of possible emotional regulation strategies help children to compare the possible short- and long-term consequences of hypothetical actions (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:277). Being able to perceive emotional situations and respond most effectively, is one of the key skills of

emotional intelligence (Wranik et al., 2007:394). The identification of when emotional regulation is required and of relevant strategies for the purpose, are important to promote socially acceptable behaviour.

- **Promotion of interpersonal goal attainment**

An increased awareness of one's inherent responses to emotions allow children to realise that they are able to regulate their emotional experiences, which can assist them to achieve interpersonal goals (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:283). Individuals with emotional awareness are more capable to prevent their emotions from clouding their judgements (Bagjar et al., 2005:570). Emotional regulation encourages children to respond more adaptively to their environments which enable them to meet goal-orientated expectations (Macklem, 2008:8). The adaption of emotional responses through emotional regulation thus creates an opportunity for children to distance themselves from emotion provoking situations and analyse the situation and their emotional responses to prevent negative emotional responses from interfering with the achievement of a specific goal.

- **Enhanced social competence**

Emotions play a fundamental role in a person's social interactions and it is proposed that a person's social interactions are guided by his or her emotions (Howe, 2005:11-12). A number of factors can be related to the fact that emotional awareness can enhance social competence. Emotional awareness refers to the ability to recognise emotions in the self and in others (Knoetze, 2012:18), and children with emotional awareness are thus more skilled at recognising emotions in others. Emotional awareness is further based on the belief-desire theory, which allows children to recognise that people's actions are influenced by their state of mind, beliefs and desires and that people respond differently to situations (Berk, 2013:452; Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:274). It is noted that children with a more elaborate emotional vocabulary are more competent in identifying emotions according to the facial expressions of others and are more socially competent than children with an average emotional vocabulary (Beck et al., 2012:503-504). The recognition of emotions in others is regarded as a crucial skill for social navigation and underpins the skill to respond empathetically (Cowie, 2012:10). Improved social skills contribute to healthy relationships with others, as is discussed under the next point.

- **Emotional awareness nurtures social relationships**

As discussed in this section, emotional awareness enhances the child's understanding of and ability to regulate emotions. Emotional regulation facilitates thriving social relationships

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(Macklem, 2008:8). A sufficient knowledge base of possible stimuli of emotions and the recognition of the various ways in which to express emotions, support children in their emotional understanding of themselves and other people (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:276). Howe (2005:13) is of the opinion that children who understand the manner in which emotions motivate their own and others' behaviour are more socially adaptable and able to interact more easily in social situations. Emotional understanding nurtures interpersonal relationships as both parties feel accepted.

- **Emotional awareness promotes brain integration**

Intricate neural pathways improve the connections between the left and right hemispheres of the brain, and this integration is associated with psychological wellness (Music, 2011:91). The recognition of emotions mainly occurs in the right brain hemisphere, but the linguistic interpretation is processed by the left hemisphere; encouraging hemispheric brain integration (Bagjar et al., 2005:570; Music, 2011:92). Emotional awareness entails many of the skills underlying emotional intelligence, namely the awareness of emotions, acquisition of emotional vocabulary, understanding emotions and appraisal of emotions (Wranik et al., 2007:394). These processes imply the involvement of secondary emotions, which are processed by the cortex; the part of the brain that assigns meaning to incoming stimuli (Holodynski & Friedlmeier, 2006:47). The involvement of different areas of the brain as a result of heigthened emotional awareness, leads to brain integration. The EA Programme that this research evaluated, was developed based on principles that promote brain integration (Knoetze, 2012:80).

In this section a number of advantages of emotional awareness were highlighted. In the next section, possible implications of a lack of emotional awareness will be discussed.

2.2.11 Implications of the absence of emotional awareness

A lack of emotional awareness is associated with a number of negative psychosocial implications. Before discussing these negative psychosocial effects, the researcher will firstly highlight two aspects that seem to be especially relevant to the harmful consequences of a lack of emotional awareness. These two aspects refer to ineffective problem solving and inefficient emotional regulation skills.

- **Ineffective problem-solving**

Effective problem solving requires secondary appraisal, based on higher order thinking, which entails an analysis of a problem, setting objectives and assessing various strategies to determine the most appropriate response in a specific situation (Wranik et al., 2007:397-

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398). Stegge and Terwogt (2007:272, 283) emphasise that a differentiated and integrated knowledge of emotions help children to constructively use their feelings to guide their behaviour; thus to consider appropriate responses. Although it is acknowledged that some problems can be solved without being aware of one's emotional experience, others problems are not easily solved, and may remain unresolved or may be irrationally dealt with to prevent discomfort or negative emotions. Being aware of one's own emotions can result in more rational problem-solving (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:278-279; Wranik et al., 2007:398). If a person is unaware of his or her emotions, however, problem-solving might be inefficient or irrational.

- **Inefficient emotional regulation skills**

Emotional awareness enhances a child's ability to regulate emotions by appraising a situation, internally contemplating their own emotions, and considering appropriate strategies to handle their emotions (Berk, 2013:412; Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2210; Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:269). The efficient regulation of emotions contributes to the extent to which an individual is able to fulfil his or her objectives in different contexts as it promotes an individual's ability to adapt in different social environments despite his or her emotional experiences.

Conversely, a lack of emotional awareness can result in dysfunctional emotional regulation that involves either overreacting to or suppressing emotions. Some of the ways in which children regulate their emotions can be seen as dysfunctional. Although such emotional regulation strategies may result in immediate satisfaction of their perceived needs, they may have unintended consequences of a more permanent nature (Hastings et al., 2014:623, 625, 636). These consequences may involve the development of emotional, behavioural and interpersonal issues. Over a longer term, unresolved emotions and issues could lead to unfinished business as contextualised within the Gestalt theoretical framework (Blom, 2006:29; Oaklander, 2006:50). The psychosocial effects of poor emotional awareness will be discussed subsequently.

- **The development of psychosocial issues**

Several psychosocial issues are related to a lack of emotional awareness. Stegge and Terwogt (2007:280-281) associate aggression and depression as especially related to an underdeveloped emotional awareness.

Children with a preference towards aggression often display ineffective emotional regulation (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:279-280). Children with behavioural problems are often

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associated with a predisposition towards aggression; an anger bias according to which they are more prone to assess a situation within an anger related framework. Due to their anger bias, these children are more apt to assess a situation as threatening and ascribe hostile motivations to other people and are therefore more likely to respond to an emotional stimulus with aggression (Berk, 2013:522; Louw & Louw, 2007b:201; Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:279-280).

In terms of awareness of their own emotions, children who tend to act overly aggressive are unaware of the situations and triggers that cause their anger. These children also tend to be unaware of different emotions such as sadness, confusion, and anxiety, do not possess the skills to recognise emotions in others, and lack an awareness of how to express their emotions in a more constructive manner. They are further mostly unaware of their own part in their aggressive response. They lack secondary appraisal skills that allow them to think introspectively about circumstances and regulate a more appropriate response (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:279-280).

Children with behaviour problems are often focused on their surroundings and ascribe the cause of their anger and behaviour to their external environment. They typically experience a sense of "the world is against me" (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:279-280). Within the Gestalt theoretical perspective, such behaviour is a manifestation of a contact boundary disturbance referred to as projection (Blom, 2006:33-34), as will be discussed later in this chapter.

Depressive symptoms can be organised within various domains of functioning such as physical, neurological or motivational but is in effect described as an affective state (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:281). The latter authors describe children who exhibit depressive symptoms as being more inclined to interpret events from a more pessimistic point of view. These children often engage in thoughts of guilt catastrophe and obsessing over events. Children with depressive symptoms are often absorbed in their emotional state and oblivious to their surroundings. The child easily identifies with a negative state but lacks awareness of specific emotions and possible strategies to express these emotions. To the contrary, emotional awareness has a positive effect on a child's ability to regulate his or her emotions (Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2210; Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:269).

The child who exhibits depressive symptoms is unaware of his or her environment as well as the emotions of others and immersed in their own negative feeling state (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:281). Even if stimuli that could evoke more positive emotions are possibly present; the child with depressive symptoms is unaware that such a situation might encourage more positive emotions. From a Gestalt theoretical perspective, depression is associated with the

contact boundary disturbances of retroflection (Blom, 2006:35-36), which implies an inability for efficient self-regulation.

The effects of a lack of emotional awareness on the child could have an impact on other aspects of the child's functioning. Fainsilber Katz, Hessler and Annest (2007:515) recognise that children who experience difficulties related to emotional awareness and regulation are more likely to exhibit behavioural problems as well as challenges in relationships with peers and others. The importance of enhancing emotional awareness in children should be emphasised when taking into account the observation by Cowie (2012:1) that the prevalence of emotional and behavioural issues among children has increased during the past four decades (Cowie, 2012:1).

It is recognised that children do not develop in isolation. The specific context in which a child finds him or herself has an impact on the manner and nature in which emotions, awareness of emotions and emotional regulation develop. Contextual influences can be the developmental phase of a child, the attachment between the child and parent, parenting practices, the manner in which parents exhibit their own direct or indirect emotional responses, the relationships with family members and peers, as well as personal motivation (Hastings et al., 2014:827; Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2234; Louw & Louw, 2007b:181). This assumption is congruent with the Gestalt concept holism; one part of the self has an impact on the other parts (Blom, 2006:22-23).

The specific focus of this study was on the emotional awareness of children in the phase of middle childhood within the child and youth care centre. It is therefore imperative to provide a theoretical outline of this stage of development as well as of the context of the child and the youth care centre. The discussion will maintain a focus on the contextual impact on emotional awareness, emotional intelligence, emotional competence, and emotional regulation.

2.3 THE DEVELOPMENTAL PHASE OF MIDDLE CHILDHOOD

Middle childhood entails the phase when children progress from pre-school to elementary school, and is noted as a fragile stage for social-emotional development (Beck et al., 2012:504).

During this phase a child's expanding social environment creates increased exposure that promotes their understanding of their social world and encourages the development of interactional skills (Louw & Louw, 2007a:214). Various traditionalist theorists such as Sigmund Freud, Erik Erikson, Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kholberg have marked this stage

as the period when cognitive processes become more complicated, children demonstrate more logical thought processes, they start to integrate internal moral values and are able to understand the views of others (Charlesworth et al., 2011:189).

The mentioned theorists, and others, constructed various theories on the development of children in middle childhood but the main focus of this section will be on the developmental areas and tasks that are to be mastered in this stage. The Gestalt concept is maintained in the sense that one domain of functioning has an impact on all other domains of functioning (Blom, 2006:23). A brief outline of the different areas of development of children in middle childhood with emphasis on the emotional domain follows.

2.3.1 Physical development in middle childhood

Children in middle childhood grow at a slower and steadier rate than in early childhood, with rapid growth in their arms and legs (Louw & Louw, 2007a:215). The physical changes during middle childhood are not as notable as in infancy and adolescence, but children's physical appearances become more adult-like (Sigelman & Rider, 2010:151). The later stage of middle childhood marks the onset of pubescence during which boys and girls start to experience physical changes that lead to puberty, such as breast development in girls and bodily hair growth (Charlesworth et al., 2011:184).

Children in middle childhood show remarkable improvement in their fine and gross motor skills (Charlesworth et al., 2011:183; Louw & Louw, 2007a:216). Enhanced fine motor skills help them to manage tasks such as tying their shoelaces and using instruments like pencils and screwdrivers (Sigelman & Rider, 2010:153) and, as they demonstrate improvement in their large muscles, coordination and balance they are able to take part in more challenging physical activities (Louw & Louw, 2007a:216). Their writing eligibility and writing speed progress steadily during this phase (Sigelman & Rider, 2010:153). The progression of their fine-motor skills that enable them to write, paint and draw play a central part in their cognitive development (Louw & Louw, 2007a:217). The involvement in structured physical activities impacts their social development as well. The mastery of physical skills in middle childhood allow children to become integrated into social settings such as schools and to participate in physical activities such as sport, art and other extramural hobbies.

2.3.2 Neurobiological development in middle childhood

The human brain plays an integral part in the emotional functioning as well as in the overall functioning of the child. The left hemisphere of the human brain is concerned with logic thought and language, while the right hemisphere is responsible for processing emotions

(Music, 2011:91; Siegel & Bryson, 2012:16-18). The emotional domain of brain functioning can be described as the irrational, circuitous and illogical process of thinking (Howe, 2005:11). Right brain functions are associated with the skills to interpret complex emotions from facial expressions (Bajgar et al., 2005:570).

By the time a child reaches middle childhood, his or her brain development and functioning has been significantly impacted by their earlier experiences (Charlesworth et al., 2011:187). Despite this, brain plasticity entails that changes and alterations are possible throughout the lifespan (Charlesworth et al., 2011:187). Related to the concept of sensitive periods during brain development (Berk, 2013:191), two aspects have to be noted about brain development for children in middle childhood (Charlesworth et al., 2011:188):

- Different parts of the brain develop during various phases of development, implicating that middle childhood can be an important period for brain development.
- Brain synapses that are not stimulated during a specific phase of development may eventually become lost.

However, brain plasticity implies that continuing experiential learning can contribute to additional brain development and a refinement of already existing schemata (Charlesworth et al., 2011:188). Experience-dependent brain growth occurs throughout a person's life (Berk, 2013:191). Therefore, the acquisition of emotional capacities based on specific learning experiences is possible during middle childhood. Emotional awareness has also been found to encourage hemispheric brain integration (Bajgar et al., 2005:570; Music, 2011:92). The relevance of an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood is elucidated by the mentioned assumptions.

2.3.3 Identity development in middle childhood

Children in middle childhood start to develop more complex concepts about themselves and demonstrate the following capabilities (Sigelman & Rider, 2010:354):

- They are able to ascribe personal characteristics to the self.
- They start to construct a social identity whereby they describe themselves as forming part of specific groups.
- They become aware of how they are different or the same as compared to other people; therefore they become capable of making social comparisons.

In middle childhood children generate concepts about the self in terms of a real self, which refers to a child's realistic view of the self, and an ideal self, which constitutes how they aspire to be (Louw & Louw, 2007a:243). Children in middle childhood evaluate their own

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self-esteem and general competence based on five domains (Louw & Louw, 2007a:241; Sigelman & Rider, 2010:355):

- achievement at school;
- acceptance by the peer group;
- their behaviour and whether their conduct is approved;
- their ability to perform in sport; and
- their physical appearance and presentation.

Children in middle childhood are able to make self-evaluations based on their performance in these five domains. These assessments of the self constitute a general self-esteem based on how a child perceives the importance of various skills. Self-esteem can be seen as a child's assessment of their own value. The experience of competency is needed for children to develop a healthy self-esteem (Cowie, 2012:18; Louw & Louw, 2007a:243-244). A healthy self-esteem is associated with emotional well-being.

Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development implies that the most significant developmental task in middle childhood is that a child experience that he or she is competent (Charlesworth et al., 2011:195; Louw & Louw, 2007a:241). This phase, described by Erikson as the phase of industry versus inferiority, emphasises the child's desire to master new skills and make significant contributions in life (Charlesworth et al., 2011:195). The advantages of emotional awareness in terms of social competence and social relationships, as discussed under point 2.2.10, can contribute to the five domains of competencies underlying a child's self-esteem.

2.3.4 Cognitive development in middle childhood

One of the most important developmental tasks for children in middle childhood is that they cope in primary school (Louw & Louw, 2007a:217). Children in middle childhood develop the skills to effectively utilise their senses to process information to reach objectives (Sigelman & Rider, 2010:189). They further develop the capacity to perform multiple neurological processes simultaneously and at a faster speed, with the result that information processing skills improve to an extent that certain processes become automatic (Louw & Louw, 2007a:218; Sigelman & Rider, 2010:153). Louw and Louw (2007a:219) describe this capacity as executive functions "that enable the individual to plan, organise, make decisions, think in an abstract way and solve new problems."

Children in middle childhood develop language and communication skills that enable them to express more complex ideas and thoughts (Charlesworth et al., 2011:186; Louw & Louw,

2007a:220). They demonstrate a more developed awareness of divergences which contributes to creative thinking (Louw & Louw, 2007a:237; Sigelman & Rider, 2010:189). In middle childhood, children's ability to concentrate for a longer time on a single subject improves so that they can purposefully pay attention to a task (Sigelman & Rider, 2010:189).

According to Jean Piaget's theory on cognitive development, children in middle childhood are in the concrete operational stage of cognitive development (Charlesworth et al., 2011:187) which involves the development of certain cognitive capacities. These capacities include, amongst others, the ability of logical problem solving and reasoning, conceptual thinking, improved memory and categorisation of complex objects, and they are able to mentally organise subjects according to a hierarchy and different categories (Charlesworth et al., 2011:187; Louw & Louw, 2007a:217). They can further understand general actions and relations among objects and grasp the concept that actions and it's consequences are reversible (Louw & Louw, 2007a:217). These advances help children to gain a better understanding of themselves and of their environment (Charlesworth et al., 2011:187).

The concrete operational phase further entails that children in middle childhood are able to acknowledge the perspectives and experiences of others and consider various perspectives in reaction to a single event (Louw & Louw, 2007a:218). A child in middle childhood demonstrates enhanced theory-of-mind reasoning and an improvement in their awareness of their own thoughts and feelings of others, as well as the impact of emotions on how a person acts (Louw & Louw, 2007a:220). The ability to consider various points of view and to hypothesise about the emotional experiences of others is concurrent with the development of a secondary appraisal process (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:282; Wranik et al., 2007:398).

The progression through middle childhood entails the acquisition of another set of cognitive skills, namely that of emotional intelligence that is seen as a set of skills that assists children to handle stressful and emotionally provoking situations constructively (Charlesworth et al., 2011:193). Louw and Louw (2007a:245) note that the foundation for the acquisition of emotional intelligence for children in middle childhood is an awareness of emotions. Theorists on developmental psychology remark that the acquirement of social and emotional capacities do not happen intuitively in children, but is subject to a nurturing environment and constructive interactions (Charlesworth et al., 2011:193).

The emotional and cognitive areas of development are intricately interrelated and the models for explaining emotional understanding in children, are similar to the progression of stages in Piaget's theory on cognitive development (Bagjar et al., 2005:571). Emotional awareness is regarded as a cognitive skill (Bagjar et al., 2005:569), which supports the relevance of the implementation of programmes to enhance emotional awareness in children, such as the EA

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Programme of Knoetze (2012) that was evaluated in this study. The attainment of language skills can also help children with an acquiring emotional vocabulary that forms part of emotional awareness.

2.3.5 Emotional development in middle childhood

A detailed explanation of emotional capacities was provided in the first section of this chapter. The relevant aspects of emotional development with specific reference to children in middle childhood will be outlined in this section.

Children in middle childhood possess a more intricate comprehension of their own emotions and the emotions of others, than earlier in their childhood (Cowie, 2012:17). During middle childhood children's emotional vocabulary expands notably, they can more accurately express emotions and they develop the skills to recognise emotions in the different facial expressions of others (Beck et al., 2012:504; Charlesworth et al., 2011:193). They further are able to understand more complex emotions, are aware that specific experiences can lead to explicit emotions, are able to conceal emotions, and can apply skills to regulate their own emotional states (Louw & Louw, 2007a:244).

At the age of 10, most children are able to acknowledge that two emotions can be experienced in reaction to the same situation. This ability requires more complex reasoning as various mental representations need to be considered to label the differrent emotions. Children in middle childhood demonstrate an increased awareness of their own emotions and are able to reason about how another person might feel in a situation. They can, for example, analyse the actual outcome and possible alternative outcomes of a specific situation and speculate about different emotional responses. The cognitive capacities discussed in this section indicate that children of this age are capable to apply secondary appraisal processes and emotional regulation strategies (Beck et al., 2012:505; Cowie, 2012:17; Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:275). The child in middle childhood can therefore interpret complex emotional responses which are influenced by mental representations and not only the observed or concrete consequence of a specific action (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:274).

Between the ages of seven and ten years children develop the ability to apply introspective skills to reason about actual and presumed outcomes with regards to mixed emotions and social emotions (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:276). These skills encourages the attainment of emotional regulation skills.

In the middle childhood years children show rapid development in terms of emotional regulation (Berk, 2013:412). Children in middle childhood are able to apply emotional regulation skills, for example to act happy, even though one does not feel that way, or to suppress feelings of anger if the social context requires it (Cowie, 2012:18). The improvement of language skills and an increased knowledge of emotions contribute to the child's capacity for emotional regulation (Louw & Louw, 2007b:181). Emotional regulation skills are mostly acquired informally through interaction and modelling in the social context, namely the family and peers, and is seen as a core developmental attainment in middle childhood that can impact a child's functioning into adolescence and even in later life (Cowie, 2012:17-18).

The important role parents and educators play in demonstrating constructive emotional regulation and emotional intelligence strategies in order for children in middle childhood to reach emotional competence, is emphasised by Louw and Louw (2007a:245). The significant impact the social environment has on the development of emotional capacities is relevant and this domain of functioning will be discussed briefly.

2.3.6 Social development in middle childhood

The child in middle childhood starts to attend formal schooling and is exposed to a wider social environment (Louw & Louw, 2007a:246). The most relevant social domains in which a child functions is within their peer group, the home and extended social environment, which is discussed subsequently.

- **The peer group**

The social context of a child in middle childhood expands rapidly which then substantially influences their development (Charlesworth et al.,2011:182). During middle childhood children tend to socialise with children of the same age and gender (Louw & Louw, 2007a:257). They start to prioritise relationships with members from their peer group and peers influence how they act and think (Charlesworth et al., 2011:197). It is approximated that children in middle childhood spend one-third of their time with their peers (Sigelman & Rider, 2010:465). They maintain these friendships as it fulfils the need for acceptance and belonging (Louw & Louw, 2007a:257).

During middle childhood children develop skills that support their social functioning. The improvement in cognitive processes allows the child to demonstrate more sophisticated communication skills and enhanced awareness of their surroundings, which promote more intricate interactions with their peer group (Charlesworth et al., 2011:198). This is described

as social competence. The increased awareness of emotions, thoughts and needs of others facilitate the development of more intimate friendships (Charlesworth et al., 2011:199). Their ability for perspective taking, thus to consider the feelings and opinions of others, promotes a less frequent experience of anger (Charlesworth et al., 2011:199). Children in middle childhood start to become aware of their own and others' ethnicity as well as other diverse factors such as socio-economic status and gender identity (Charlesworth et al., 2011:190). They start to understand the complex issues surrounding stereotypes and are cognitively able to reject these.

Having close friendships in middle childhood serve as a protective factor as it provides an experience of belonging and attachment (Sigelman & Rider, 2010:468). The development of emotional competencies in middle childhood can thus nurture close friendships and enhance resilience in children.

- **The home and the extended social environment**

Even though children in middle childhood spend less time at home, the home and family still offer them the most security and they regard their relationship with their parents/care-givers as the most secure relationships (Louw & Louw, 2007a:247). In the child's progression through childhood their relationship with their parent/care-giver is described by Bowlby (in Sigelman & Rider, 2010:464) as "a goal-corrected partnership in which the parent and child accommodate each other's needs." This manner of co-regulation occurs with the child exerting more control over daily tasks and the parent executing general supervision (Louw & Louw, 2007a:247). At this stage, children experience their care-givers as readily accessible when they require assurance, but become progressively more independent from them (Sigelman & Rider, 2010:465).

An emphasis is placed on the educational or socialisation responsibilities of the parent in terms of aspects such as spirituality, morality, culture and interpersonal issues. The child's activities are chosen and monitored by the parent, parents/care-giverswho act as important role models and are responsible to convey certain ethical values and instil discipline for children to learn socially acceptable behaviour. Parents thus impact the socialisation of the child in middle childhood in a direct and indirect manner (Berk, 2013:569; Louw & Louw, 2007a:250-251).

A family systems perspective is taken by Sigelman and Rider (2010:529) in which the authors uphold that parents as well as the extended environment, in which a family functions, have an impact on how a child progresses through the stages of development.

The development of emotional capacities takes place within a social or cultural context that could influence the way in which emotions are expressed (Charlesworth et al., 2011:193).

The context in which children grow up can thus have a significant impact on children's emotional and overall development. This study was conducted within the context of the child and youth care centre. Children being cared for in a child and youth care centre experience a different care-giving environment than the child who grows up in a parental home. These children were also exposed to harmful circumstances, such as deprivation and abuse (Willis, 2011:29) prior to or due to removal from the care of their parents. Charlesworth et al. (2011:194) note that issues relating to loss and trauma are risk factors for the normative emotional development of children in middle childhood. Interventions to promote children's emotional competence seem to be more successful when presented before or in the phase of middle childhood (Charlesworth et al., 2011:194). The finding that loss and trauma are risk factors for acquiring emotional capacities, motivate the relevance of interventions to promote the emotional competence of children in a child and youth care centre. The goal of this study was to evaluate an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood placed in a child and youth care centre in the North-West Province. The context of the child and youth care centre will be discussed in the following section.

2.4 THE CONTEXT OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH CARE CENTRE

The placement of children in insituitions as a result of the Second World War, when children were removed from their homes and placed in alternative care, remained high after this period (Cocker & Allain, 2013:5). Internationally, a policy developed by the United Nations (2010:6) provides guidelines for alternative care in institutions. Within the South African context the Department of Social Development (2010:276) issued the Norms and Standards and Practice Guidelines for the Children's Act 38 of 2005 to provide a framework with the intention of "deinstitutionalising" these organisations. Regardless of the implementation of these policies, recent research still record multiple challenges in providing care for destitute children and emphasise the high risk of poor future outcomes for children placed in alternative care institutions (Cameron & Maginn, 2009:67; Cocker & Allain, 2013:199-200; Music, 2011:207) .

Section 110 of the South African Children's Act 38 of 2005 indicates that, amongst others, abuse, neglect, living without a parent and a shortage of means to provide in basic needs as motivational factors to remove children from their home environments. In South Africa there is an overwhelming number of children in need of alternative care placements (Koursaris, 2009:7; Van Wyngaard 2009:40-41; Willis, 2011:34). The shortage of adequate family

placements results in a high proportion of these children being placed in child and youth care centres (Meintjes, Moses, Berry & Mampane, 2007:1; Van Wyngaard, 2009:37).

Research done for the National Adoption Coalition estimates that 4.5 million children in South Africa are not cared for by a parent and that 13 000 children live in residential care facilities (Blackie, 2014:1). One such non-governmental facility, Engo Free State Child and Youth Care Centres, state in a recent annual report that there have been services delivered to 909 children in their facilities situated in the Free State Province in that year (Free State Child and Youth Care Centres, 2014:43). The mentioned annual report highlights the most prevalent reasons for admitting a child into a youth care centre as the exposure to circumstances that could be harmful for their overall development, as well as abandonment and failed foster care placements.

Most children who enter residential care have been exposed to not only harmful circumstances, but also to deprivation and abuse (Kjelsberg & Nygren, 2004:19; Willis, 2011:29). At the time of the study, the researcher has been employed at a residential care facility for five years. It is her experience that many of the children in the child and youth care centre have experienced maltreatment, neglect and rejection.

Reviewing the context of children being cared for in institutional care facilities, is a complex topic. The focus of this study is however on the emotional awareness of children and therefore the factors deemed the most relevant are highlighted: the impact of maltreatment, abuse, neglect and trauma on a child; the impact of residential care on the child; the psychosocial functioning of the child placed in a child and youth care centre, and lastly a perspective on the functioning of the child in the child and youth care centre from a Gestalt theory perspective.

2.4.1 The impact of maltreatment and trauma on the child

The detrimental effect of abuse and neglect on the normative development of a child is emphasised by Cowie (2012:2) and Howe (2005:3). Various authors (Cameron & Maginn, 2009:15; Music, 2011:203) refer to the harmful effects of abuse and neglect on the brain and cite the work of neuroscientist Dr Bruce Perry and his colleagues, who investigated brain scan images of young children who were exposed to severe neglect and found their brains to be physically smaller and underdeveloped. The absence of positive stimulation leads to the absence of certian skills in various developmental domains (Music, 2011:203).

The profound impact of neglect, deprivation, rejection and abuse on children's neurological development is described in recent research. As described under point 2.2.4 in this chapter,

the harmonious functioning between the amygdala and the hippocampus is affected in situations of chronic stress. In threatening situations the brain excretes hormones and chemicals that induce hyper physical arousal allowing the body to react to the danger (Coates, 2010:395; Zillmer et al., 2008:260). The human brain is instinctively programmed to respond to danger and reacts to immediate danger by a fight, flight or freeze response (Brendtro et al., 2009:30; Howe, 2005:6; Knoetze, 2012:76; Music, 2011:93). Early childhood experiences set-up neural pathways for emotional triggers.

The neural reactions of the fight, flight or freeze responses are evident in children that were exposed to traumatic events from early in their life and, as a result, they experience a constant state of stress (Blom, 2006:101; Music, 2011:93). Children exposed to neglect or abuse therefore struggle to manage emotional arousals (Howe, 2005:13). They often react aggressively by projecting distraught feelings onto others or their surroundings (Howe, 2005:23). As their neural pathways are pre-set to react in these manners, these emotional reactions are pre-determined by their early experiences, and current events are processed according to these earlier experiences (Brendtro et al., 2009:32, 34; Goodyear-Brown, 2010:28). Even if no danger or immediate threats are present, children who experienced traumatic events are more likely to overreact in a physical and emotional manner or to disassociate or suppress their emotions as a response to daily life triggers (Goodyear-Brown, 2010:30).

Trauma, maltreatment and abuse are often associated with hypervigilance and a disrupted attention span. Children who have been exposed to trauma are often unable to recognise and apply emotional interpretations to guide their behaviour and decision-making, as their pre-determined responses are focused on survival, which negatively affect their capacity for emotional regulation (Music, 2011:205-206).

The adverse effects of maltreatment on emotional capacities have been found in children as early as the age of three months. Research indicates that babies who were physically maltreated by their mothers, expressed a higher amount of fearfulness, anger and sadness (Cicchetti & Ng, 2014:1197, 1215). These authors (Cicchetti & Ng, 2014:1197, 1215) state that the expression of anger at this young age is particularly noteworthy as it is expected that infants initiate the expression of anger only from the age of seven to nine months. The mentioned authors explain that children in early childhood master the skill to recognise emotions in bodily expressions and in contextual suggestions. Maltreated children struggle to identify emotions as compared to their peers who were not exposed to maltreatment.

Children exposed to abuse and neglect are at risk to not develop the skills to gain emotional understanding about themselves or others (Howe, 2005:13). The child that has been

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exposed to abuse and neglect in their family environment has been exposed to an environment in which there are more negative and less positive emotions present (Cicchetti & Ng, 2014:1159). As compared to children who are not exposed to maltreatment in their families, children who are exposed to maltreatment grow up in a non-conventional emotional atmosphere, characterised by unpleasant emotions (Cicchetti & Ng, 2014:1150). Caregivers in these families tend not to initiate discussions about emotions as often as attentive parents. The lack of order and predictability that are often present in homes in which children are being maltreated, contribute to children experiencing more discomforting emotions, such as frustration and anger, more regularly. This gives rise to a cycle in which these children experience high levels of emotional stress, while they are ill equipped in terms of emotion regulation strategies (Cicchetit & Ng, 2014:1290).

Children who were exposed to maltreatment often struggle to develop emotion regulation strategies as the parents are not accessible to provide positive or supporting input when these children experience emotional episodes (Cicchetti & Ng, 2014:1290). Children's understanding of emotions develops mostly within the context of the child-parent relationship, with the attachment to the mother having a significant impact on this domain of development. Compared to non-maltreated children, who are more likely to analyse that pleasant events will result in positive emotional responses, children who have been exposed to maltreatment are more likely to misperceive the emotional nature of pleasant events. This suggests that these children easily appraise a situation as threatening and will act with hypervigilance (Cicchetti & Ng, 2014:1352).

The findings of a study that investigated the impact of exposure to domestic violence on children's emotional capacities, suggest that these children demonstrate a lack of emotional awareness, struggle to distinguish between different emotions, are unable to verbally describe the physical and sensory responses in an emotional experience and are not adequate in recognising own emotional triggers (Fainsilber Katz et al., 2007:529). When considering the skills underlying emotional awareness (Bajgar et al., 2005:569; Knoetze, 2012:18; Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:271), it is clear that exposure to traumatic situations inhibits children's capacity for emotional awareness. Inhibited brain development in children exposed to trauma is found in brain areas related to empathy, emotional regulation and social interaction (Cameron & Maginn, 2009:15; Howe, 2005:99; Music, 2011:93).

The effects of trauma due to exposure to factors such as maltreatment and domestic violence, are observable in the behaviour of children placed in child and youth care centres. They are often described as being hyper alert and defensive, or completely withdrawn and dissociative (Music, 2011:93). Maltreated children are thus more likely to react from a state

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of feeling threated and defending the self that is controlled by the amygdala, even if surroundings are safe, as their cognitive pathways are pre-determined to interpret situations as threatening and emotions as unpleasant.

In addition to the traumatic events children in child and youth care centres are exposed to prior to the removal from their families, they experience the separation from their home environment as severely disruptive and feel that they have in some way been rejected by their families (Cameron & Maginn, 2009:10; Otto, 2006:74). Additionally, being looked after in an institutional context has a substantial impact on a child's psychosocial functioning.

2.4.2 The impact of residential care on the psychosocial functioning of the child

Child and youth care centres face numerous challenges that affect their capacity to look after the children placed in their care. These challenges include untrained staff, high staff turnover, the extreme behavioural problems of children, and a lack of financial and human resources (Cameron & Maginn, 2008:1152; Koursaris, 2009:97-98; Van Wyngaard, 2009:148-149).

In a local study by Van Wyngaard (2009:149-151) on the experience of child care workers in residential care settings, it was concluded that child care workers are employed for short periods of time and demonstrate a lack of knowledge and skills to handle the symptomatic behaviour of the children they care for. The care-givers change frequently and do not possess the skills to react attentively to a maltreated child. These children therefore struggle to form a selective and secure attachment with their caregivers (Howe, 2005:147). Parents (or care-givers in the context of the child and youth care centre) play an integral part in contributing to the foundation of children's emotional capacities (Fainsiliber Katz et al., 2007:515). The limited availability of a permanent attachment figure results in children avoiding the exploration of their own mental states as well as the mental states of others (Howe, 2005:143).

The findings of the mentioned study by Van Wyngaard (2009) are supported by another local study. This study about children in middle childhood placed in a child youth care centre suggests that child care workers possess inadequate knowledge and skills about emotions, resulting in the children being exposed to an atmosphere in which opportunities for emotional exploration are limited (Otto, 2006:139). The child participants were suspicious of the staff members and regarded the child and youth care centre as unsupportive and hostile towards them; factors which resulted in a sense of hostility and alienation experienced by the children (Otto, 2006:139-140).

The influence of an emotionally unavailable care-giver on the care-giving environment and eventually on the functioning of the maltreated child is an important factor to consider. Howe (2005:98) describes a constrained psychological care-giving environment as a setting in which a care-giver is only accessible to some degree and does not provide adequate opportunities for a child to introspect on emotional experiences. A constrained environment contributes to children finding it challenging to handle their own emotions and the emotions of others, which are related to mental health problems in later life. In terms of the long-term consequences, Howe (2005:99) cites Loeber and Strouthamer-Lober in a conclusive quotation: "parental rejection and a lack of emotional responsiveness were among the most powerful predictors of juvenile delinquency." Children who exhibit behavioural problems have been linked to demonstrating challenges in emotional awareness and regulation (Fainsilber Katz et al., 2007:515). Howe (2005:152) emphasises the importance of a mind-minded and attentive adult in order to support the development of an emotional competent child.

Willis (2011:178-180) investigated the emotional development of children in middle childhood placed in residential care. The findings point out that the emotional functioning of these children include frequent feelings of insecurity, regression, attention-seeking behaviour, impulsivity as well as anxious and aggressive states. The author (Willis, 2011:179) suggests that the child participants did not develop the skills to recognise and express their emotions, and that their failure to regulate their emotional states manifested in inappropriate behaviours. Their disruptive and aggressive behaviour contributed to experiences of rejection and consequently negatively affected their sense of self. In terms of their psychosocial functioning, the children in the sample struggled to proceed to the competence of the age-related stage of industry versus inferiority in Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development (Berk, 2013:18), and found themselves in the stage of autonomy versus guilt or shame, associated with early childhood (Willis, 2011:179-181).

The emotional quality of care in a child and youth care centre can even influence the physical development of the children. A comparative study of two child care institutions that was conducted in Germany during 1951 measured the physical progress of children in the two instutions under circumstances were identical nutrition were given to them. The children in the orphanage with an attentive and emotionally available care-giver were physically more developed than the children in the orphanage with an inaccessible, punitive adult (Music, 2011:204).

The above-mentioned studies illustrate the importance of an available and atuned care-giver and a supportive environment for the healthy development of the child. It is therefore

alarming that "[t]he most extreme forms of neglect studied have been those seen in institutional settings" (Music, 2011:202). The impact of maltreatment and the residential care setting on a child is distinct when considering the functioning of the mentioned children.

2.4.3 The psychosocial functioning of the child placed in the child and youth care centre

Children who were exposed to maltreatment often present with challenging behaviour, an emotional state of hyper-arousal and tend to act aggressively (Music, 2011:206). These behaviours are also observed in children in child and youth care centres.

Children placed in institutions are often described as aggressive and anti-social, have low self-esteem, display regressive behaviour and essentially exhibit inappropriate emotional expression skills (Howe, 2005:147; Otto, 2006:78; Van Wynyard, 2009:5). Children in middle childhood in institutional care who were exposed to deprivation and neglect tend to act emotionally as younger children. These children present with under developed emotional expression skills, for example by expressing emotions exuberantly and an indiscriminate expression of delight towards care-givers, parents or strangers (Howe, 2005:147). They often present with intense emotional needs, complex behavioural issues, have overall delayed development and are in a state of inner turmoil (Van Wyngaard, 2009:4; Willis, 2011:70-74). The essential emotional competencies of these children are severely dysfunctional compared to their peers growing up in family settings (McAuley & Davis, 2009:152).

A study on the mental health of looked after children (Stanley et al., 2005:243) identified low self-esteem, aggression, hostility, relationship challenges with adults and peers, poor concentration and tantrums as well as frequent and severe mental health issues being present. In the same study (Stanley et al., 2005:243) other mental health issues that were found with a lesser frequency were enuresis and encopresis, drug misuse, stealing, bullying or victimisation, sexualised behaviour, fire setting, absconding and self-injurious behaviour.

Cocker and Allain (2013:131) indicate that studies conducted in the United Kingdom found that looked after children have a significantly higher prevalence of diagnosable mental health disorders than the national average. The behaviour of children placed in a child and youth care centre is futhermore characterised by anger outbursts, withdrawal, victimisation and distrust in adults (Cameron & Maginn, 2009:39). They typically struggle in their schoolwork and have difficulties in forming meaningful relationships with their peers (Cocker & Allain, 2013:132-133). The lack of emotional regulation strategies generally found in these

children, lead them to internalising their emotional stress en exhibiting mental health problems (Cicchetti & Ng, 2014:1335).

The complex behaviour of children in child and youth care centres is recognised as a prominent obstacle in the effective functioning of these institutions (Cameron & Maginn, 2009:39). The children who display serious mental health needs, are more likely to be transferred to another placement because of their challenging behaviours or unhappines within the placement (Stanley et al., 2005:244). This group of looked after children are specifically at risk to develop mental health disorders or behavioural difficulties (Cowie, 2012:2).

The challenging behaviour of children in institutional care is seen as an outcry of the emotional distress they are experiencing. Children that suppress their emotions often communicate their emotional states through behaviour that includes aggression, anxiety, hyperactivity, overdependence, isolation or low self-esteem (Goodyear-Brown, 2010:34-48). The absence of emotional exploration is developmentally harmful for children, while children who do not express their emotions tend to be anxious, distressed, anti-social and oppositional in attempts to protect themselves (Howe, 2005:99). It can be argued that increased emotional awareness can assist children in child and youth care centres to express their emotions in more constructive manners and in turn enhance their emotional self-regulation (Siegel & Bryson, 2012:53).

In the discussion of the child in the child and youth care centre, the interrelatedness between the awareness and expression of emotions, and the child's behaviour was a recurring theme. The Gestalt theoretical approach interprets problematic behaviour in children as communication of one's inner emotional states, as will be discussed in the following section.

2.4.4 A Gestalt theoretical perspective on problem behaviour

As indicated in Chapter one in the discussion of the theoretical framework for this study, the Gestalt approach concludes that a lack of awareness and contact with the self and the environment contributes to the development of symptomatic behaviour in children (Blom, 2006:29; Oaklander, 2006:50). Children placed in a child and youth care centre experienced the trauma related to maltreatment as well as related to the challenge of coping in a new care-giving environment. Van Wyngaard (2009:79) is of the opinion that this consecutive exposure to trauma can result in the development of contact-boundary disturbances.

The contact boundary is the distinction between the child and the environment and needs to be penetrable for the child to make effective contact with the environment. Contact

boundary disturbances develop when children restrict awareness of their senses, body, emotions and intellect, and are characterised as ineffective ways of making contact to meet one's needs (Blom, 2006:31). Behavioural and symptomatic responses of children in a child and youth care centre can thus be related to contact boundary disturbances (Otto, 2006:140; Van Wyngaard, 2009:69). The following contact boundary disturbances are commonly found in children (Blom, 2006:32-37; Oaklander, 2006:7-12):

- Introjection is a result of an enmeshed contact boundary between a child and their environment. The child incorporates messages and information from their surroundings into the self without evaluating whether they agree or disagree with the content. Introjects result in children internalising and living messages about the self, for example that they are naughty or selfish. Introjects can also lead to the development of a rigid personality and the belief that it is wrong to experience or express emotions.

- Projection describes a process where a child assigns characteristics of the self onto other objects or people in their environment. Children displaying projection deny ownership and responsibility of certain thoughts, traits, behaviours and emotions. Projection can result in behaviours such as lying, blaming others, aggression, destructive acts and not accepting responsiblity for one's actions. It can also lead to ascbribing emotions that the self experience onto others and not taking ownership of emotions.

- Confluence is the lack of a boundary between a child and the environment. A child displaying confluence struggles to distinguish the self from the environment. Confluence may manifest as overly pleasing behaviour, where the child finds it difficult to make choices and is prepared to do anything that others expect of him or her.

- Retroflection is the process where a child turns the wishes to act towards objects or significant others in the environment, onto the self. Physical symptoms like headaches, stomach pains or nausea are associated with retroflection. Retroflection can also manifest as self-harm.

- Deflection is when a child avoids interaction or contact with objects or persons in their environment. Deflection can be related to the inability to control one's emotions and often manifest in behaviours such as anger outbursts, tantrums, hyperactivity, acting out behaviour, fantasising or daydreaming.

- Desensitisation refers to cutting off the use of sensory and physical contact with the self and the environment. It involves a numbing of bodily sensations and, as a result, a desensitised child often struggles to experience emotions.

- Egotism involves a diminished or subjective emotional awareness of experiences. It manifests as efforts to continuously attempt to be in control of all aspects of their life. These children have a rational awareness of their experience, but lack an emotional awareness and sponteneity related to these experiences.

Oaklander (1994) in Blom (2006:31) notes that children who are exposed to negative circumstances, often learn from an early age to make use of contact boundary disturbances in order to survive. From a Gestalt perspective, the child is regarded as a holistic entity, implying that change in one part of an organism will influence other parts thereof (Blom, 2006:22-23). The concept of holism is in line with the argument of Siegel and Bryson (2012:53) that increased emotional awareness could lead to enhanced emotional self-regulation. As poor emotional awareness and emotional regulation manifest in negative behaviours (Goodyear-Brown, 2010:34-48; Howe, 2005:99) the concept of holism can further imply that increased emotional awareness could have a positive influence on a child's behaviour.

The goal of the study was to evaluate an an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood within the context of a child and youth care centre. The relevant programme will be briefly outlined in the following section.

2.5 AN EMOTIONAL AWARENESS PROGRAMME

The development of emotional knowledge in children occurs in a similar manner to which other knowledge is analysed and memorised. Children analyse their environment and process situations by obtaining information from the environment, evaluating this information against already existing knowledge, then organising and integrating the new information into existing knowledge, and storing it in memory (Wranik et al., 2007:397). In a similar manner, children learn about emotions by experiencing a situation, becoming aware of a physical sensation, evaluating the sensation and labelling a relevant emotion based on an existing emotional schema, for example angry, and lastly, following with specific actions or behavioural outcomes. Thus, for optimal emotional functioning, it is necessary that children possess knowledge of emotions. This knowledge comprises of a comprehension of the attributes of specific emotional schemas and the realisation of how different regulation strategies can effect one's emotional functioning (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:282).

Gaining knowledge about emotions is therefore conceptual and depends on the environment. Stegge and Terwogt (2007:273) uphold that young children associate an emotional experience with an observable external indication, for example "I am happy because I receive a gift." The development of emotional awareness can thus be related to

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acquiring emotional knowledge, which is based on a learning process in which knowledge is obtained and memorised. This fact supports the use of a programme in which the skills of emotional awareness could be taught to children in middle childhood.

An emotional awareness programme was developed by Knoetze (2012) with the focus on enhancing the emotional awareness of children in middle childhood in an educational setting. In this study, the programme was evaluated with children in middle childhood in the context of a child and youth care centre. The programme is divided into seven modules and is presented over a period of seven weeks. Each module consists of a number of activities to support the aim of the specific module. The seven modules focus on the following aspects respectively: building a relationship with the children, knowledge of different emotions, emotional language, empathy, emotional regulation, problem solving, and summarising and termination of the programme. An outline of the programme developed by Knoetze (2012) is attached as Appendix A.

2.6 CONCLUSION

Therapeutic interventions aimed at increasing awareness of the self, which include an enhanced awareness of emotions, is seen as a manner in which the psychosocial functioning of traumatised children can be promoted (Music, 2011:206). An emotional awareness programme such as the programme by Knoetze (2012) which was evaluated in this study, can be seen as such an intervention. This chapter aimed to clarify applicable concepts and emphasise the relevance of enhancing the emotional awareness of children in middle childhood, specifically in the context of a child and youth care centre. The negative impact that maltreatment and a placement in residential care can have on the child, support the goal of the research, which was to evaluate an emotional awareness programme that might assist these children in enhancing their emotional awareness and subsequently their psychosocial functioning. The research methodology that was followed, the ethical considerations as well as the findings of the study will be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter two the importance of developing emotional awareness in middle childhood was highlighted, as emotional awareness assists the child in becoming competent in all domains of functioning and promotes mental well-being. The reviewed literature indicates the detrimental effects of maltreatment and residential care on children placed in child and youth care centres, which negatively affect their psychosocial functioning and put them at risk to develop issues in later life. Therefore, the importance of exposing children in residential care to effective interventions is emphasised. The development of emotional awareness skills might promote integrated and holistic functioning in emotional, social and cognitive domains. The assumption that the enhancement of children's levels of emotional awareness can help them to adjust behaviours and cope with emotional stress (Knoetze, 2012:212; Music, 2011:107), thus supporting growth and development, is concurrent with the rationale of the research.

An emotional awareness programme developed by Knoetze that (2012) specifically focuses on emotional awareness of children in middle childhood, was found effective to increase the levels of emotional awareness of children in middle childhood in a school setting. The goal of the study was to evaluate the mentioned programme with children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre in the North-West Province. The research methodology and ethical considerations related to the study, as well as the empirical findings will be presented in this chapter. The hypothesis and sub-hypotheses for the study, as was stated in Chapter one, will be integrated into the discussion of the research findings.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this section the discussion of the research methodology will focus on the research approach, type of research, the research design, the sample, as well as on data collection and analysis.

3.2.1 Research approach

Social science research can be conducted from a quantitative, qualitative or mixed method approach. The research approach served as the blueprint that theoretically underlied the research process to most effectively attain the research goals and objectives in a scientific manner (Denscombe, 2009:99; Fouché et al., 2011:143). A quantitative research approach

rendered itself pragmatic to achieve the research goal and objectives. A key principle of quantitative methodology entails that the data is translated into numerical interpretations (Goertz & Mahoney, 2012:17; Rubin & Babbie, 2011:67). A quantitative approach was thus in line with this study which was intended to evaluate the effectiveness of an emotional awareness programme by calculating and analysing levels of emotional awareness.

The measurement of emotional awareness was presented in statistical representations of the respondents' skills to be in contact with their own emotions, to distinguish between various emotions and to express their affective states verbally. The emphasis on the mentioned aspects was regarded in this study as the three variables related to emotional awareness. These variables were measured and analysed to make conclusions and recommendations about the effectiveness of an emotional awareness programme (Fouché & Delport, 2011:63; Grinnell et al., 2012:139; Rubin & Babbie, 2011:67).

Social research attempts to explore, explain, describe and evaluate or indicate relations of an issue in the social science profession. These objectives can be seen as the various subtypes of research. This research incorporated elements of explanatory research as it attempted to test a hypothesis and to describe the outcomes of an emotional awareness programme on the emotional awareness of the respondents (Fouché & De Vos, 2011:96; Rubin & Babbie, 2011:133-135).

3.2.2 Type of research

Applied research was applicable to the study as the study focused on a specific issue in practise (Fouché & De Vos, 2011:94). The specific issue related to the evaluation of an emotional awareness programme, which could be an intervention to enhance service delivery to children in a child and youth care centre. The type of research was thus applied research (Denscombe, 2009:11). The evaluation of the impact of a specific programme, namely the Emotional Awareness Programme (EA Programme) developed by Knoetze (2012), also classifies this research as programme evaluation research (Fouché, 2011:453; Grinnell et al., 2012:26).

3.2.3 Research design

This research was based on an experimental research design, which is described as scientific research methods that are applied to determine the relationship between a cause and effect or between a dependant and independent variable (Grinnell et al., 2012:222; Rubin & Babbie, 2011:253). The continuum of experimental designs starts with the pre-experimental design, quasi-experimental and then the true experimental design (Fouché et

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al., 2011:144-145). The criteria for the true experimental design are that the participants are selected randomly and are assigned indiscriminately to either the experimental or the control group (Rubin & Babbie, 2011:253). The experimental group is then exposed to an independent variable, such as a programme or intervention, while the control group does not receive the intervention during the time of the study (Grinnell et al., 2012:145).

In cases where the randomised selection of participants is unfeasible, a quasi-experimental research design is applied, as was the case in this study (Rubin & Babbie, 2011:272). Randomisation was impractical as the sample was selected according to a certain sampling criteria and each member of the population did not have an equal chance of being selected. The quasi-experimental design entailed that two groups, the comparison group and the experimental group, completed the pre-test and post-test at the same point in time (Grinnell et al., 2012:222). After both groups completed the pre-test, only the experimental group was exposed to the intervention, namely the EA Programme after which both groups completed the post-test again (Fouché et al., 2011:150; Grinnell et al., 2012:222).

The EA Programme was presented to the respondents of the experimental group as an eight week group work programme. The EA Programme consists of seven modules with different activities that were presented in an hour-long group work session twice a week. The researcher presented the programme herself and a special session was held at the end of the programme to address debriefing and termination.

It is recognised that one of the obstacles in a quasi-experimental design is that the intervention is not applied as it is meant to be delivered (Rubin & Babbie, 2011:284). The researcher made an in-depth study of the EA Programme and presented the programme herself. This enhanced the probability that the intervention was delivered as it was intended by the developer, Knoetze (2012).

3.2.4 Population and sample

Research with the intention to evaluate a programme can obtain data from people or analyse existing data or documents (Grinnell et al., 2012:270). In the case of this study the data was collected from children. The population, which is defined as the prospective participants that have specific characteristics as determined by the parameters of the study (Strydom, 2011a:223), were children in middle childhood who resided in a child and youth care centre in the North-West Province. The child and youth care centre was selected by applying the convenience or availability sampling method. This entailed that the centre was the easiest accessible to the researcher and had the most available respondents meeting the requirements of the study (Grinnell et al., 2012:231).

From the population, the researcher selected the sample as a representative portion of the population that would be available and could be involved in the study (Grinnell et al., 2012:273). A non-probability sampling method was used to select the sample of respondents from the child and youth care centre, namely purposive sampling (Grinnell et al., 2012:274-275; Strydom, 2011a:231). This sampling method entailed that the respondents were selected based on the judgement of the researcher in terms of them possessing key characteristics that were required for the study (Strydom, 2011a:232).

A sample of 18 respondents was selected from the child and youth care centre in the North-West Province according to the following selection criteria:

- Language: The respondents were Afrikaans speaking.
- Developmental phase: Between the ages of seven and twelve years.
- Education: Children enrolled in Gr. 3 to 6 in a mainstream Afrikaans medium school.
- Programme: They were not involved in any programmes that had the same objectives as the EA Programme during the time of the research.

The sample was then randomly divided into two groups of nine respondents each, by listing them alphabetically and selecting every second name from the alphabetical list. The two groups represented the comparison and experimental group. The researcher then randomly assigned which was the experimental and which the comparison group.

3.2.5 Data collection methods

The data was obtained by using a standardised measuring instrument, the *Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale for Children (LEAS-C)* (Appendix B). The instrument was completed by the respondents as a group administered questionnaire. The measuring instrument has been translated into Afrikaans and effectively administered in other studies and other languages with the consent of the founders (Knoetze, 2012:177; Otto, 2006:128). Thus the instrument was applicable to utilise with Afrikaans-speaking respondents in this study. The questionnaire was utilised with the written permission of the Department of Psychiatry of the University of Arizona in the USA (Appendix C).

3.2.5.1 Measuring instrument

The LEAS-C consists of a questionnaire, a scoring manual and a glossary of words. The questionnaire consists of 12 scenarios with open questions. The questions illicit answers about the emotions respondents would experience and how they think another party would feel in the hypothetical scenarios. The self-reported responses are then analysed in terms of

the emotional vocabulary used and scored according to the instructions in the manual and the glossary of words (Bagjar et al., 2005:572).

The glossary of words that constructs the emotional vocabulary is organised in the LEAS-C into four categories; levels zero, one, two and three, as related to the emotional content of a specific word, with level three representing the most descriptive emotional words. The responses are then rated at a specific level that corresponds with the degree of emotional content. Each question contains two responses: a response for how the self and for how another person would feel. Both responses are scored according to the level of emotional complexity. The total score for each scenario is then calculated based on the specific level from each response for the self and the response for the other.

The glossary of words corroborates the grading of emotional words according to their emotional content. After scoring individual emotional words according to the above process, the degree of emotional awareness for each question is calculated on five levels, with level five representing the highest level of emotional awareness. A more detailed explanation of the levels of responses will be given complementary to the discussion of the empirical results in the next section of this chapter.

3.2.5.2 Validity and reliability of the measuring instrument

The LEAS-C is a standardised measuring instrument that is intended to measure children's level of emotional awareness in terms of ability to be aware of own emotions, discriminate between different emotions and verbalise own emotions. The instrument was therefore adequately tested, which confirms the validity (the extent to which a measuring instrument actually measures the intended component) and reliability (the extent to which the same results will be obtained from respondents under the same conditions) of the instrument (Bajgar et al., 2005:581; Grinnell et al., 2012:246-247).

The developers of the LEAS-C have provided preliminary evidence of the reliability and validity of the measuring instrument, indicating acceptable internal consistency (co-efficient alpha=.66) and good inter-rater reliability (r=.89)" (Bajgar et al., 2005:577, 579; Knoetze, 2012:178).

The measuring instrument was translated from English to Afrikaans in Knoetze's study with the permission of the developers of the LEAS-C (Knoetze, 2012:177). Knoetze (2012:177) confirms this by stating that "Dr. Lane indicated that translated questionnaires were already successfully utilized in other languages." The fact that a translated version of the LEAS-C were used in this study, should not have a considerable effect on the validity and reliability of

the measuring instrument as the developers confirmed the effective application of the LEAS-C in other languages and Knoetze demonstrated the successful utilization of the LEAS-C in Afrikaans (Knoetze, 2012:177, 223).

A **pilot study** of the questionnaire was thus not required as the instrument had been subjected to extensive research and was developed into a standardised measuring instrument of emotional awareness in children (Bajgar et al., 2005:581; Delport & Roestenburg, 2011:195).

3.2.5.3 Administration of the measuring instrument

Data was collected by the means of a group administered questionnaire. An advantage of the group administered questionnaire is that the respondents complete the instrument under the same circumstances, which minimise the chance to manipulate their feedback (Delport & Roestenburg, 2011:189). The respondents were residents at a child and youth care centre and were available at the same location at the same point in time to be able to complete a group administered questionnaire.

The pre-test was completed by the comparison and experimental groups at the same location and at the same time. After the pre-test, the researcher presented the EA Programme to the experimental group. After the completion of the programme, both groups completed the measuring instrument as a post-test, under the same circumstances as in the pre-test. The researcher was present during the administration of the questionnaires which contributed to the fact that all the questionnaires that were administered were fully completed. The researcher could thus ensure that the respondents were exposed to the same circumstances and could prevent the manipulation of feedback.

A possible disadvantage of the group-administered questionnaire is that the respondents might be inhibited to approach the researcher if they do not understand a question (Grinnell et al., 2012:279, 276). The researcher addressed this issue by informing the respondents that they could indicate if they had any questions by raising their hand. The respondents were comfortable to indicate to the researcher if they did not understand a question and the researcher then clarified the issue with the respondent without distracting the larger group.

3.2.6 Data analysis

Data analysis when utilising quantitative research methods entails that the information collected from the respondents is processed and calculated into easily understandable structured numerical representations or statistics either manually or by using a computer software programme (Denscombe, 2009:155; Fouché & Bartley, 2011:249; Grinnell et al.,

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2012:314). After coding the responses on the questionnaires, the researcher analysed and interpreted the data by using the SPC-XL Software for Microsoft Excel, and presented the findings in figures and graphs, which were followed by a discussion. The mentioned computer software allowed the researcher to analyse and interpret the collected data in terms of the effect of the EA Programme (the independent variable) on the levels of emotional awareness of the respondents (the dependent variable) and report it through numerical graphs, diagrams and tables. These representations were then contextualised to add meaning to the data collected.

It is recognised that the dual role of the researcher as interventionist and researcher could lead to bias in the interpretation of the findings. However, the intervention was specifically guided by the modules and activities as indicated in the EA Programme. The researcher was reflexive in her role as interventionist by planning the group sessions according to the programme and writing field notes to evaluate to what extent she presented the programme according to its intended content. The use of a standardised measuring instrument, the LEAS-C, enhanced the objectivity of the researcher as the data was scored against a pre-determined glossary of words and analysed according to the stipulations of the LEAS-C. The researchers' awareness of her dual role and the application of the abovementioned strategies contributed to the fact that the most objective results possible were acquired.

Preceding the presentation and discussion of the empirical results, it is important to recognise the ethical considerations that were taken into account during the study.

3.3 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics in research provided the researcher with guidelines to conduct research in such a manner that the research process obtains the most accurate data whilst respecting the moral values of the social work profession and wider society (Denscombe, 2009:74-75; Grinnell et al., 2012:73-74). The research was conducted with the permission of authorities at the child and youth care centre (Appendix D) and approval by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria (Appendix E).

3.3.1 Avoidance of harm to respondents

During research the prevention of doing harm to respondents needs to be considered by a researcher in the social sciences (Grinnell et al., 2012:71). Even though the research did not have the direct intention to cause any degree of harm, the researcher took caution as the respondents involved in the study possessed attributes that rendered them vulnerable (Denscombe, 2009:63; Rubin & Babbie, 2011:78).

Although the developer of the EA Programme emphasised that the programme aims to enhance knowledge and skills about emotions and is not focused on personal emotional content (Knoetze, 2012:180), the researcher recognised the possibility of emotional harm (Strydom, 2011b:115). The respondents in the study were residents in a child and youth care centre and have been exposed to varying degrees of trauma. The researcher presented the EA Programme herself and attempted to deliver the content as it was intended, namely to focus on knowledge and awareness of emotions, and did not elaborate on the personal trauma experiences of the respondents.

As a rule of practice of the setting, the respondents were assigned a social worker at the child and youth care centre. If a respondent experienced emotional discomfort, the researcher would have referred them to the social worker. The well-being of the group members were monitored by debriefing at the end of each session and by the researcher writing field notes after each session. No need was found to refer any respondent to the social worker.

At the time of the research, the researcher had five years' experience in working with children placed in child and youth care centres. The researcher drew from this experience to establish a professional relationship with the respondents in her role as facilitator of the group as well as researcher. In order to minimise the possibility of emotional distress, attention was paid to prepare the respondents for the termination of the group. The final session also focused specifically on debriefing the respondents and adequately terminating the group.

3.3.2 Inclusion in treatment

During experimental research the comparison group is not exposed to the intervention or programme at the time of the research but this does not imply that they are being denied services (Strydom, 2011b:121). The study intended to measure the effectiveness of the EA Programme specifically and this did not relate directly to other areas of service delivery to the respondents. Both the experimental and comparison groups were involved in their therapeutic and developmental services as rendered by the institution and at the time of the research did not attend any programmes that had similar objectives as the EA Programme. The EA Programme was provided to the social worker at the child and youth care centre to be presented to the comparison group after the completion of the post-test. The programme has however not been presented to the comparison group due to a high case load and would thus be presented by the researcher during the first term of 2016.

3.3.3 Informed consent

The informed consent of the legal guardians is necessary when the respondents are children (Denscombe, 2009:70; Grinnell et al., 2012:80). The legal guardian of the respondents for the study was the director of the child and youth care centre. The director signed a letter of informed consent for each child who took part in the study. The letter of informed consent provided the details of the research; the research objectives, research methods and the possible risks were also explained in this document (Appendix F).

The respondents in a study maintain the right to be informed about the objectives and the process of the research project even though they are children (Grinnell et al., 2012:79; Rubin & Babbie, 2011:77; Strydom 2011b:118). The respondents were informed verbally and by the means of an informed consent letter, about the objectives and the research process (Appendix G) whereby the respondents gave their consent to participate in the study, known as informed assent. The informed assent letter was formulated at the comprehension level of children in the developmental phase of middle childhood. Keeping in mind that the respondents did not necessarily read the letter of informed assent, they were also informed verbally by the researcher reading the assent letter out loud and explaining the content in terms of the research objectives and process before executing the pre-test.

3.3.4 Voluntary participation

Literature on social science research methods emphasise that any participation in any kind of research should be voluntary (Rubin & Babbie, 2011:77; Strydom, 2011b:116). The respondents were informed about their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences for them. The child and youth care centre was also informed that their participation is voluntary and that the respondents maintained the right to withdraw.

The researcher communicated this to the respondents before the completion of the pre-test and also stipulated this in the informed assent document. The respondents were also verbally reminded of their right to withdraw before they started the post-test. The researcher was not employed by the child and youth care centre and there was thus no conflict of interest.

3.3.5 Right to confidentiality

Anonymity entails that the researcher is unable to identify the respondents based on the data. Confidentiality involves that despite the researcher being able to identify the feedback of a respondent, that the researcher agrees to not disclose or publish any identifying details (Denscombe, 2009:64; Grinnell et al., 2012:88; Rubin & Babbie, 2011:83).

The researcher was aware of the identity of the participants as she personally presented the EA Programme. Although anonymity was not ensured, the questionnaires were completed ensuring confidentiality of information. Questionnaires were coded to correlate pre-test and post-test data. The raw data was archived according to the data storage stipulations prescribed by the University of Pretoria. The details of the child and youth care centre are not published to ensure the privacy and further protect the participants' identity.

3.3.6 Debriefing of respondents

Debriefing was intended to provide the respondents with the opportunity to work through their experience of the research, to clarify any misconceptions and to provide answers to any questions they might have had related to the research (Strydom, 2011b:122). The researcher debriefed the respondents of both the experimental and the comparison groups directly after the completion of the post-test, while the experimental group was debriefed during presentation of the programme at the end of every module. As the programme focused on the development of skills related to emotional awareness, the risk of harm was considered minimal.

3.3.7 Reporting on research findings

Ethical research requires that results and findings be published as accurately and scientifically as possible (Rubin & Babbie, 2011:85). These authors remind researchers that the truthful publication of negative or ineffective results is vital, as this contributes to the critical evaluation of evidence based practise. The research report was written under the supervision of a study leader and the researcher presents the findings in a truthful manner, with recognition of the limitations of the study which were mentioned in Chapter one. The research report is also available in the library of the University of Pretoria.

The researcher also provided written feedback on the research findings to the child and youth care centre involved in the study. In this regard, it is recognised that the involvement of different stakeholders in research can lead to the misreporting of data to avoid a conflict of interest (Grinnell et al., 2012:95). The researcher was not involved at the child and youth care centre and had no conflict of interest in this regard. She further maintained objectivity in the data analysis and presentation of the research findings. The empirical findings are presented in the next section.

3.4 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The empirical findings of the research are presented in two sections. Section A will provide the biographical information of the respondents. In Section B the findings based on the data collected are presented and will focus on:

- The development of an emotional vocabulary, and
- The levels of emotional awareness.

3.4.1 Section A: Biographical profile of respondents

The biographical profile of respondents in this study will be discussed according to their language, age and education, gender, and their involvement in programmes.

3.4.1.1 Language

The respondents in the study were children placed in a child and youth care centre in the North-West Province. All of the respondents (100%) were Afrikaans speaking and enrolled in an Afrikaans medium school. The EA Programme, as developed by Knoetze (2012), was presented in Afrikaans. The LEAS-C was translated into Afrikaans for the purpose of Knoetze's study (Knoetze, 2012). Both the EA Programme and the data collection instrument were therefore in the mother tongue of the respondents.

3.4.1.2 Age and education

As the study was about evaluating an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood, all the respondents in the sample were in middle childhood. Children in middle childhood have the capacity to understand emotions, to express emotions and recognise emotions in others (Beck et al., 2012:504; Charlesworth et al., 2011:193; Cowie, 2012:17). The data collection methods required that the respondents possess adequate reading and writing skills to participate in the research. The respondents were in Grade 3 to Grade 6 educationally and between the ages seven and 12 years.

The average age of the respondents was between 10 and 11 years and their grades were between Gr. 3 and Gr. 4, with a slight difference between the experimental and the comparison group. These figures are presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Average age and school grade of respondents

Group	Average age	Average grade
Comparison group	10 years	Gr. 3
Experimental	11 years	Gr. 4

The respondents were randomly assigned to either the experimental or the comparison group. The comparison group's average age was ten years, with the youngest respondent being nine years old and the oldest being 11 years of age. The average age of the experimental group was 11 years, with the youngest respondent being nine years old and the oldest being 12 years old. The average educational grade for the comparison group was Gr. 3 and for the experimental group was Gr. 4. The difference between the averages of the comparison and experimental group in age and grade were one year and one school grade respectively.

3.4.1.3 Gender

There were 18 children in the child and youth care centre that fitted the sampling criteria and could be included in the sample. All of these children were included in the sample and represented nine male and nine female respondents. The respondents were divided either into the experimental or the comparison group based on simple random sampling. The gender distribution in the two groups is presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Representation of gender of the respondents

Group	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Comparison group	Male	4	44 %
	Female	5	56%
Experimental group	Male	5	56%
	Female	4	44%

The distribution of gender between the two groups displays a minor difference. The comparison group consisted of one more female than male respondent and the experimental group of one more male than female respondent.

3.4.1.4 Programmes

The respondents in the study were not involved in any other programmes during the time of the study at the child and youth care centre that had the same objective as the EA Programme.

3.4.2   Section B: Empirical findings

The data obtained through the utilisation of the standardised measuring instrument, the *Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale for Children (LEAS-C)* developed by Bajgar and Lane (2003), will be discussed in this section.

The experimental group was exposed to the EA Programme with the intention to measure the levels of emotional awareness of the experimental and comparison group by the means of a pre- and post-test, and then compare the effect of the EA Programme on the experimental group in terms of:

- The development of an emotional vocabulary and the extent to which the respondents were able to express themselves emotionally.
- The effect of the EA Programme on the levels of emotional awareness of the respondents.

The aim of the EA Programme is to enhance the emotional awareness of children in middle childhood (Knoetze, 2012:191). A direct objective of the programme is to expand children's emotional vocabulary to complement their emotional expression. The measurement of emotional awareness in this study focused on the extent to which the respondents were in contact with their emotions, were able to discriminate between emotions and could express their affective states verbally. The expansion of their emotional vocabulary was measured as a basic component of emotional awareness. A demonstration of the respondents' emotional vocabulary, measured in terms of the frequency of emotion words according to different levels of responses, will first be discussed, followed by the presentation of their levels of emotional awareness measured by the LEAS-C.

The standardised measuring instrument, the LEAS-C, calculates an emotional awareness value based on the interpretation of a child's responses to twelve scenarios in terms of their own and another person's emotions. The emotion words in a response are scored against a

glossary of words in Bajgar and Lane (2003), according to which the responses are assigned a specific value ranging from level zero to level five. Levels zero to three are scored against the glossary of words, while level four and five responses are analysed according to a specific combination of level three responses. An increase in higher level responses from the pre- to the post-test will thus indicate the improvement of emotional awareness. A comparison of the emotional vocabulary and the levels of emotional awareness between the experimental and the comparison group in the pre- and post-test will be indicative of the effectiveness of the EA Programme.

The next section will present an analysis of the frequency of the different levels of words found in the responses from the comparison and experimental group in the pre- and post-test. The levels are fixed values scored according to the glossary of words that forms part of the LEAS-C from Bajgar and Lane (2003:5) and Lane (1991). The frequency is then calculated by counting the number of times a specific level response occurs. The frequency of the different levels of responses is not the same as calculating the final value for the levels of emotional awareness; this value will be discussed further under point 3.4.2.4.

3.4.2.1 Frequency of emotion word responses according to the LEAS-C levels of emotional value

The following section indicates the number of emotion responses from the respondents as scored against the glossary of words provided in the LEAS-C. The emotion responses are scored according to levels zero to five, with level zero indicating no emotional content and level five representing a comprehensive and differentiating emotional response (Bajgar & Lane, 2003:5-6; Lane, 1991). The graphs in this section are organised in terms of the total number of responses that correlate with a specific level during the pre- and post-test for the experimental and the comparison group respectively. The frequency of responses in the different levels are analysed separately from the actual levels of emotional awareness to indicate the increase or decrease in the words, thus the vocabulary, that correlate with the specific level it represents. A chart that depicts a conclusive analysis will then be given to indicate the prevalence of the total responses for level zero to level five that appeared for each group during the pre- and post-test. The scoring guidelines for the adult-based LEAS are the same as the LEAS-C for minors that were used in this study (Bajgar & Lane, 2003:5). The different scoring levels are explained in more detail in the Guidelines for the LEAS Scoring Manual and Glossary (Lane, 1991), attached as Appendix H and the LEAS-C, a Supplement to the LEAS Scoring Manual (Bajgar & Lane, 2003) attached as Appendix I.

- **Level zero**

A level zero response entails that no emotional feedback was given and the response can be seen as a cognitive thought or idea, for example when a respondent stated *"I think"* instead of *"I feel"* (Bajgar & Lane, 2003:5; Lane, 1991*)*. Level zero responses can be regarded as non-emotional responses. The frequency of level zero responses for both groups were minimal, as presented in Figure 3.1.

Level zero responses

	Comparison group	Experimental group
Pre-test	5	4
Post-test	11	1
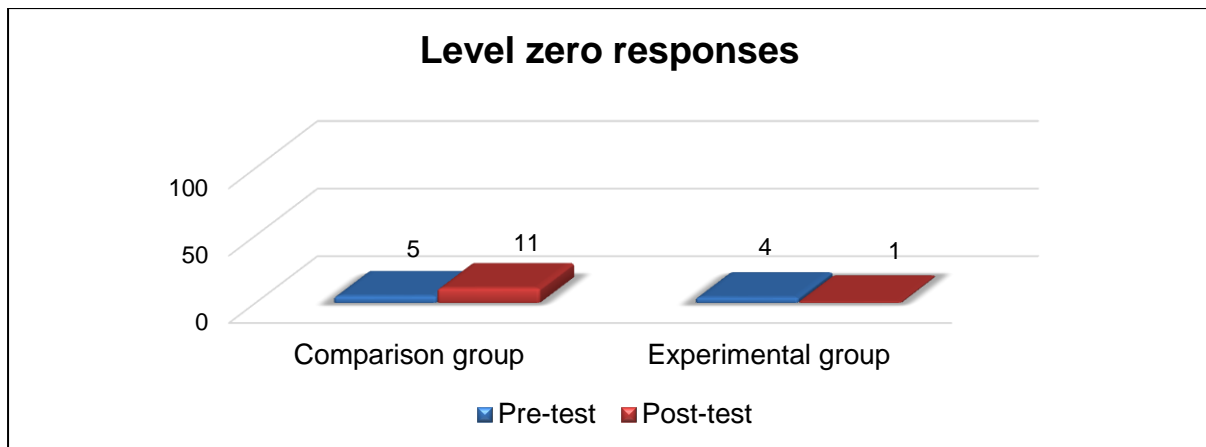
Figure 3.1: Frequency of level zero responses

Figure 3.1 indicates that there was an increase in level zero responses in the comparison group from five (5) responses in the pre-test to 11 responses in the post-test. In the experimental group, the level zero responses decreased from four (4) in the pre-test to one (1) in the post-test. The slight decrease in the level zero responses in the experimental group could be explained by the increase in higher level responses as a result of their exposure to the EA Programme, as will be discussed subsequently.

- **Level one**

A level one response includes reactions of indifference, such as not knowing what the self or the other person would feel. The LEAS-C responses classified as level one also involves physical reactions such as "*feeling sick"* or an apathetic response such as "*not feeling anything*" (Bajgar & Lane, 2003:5; Lane, 1991). In the pre-test as well as the post-test, both the comparison and the experimental group had a limited number of level one responses, as presented in Figure 3.2.
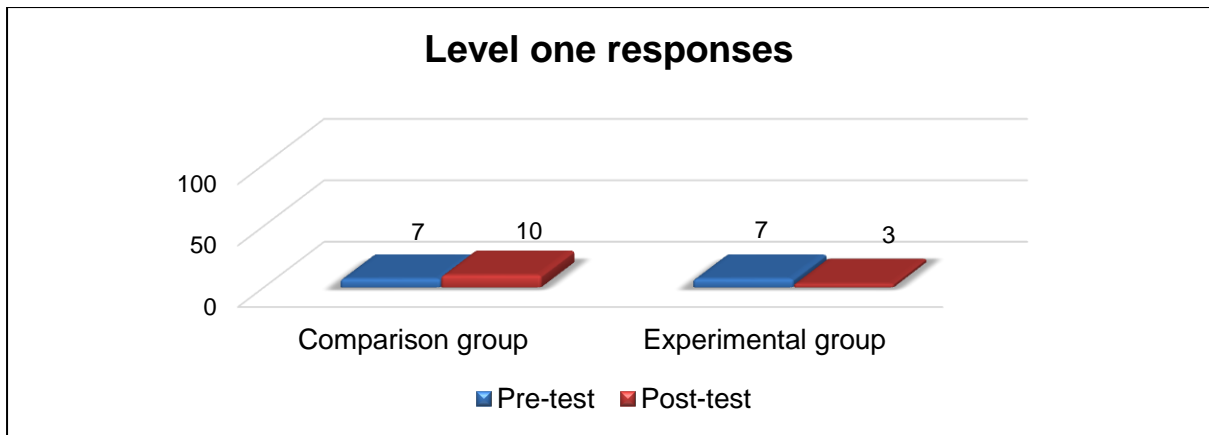
Figure 3.2: Frequency of level one responses

Figure 3.2 indicates that the comparison group demonstrated a slight increase in level one responses from the pre-test to the post-test; from seven (7) to ten (10). The level one responses of the experimental group decreased, from seven (7) in the pre-test to three (3) in the post-test. The decrease of level one responses in the experimental group is noteworthy when considered within the context of the analysis of the higher level responses.

- **Level two**

Any action tendency, if demonstrating an emotion, is regarded as a level two response such as *"I would feel like hitting someone"* as well as a simplified universal answer such as *"I would feel bad"* (Bagjar & Lane, 2003:6; Lane, 1991). The glossary of words provided by the LEAS-C regards level two responses as more specified emotional feedback than level zero and level one, but still not as expressive as a level three word. Level two responses are thus more universal emotional responses than level zero and level one, but are still only vaguely descriptive. The responses of the respondents that were regarded as reflecting level two responses are presented in Figure 3.3.
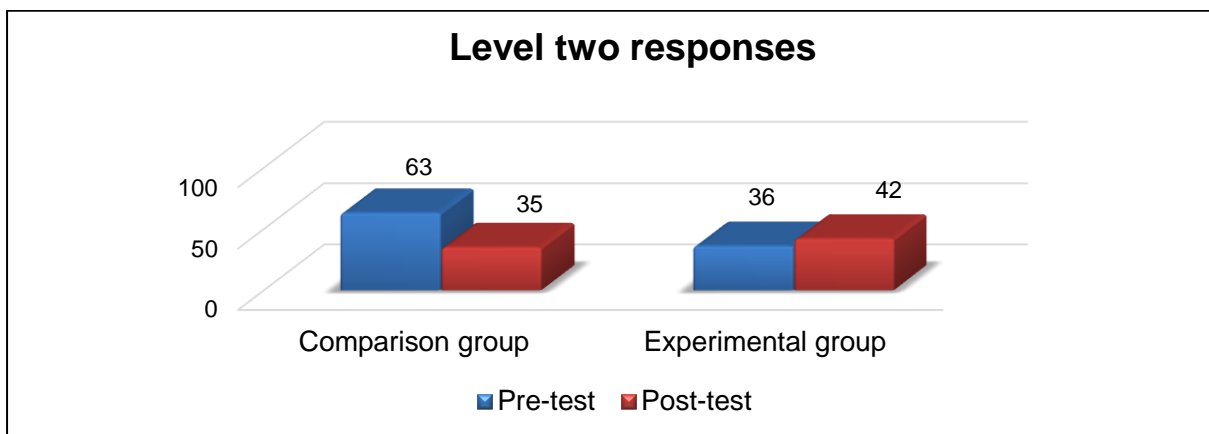
Figure 3.3: Frequency of level two responses

As indicated in Figure 3.3 the comparison group gave almost twice as many level two responses than the experimental group in the pre-test. The frequency of level two responses in the comparison group decreased from 63 in the pre-test to 36 in the post-test, while the level two responses of the experimental group increased from 36 to 42; an increase of eight (8) responses. The decrease in the level two responses of the comparison group, could be related to the fact that the level zero and one responses of the comparison group increased (as demonstrated in Figures 3.1 and 3.2) in the post-test. The slight increase in level two words of the experimental group could be indicative of their use of higher level emotional words and needs to be interpreted only as a part of the total analysis of the frequencies of responses.

- **Level three**

Level three responses entail simplified emotional responses such as *"I would feel angry"* (Bajgar & Lane, 2003:6; Lane, 1991). Level three responses indicate specific emotions, e.g. "sad", words closely related to emotions, e.g. "let down", and words that convey emotions, e.g. "sympathy". Words with emotional content are found in level three responses, but are used exclusively without descriptive variations, for example a simple statement conveying a single emotion such as "I would feel sad".
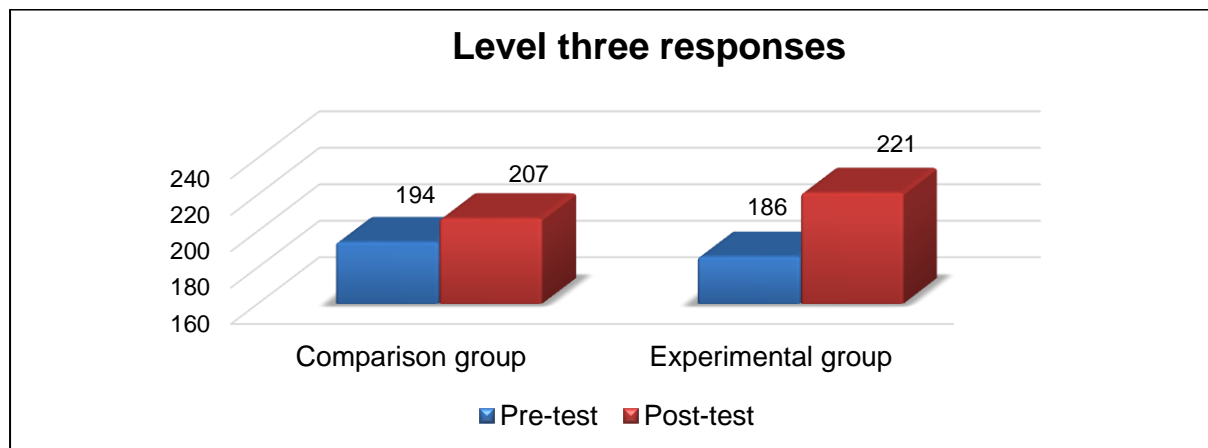
Figure 3.4: Frequency of level three responses

Figure 3.4 demonstrates the high prevalence of level three responses as compared to level zero, one and two responses in the pre- and the post-test of both groups. In the pre-test, level three responses occurred 194 times for the comparison group and 186 times for the experimental group. The comparison group's level three responses increased from 194 to 207; demonstrating an increase of 13 responses. The post-test of the experimental group measured 221 level three responses, calculating an increase of 35 responses. The greater

increase in level three responses in the experimental group demonstrates the use of more advanced words in their emotional vocabulary.

- **Level four**

According to the LEAS-C glossary of words, a level four score is given when more than one level three emotion words are used in combination as part of one response. Level four responses are not included in the glossary of words provided by the LEAS-C but are considered as level three responses that suggest an understanding of emotional intricacy and emotional awareness (Bajgar & Lane, 2003:6; Lane, 1991). Level four responses are only scored when a blend of level three words is present, such as: *"I would feel angry and slightly scared."* The response is thus more complex and descriptive of an emotional reaction, supporting a more progressed skill to verbally express emotions. The frequency of level four responses is presented in Figure 3.5.
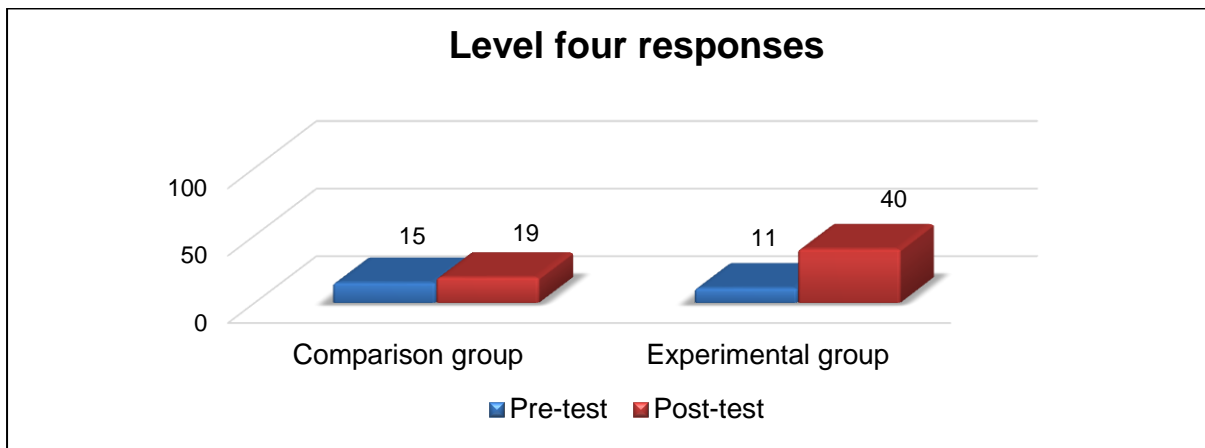
Figure 3.5: Frequency of level four responses

As indicated in Figure 3.5, there was an increase of level four responses in the post-test of the comparison group. This increase from 15 to 19 responses was however relatively small. The experimental groups' increase from 11 to 40 level four responses from the pre- to the post-test demonstrates the development of a more complex emotional vocabulary in terms of the combination of a variety of level three words. The increase in usage of level three words by the experimental group supported the increase in frequency of level four responses, which are ultimately scored according to the variety of level three words used in a specific response. The increase of 29 level four responses in the experimental group indicates this groups' improved ability to reflect on and express emotional states with combinations of emotion words; thus enhanced levels of emotional awareness and emotional expression.

- **Level five**

Similar to level four responses, level five responses are not scored against the glossary of words provided by the LEAS-C. A level five response is obtained when two level four responses are awarded to a particular scenario, one to the self and one to the other, and only if the two responses are clearly distinguishable from each other (Bajgar & Lane, 2003:6; Lane, 1991).

The responses for a level five score thus entail that the two responses consist of intricate, combined but differentiated emotional content for the self and the other. Two level four responses will thus not inherently equal a level five response. A level four score for the 'self' and a level four score for 'other' will give a total level five score, only if the two level four responses are clearly distinguishable from one another. Figure 3.6 provides a presentation of the frequency of level five responses.
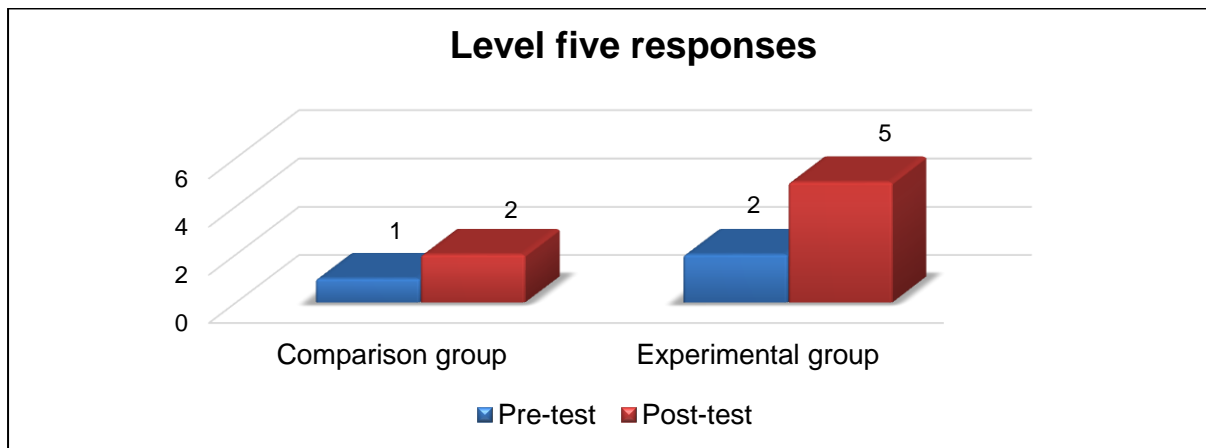
Figure 3.6: Frequency of level five responses

A limited number of level five responses were given in the pre-tests of both groups, with the comparison group scoring one (1) and the experimental group scoring two (2) level five responses. Both the comparison and experimental group showed a limited increase in level five words in the post-test, with the experimental group showing a slightly higher increase of three (3) level five responses, compared to the increase of one (1) response in the comparison group. A level five response encompasses an empathetic element in which a unique response for the other is required. It is possible that the EA Programme was not effective in equipping the respondents to apply empathetic skills.

3.4.2.2 Summary of the frequency of emotion level responses

A summary of the responses of both the experimental and comparison groups in the pre- and post-test will be provided in the following section.
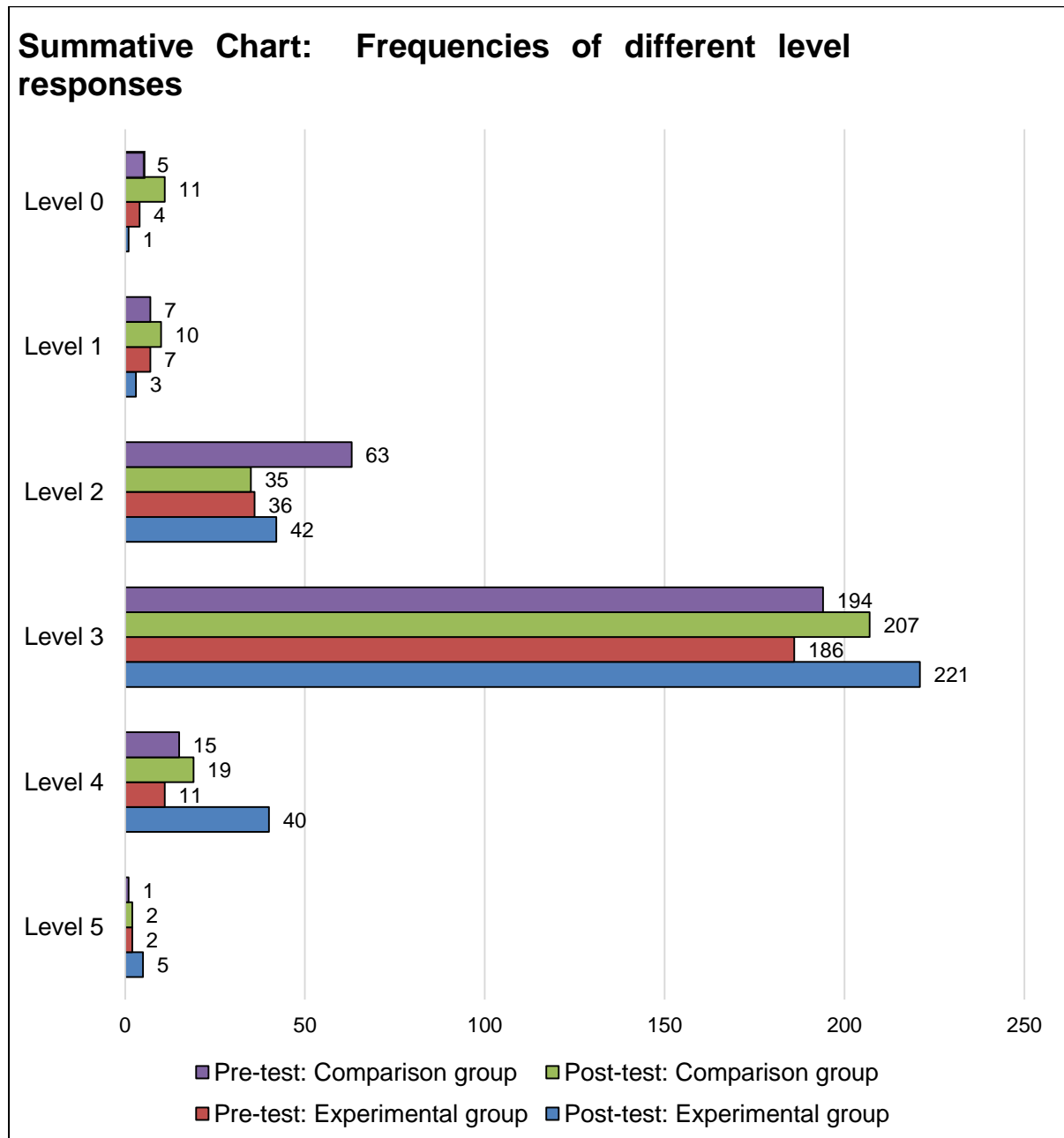
Figure 3.7: **Summative chart of the frequencies of the different response levels**

The overall low level zero and level one responses for both the comparison and experimental group in the pre-test, is illustrated in Figure 3.7. In the pre-test, the frequencies of the responses on levels one and two were very similar for both the groups. In the post-test, there was an increase in both level zero and level one responses in the comparison group, while there was a decrease in the responses in both these levels in the experimental

group. This could indicate the acquisition of a more comprehensive emotional vocabulary by the experimental group.

A larger number of level two words were present in the responses of both the comparison and the experimental group. In the pre-test, the comparison group responded with 63 level two words, which were much higher than the number of level two words in the experimental group, who responded with 36 level two words. The post-test results showed that there was a decline in the number of level two words in the comparison group (from 63 to 35) while the experimental group responded with 36 level two words in the pre-test and 42 level two words in the post-test; indicating a slight increase of six (6) level two words.

Compared to other levels, both groups presented with a relatively high frequency of level three words in the pre-test. Level three responses indicate words that refer to specific emotions, words closely related to emotions and words that convey emotions. In the post-test, the occurrence of level three words in the comparison group increased with 15 words as compared to the more substantial increase of 35 level three words in the experimental group. This increase in level three words indicates the expansion of the emotional vocabulary of the experimental group.

In terms of level four responses in the pre-test, the comparison group a showed slightly higher use of these level words compared to the experimental group (15 compared to 11). The post-test results indicated an increase of four (4) level four responses in the comparison group and an increase of 29 level four responses in the experimental group. Level four responses reflect a blended or combination of two or more level three emotions and thus reflect a better understanding of intricate emotions (Bagjar & Lane, 2003:6; Lane, 1991). The increase of 29 responses in the experimental group can thus be regarded as a demonstration of the attainment of a more complex understanding of emotions and the expression thereof. The effectiveness of the EA Programme is demonstrated by the increase in level three and four responses of the experimental group.

A small number of level five responses occurred in both groups. On this level, the comparison group showed an increase of one (1) response from pre- to post-test, while the experimental group showed an increase of three (3) responses from the pre-test to the post-test. This slight increase from two (2) to five (5) level five responses in the experimental group could be regarded as substantial in such a small sample. Level five responses shows an ability to distinguish between emotions of the self and of others and the results point to the development of an enhanced emotional understanding of some of the respondents that completed the EA Programme.

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In order to better understand the enhancement of emotional expression it is necessary to analyse the nature of the emotional language of the respondents. This is a critical element in determining the effect of the EA Programme on the respondents' emotional vocabulary. In the next section, the researcher will discuss the emotional vocabulary of the respondents in terms of the use of specific emotions words which are classified as *weak* and *strong* emotion words.

3.4.2.3 Weak and strong emotion words

The empirical findings include an analysis of *weak* and *strong* emotion words as used by the respondents in the pre- and post-test. Knoetze (2012:200-201) described weak emotion words as "ordinary emotion words" and strong emotions words as words with a "strong emotional impact". The weak words have a simplified emotional description and include words such as *good*, *bad*, *sad* and *glad*. It is important to note that *happy*, *unhappy*, *glad* and *sad* are regarded as level three words, but are less descriptive of emotional states. These words often feature in day to day conversations. The more descriptive emotional words, such as *furious*, *excited*, *shy* and *distressed* are regarded as strong words. Strong emotion words such as the ones mentioned, express an emotionally loaded meaning to an experience. These words are regarded as a more developed and intricate emotional language.

The comparison of the occurrence of weak and strong emotion words in the pre- and post-test is regarded as indicative of the impact of the EA Programme on the experimental groups' emotional language and their skills to emotionally express themselves more comprehensively. An increase in the occurrence of strong emotion words will suggest that the participants acquired a more complex emotional language and an improved ability to express themselves.

In this section the occurrence of weak emotion words will be discussed as it occurred in the pre- and post-test of the comparison and experimental groups. Subsequently, the occurrence of strong emotion words for both groups will be presented and discussed. The occurrence of weak emotion words in the comparison group is presented in Figure 3.8.
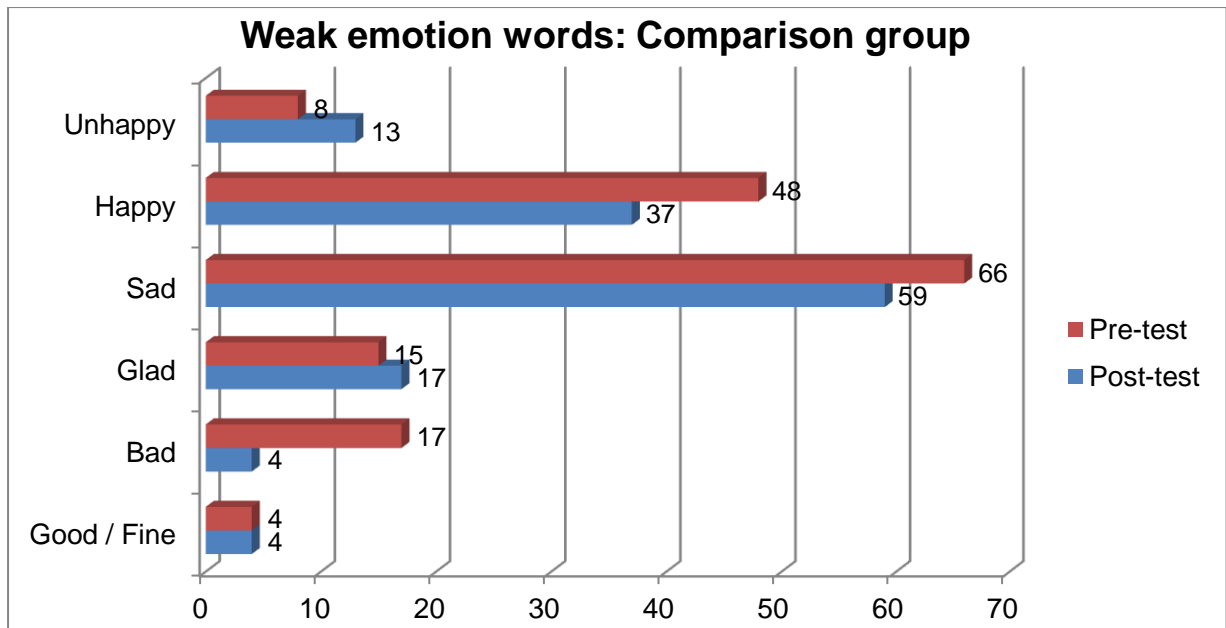
Figure 3.8: Occurrence of weak emotion words in the comparison group

The weak words with the highest prevalence in the pre- and post-test were firstly *sad* and then *happy*. The word *sad* was used 66 times in the pre-test and 59 times in the post-test; demonstrating a slight decrease. The word *happy* occurred 48 times in the pre-test and 37 times in the post-test. Although their occurrence decreased from the pre- to the post-test, the use of the words *sad* and *happy* remained relatively high.

The words *glad* and *bad* were almost equal in number in the pre-test. The post-test showed that there was a slight increase in the word *glad* (from 15 to 17), but a significant decline in the occurrence of the word *bad*; from 17 to four (4). On the other hand, the use of the word *unhappy* increased from the pre-test to the post-test; from eight (8) to 13. The words *good* or *fine* did not have a high prevalence and occurred four times in both the pre- and post-test.

The results from the post-test indicate that the respondents still frequently used the words *happy, sad* and *glad* to describe emotional states. These words thus still made up most of the emotional vocabulary of the comparison group at the time of the post-test.

The occurrence of weak emotion words in the experimental group is presented in Figure 3.9.
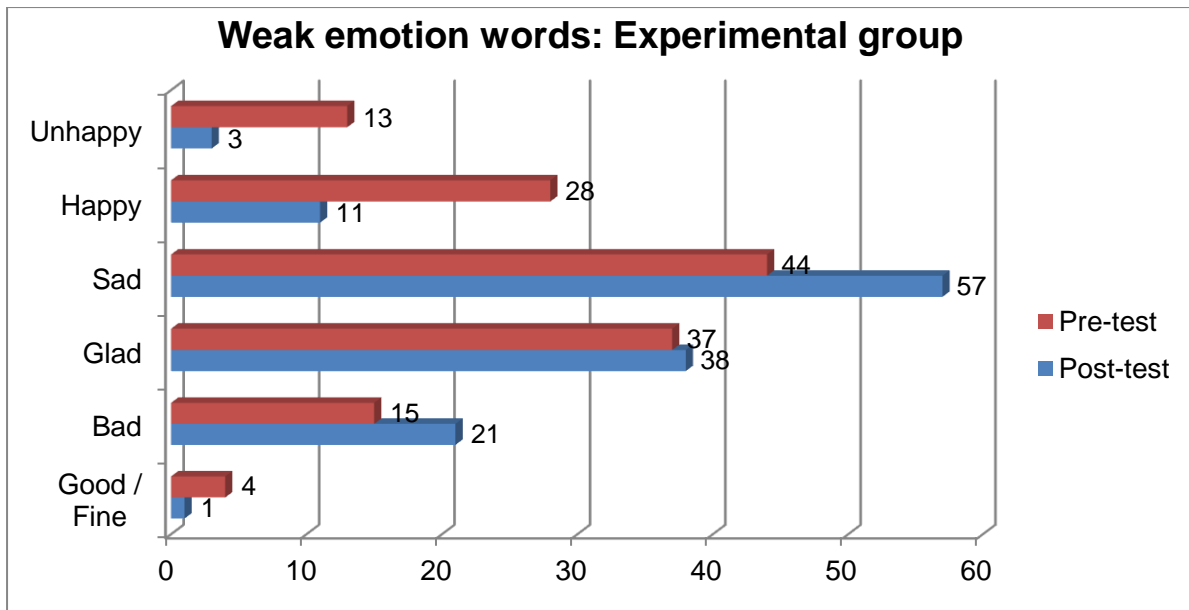
Figure 3.9: Occurrence of weak emotion words in the experimental group

In the experimental group, *sad* and *glad* were the most used words in the pre-test. The occurrence of the word *glad* remained relatively consistent, occurring 37 times in the pre-test and 38 times in the post-test, whilst the frequency of the word *sad* increased from 44 to 57. The words *sad* and *glad* are considered level three emotion words, even though they are not as descriptive as strong emotion words. The high prevalence of the word *glad* in the post-test supports the assumption that respondents still used this word as part of everyday life. The increase of the word *sad* can be supportive of heightened levels of emotional awareness as respondents could have acquired a more intricate awareness of the emotion of sadness within themselves. The utilisation of the words *unhappy* and *happy* decreased from the pre- to the post-test, with *unhappy* from 13 to three (3) and *happy* from 28 to 11. The occurrence of the words *good* or *fine* decreased from four (4) in the pre-test to one (1) in the post-test.

The increase of the word *bad* was analysed more in depth and it was found that one respondent used the word *bad* 11 times in the pre-test and 16 times in the post-test. This respondent's results had a marked impact on the occurrence of the word *bad* in terms of the total results.

A discussion of the total numbers of weak and strong words in the comparison and experimental groups in terms of weak and strong words, will follow later. Firstly, an analysis of the occurrence of strong emotion words will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the emotional vocabulary of the respondents. These results are presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Occurrence of strong emotion words for both groups

Emotion word		Comparison group		Experimental group	
		Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
1.	Affectionate				1
2.	Amazed	1	4	1	1
3.	Agonized				2
4.	Angry	14	31	14	26
5.	Content	1		1	
6.	Curious	1		1	
7.	Dejected	1	2	1	
8.	Deceived				1
9.	Disappointed	1		1	2
10.	Determined				1
11.	Embarrassed				4
12.	Excited	2	5	2	8
13.	Expectant				1
14.	Furious	3	5	3	2
15.	Grateful		1		2
16.	Guilty	3	1	3	4
17.	Hurt		1		2
18.	Interested				1
19.	Jealous		4		
20.	Pity	7	7	7	11
21.	Scared	16	8	16	17
22.	Scorned				1
23.	Shocked	2	3	4	2
24.	Shy	1		1	2
25.	Startled		5	3	3
26.	Surprized				
27.	Trusted				1
28.	Worried	10	10	10	22
	Frequency of words	**63**	**87**	**68**	**116**
	Variety of words	**14 words**	**14 words**	**15 words**	**23 words**

The occurrence of strong emotion words for both groups is presented in a comparative table to demonstrate variety of words as well as the frequency in which they were used as an indicator of the expansion of the participants' emotional vocabulary.

In terms of the variety of strong words used, the comparison group used 14 different emotional words to express their affective states in both the pre- and post-test. The use of these words differed from the pre- to the post-test. Words such as *angry, pity, scared* and *worried* occurred frequently in the pre-test results. The post-test results showed a frequent occurrence of the words *angry, excited, jealous, scared, startled* and *worried*. Compared to other words that showed lesser variance, a notable difference was observed in the words *angry* and *scared* between the pre- and post-test. An increase from 14 to 31 in the occurrence of the word *angry* occurred and a decrease of 16 to eight (8) in the word *scared*. For the comparison group the total frequency of strong emotion words increased from 63 in the pre-test to 87 in the post-test. This demonstrates a higher prevalence of strong emotion words used by the comparison group in the post-test; observed in a difference of 24 words between the two measurements.

The results for the experimental group indicate that 15 different strong emotion words were used to describe their emotional state in the pre-test. This number increased to 23 different strong emotion words in the post-test. This increase is indicative of the use of eight (8) additional words in the variety of strong words. Strong emotion words used frequently in the pre-test, were *angry, pity, scared* and *worried*. The same words also occurred frequently in the pre-test data of the comparison group. During the post-test, the most prevalent strong emotional words used by the experimental group were *angry, embarrassed, excited, guilty, pity, scared* and *worried.* The post-test results indicate that the frequency of strong emotion words in the responses of the experimental group increased from 68 to 116. This marked increase in the use of strong emotion words by the respondents in the experimental group is indicative of the effect if their exposure to the EA Programme.

The results show that the comparison and the experimental group presented with a very similar vocabulary of strong words in the pre-test, which confirms that those words were part of the emotional vocabulary of all the respondents. The obvious increase in the variety as well the frequency of strong emotion words in the experimental group, is an indication that the EA Programme contributed to the enhancement of the emotional vocabulary and emotional expression skills of the experimental group. A comparative percentile synopsis of the occurrence of strong and weak emotion words for the two groups is presented in Figures 3.10 and 3.11.
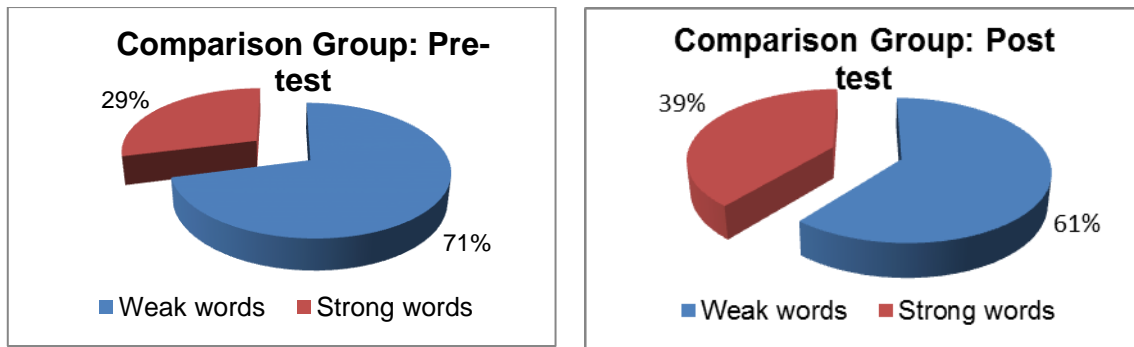
Figure 3.10: Strong and weak emotion words in the comparison group
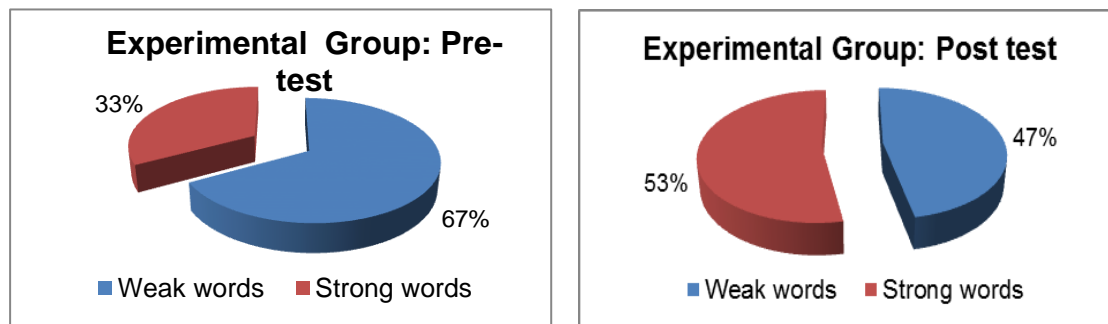
Figure 3.11: Strong and weak emotion words in the experimental group

The percentile synopsis was calculated by counting the total frequency of strong and weak emotions words in the pre- and post-test and then presented as percentages of the occurrence of strong and weak emotion words for each test.

In the comparison group the occurrence of weak emotion words decreased from 71% to 61%, while there was an increase of strong emotion words from 29% to 39%, as presented in Figure 3.10. The results for the experimental group are presented in Figure 3.11. As indicated in Figure 3.11, the experimental group's use of weak emotion words decreased from 67% to 53%, while the occurrence of strong emotion words increased from 33% to 47%. In comparison, there was a greater decrease in the use of weak words in the experimental group (a decrease of 14%) than in the comparison group (a decrease of 10%). Also, the increase in the use of strong words was greater in the experimental group (an increase of 14%) than in the comparison group (10%). The more significant increase of strong emotion words and decrease of weak emotion words in the experimental group are indicative of the enhanced ability of the experimental group to express themselves by using more descriptive emotional words.

The total levels of emotional awareness of the respondents as calculated and measured according to the LEAS-C will be presented in the following section. This will provide a more comprehensive overview of the respondents' emotional capacities.

3.4.2.4 The levels of emotional awareness

The LEAS-C is a standardised measuring instrument, developed by Bajgar and Lane (2003), which accurately quantifies the levels of emotional awareness of children (Bajgar et al., 2005). The LEAS-C questionnaire consists of 12 hypothetical scenarios to which two responses is required from each scenario, a response of how the person completing the questionnaire would feel and how the other person involved in the scenario would feel. Both responses of each scenario are then scored according to the scoring manual as a level zero, one, two, three, four or five response. The final score for each scenario is then considered as the highest score of the two responses, except in the case of two level four responses. Two level four responses are analysed as a level five score, only when the two responses are distinguishably different from one another. The total score is then calculated as the sum of all the single highest scores for each scenario. The highest score to be achieved on a question is thus level five, and the maximum score that can be achieved is then five (5) multiplied by 12, which equals 60. The combined total scores of the respondents from the separate groups are presented in the graph below, Figure 3.12, which measures their levels of emotional awareness in the pre- and post-test.
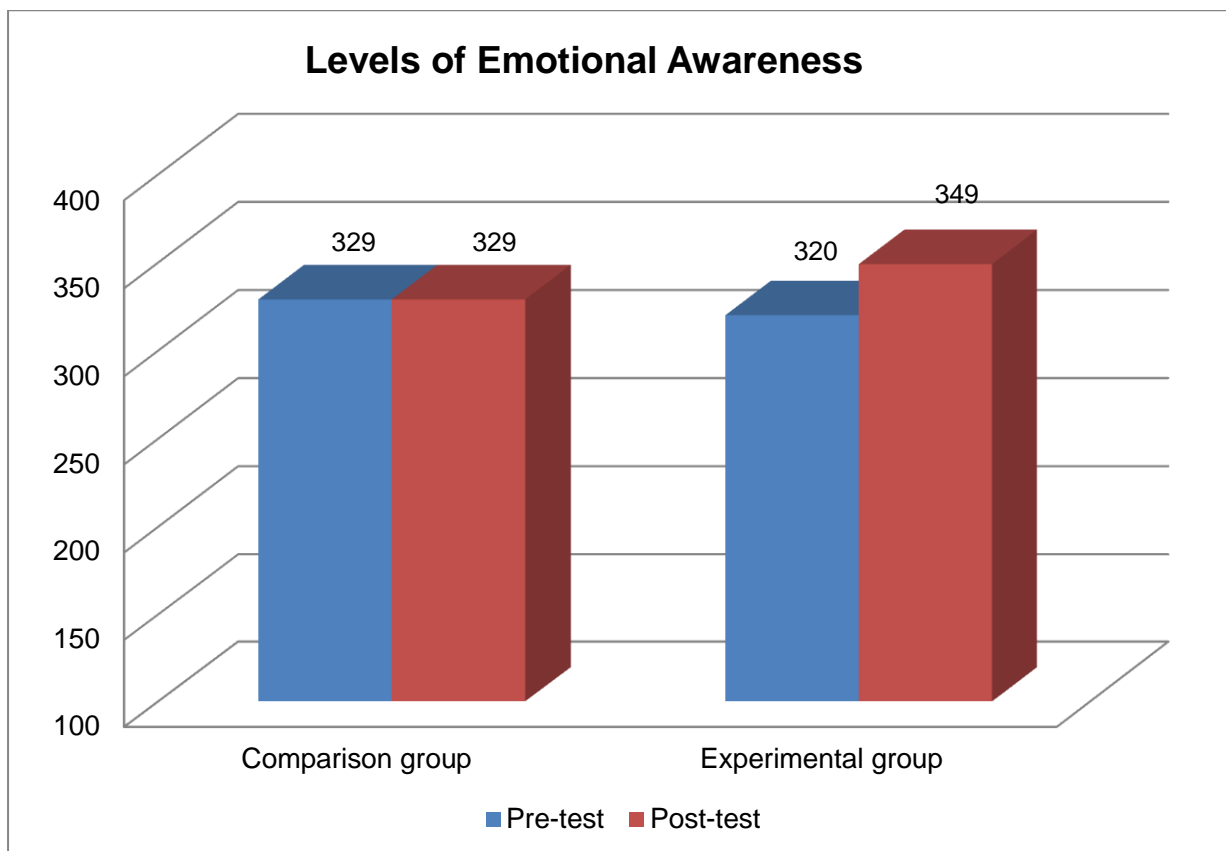
Figure 3.12: The levels of emotional awareness in the pre- and post-test

Both groups had the same number of respondents; making the total levels of emotional awareness comparable. The comparison group obtained a higher score than the experimental group in the pre-test. This is noteworthy as the average age of the respondents in the comparison group was a year and grade younger than the experimental group, as indicated in Table 3.1. If the average age and grade of the respondents are considered it would imply that the experimental group, being a year older and in one grade higher, would have been more developed in terms of emotional awareness than the comparison group. In this study it was not the case. These divergences in grade and age of the respondents had no significant impact on the levels of emotional awareness of the respondents.

Figure 3.12 is representative of the levels of emotional awareness measured of the comparison and experimental groups in the pre- and post-test. The total levels of emotional awareness for the comparison group stayed consistent from the pre- to the post-test at 329. Even though the occurrence of strong emotion words increased in the comparison group, as Figure 3.10 demonstrates, the stagnation in the measurement from the pre- to the post-test indicate that they were unable to apply more complex and combined emotional responses in terms of level four and level five responses, as illustrated in Figures 3.5 and 3.6.

The total levels of emotional awareness measured for the experimental group increased from 320 to 349, as indicated in Figure 3.12. The levels of emotional awareness of the experimental group increased with 29, calculated as a five percent (5%) increase. This increase, as compared to the unchanged figures of the comparison group, is demonstrative of the effect of the EA Programme on the levels of emotional awareness. Both groups have been exposed to similar environments in terms of the context in which they find themselves in. They resided in the same child- and youth care centre and were pupils at the same school. The only influence that the researcher could account for was the EA Programme that was presented over 12 sessions, to which the comparison group was not exposed to. The increase in the levels of emotional awareness of the experimental group can be considered as a result of the EA Programme.

3.5 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The relevance of the results is directly associated with the hypothesis of the study. The main hypothesis that applied to the study was: If an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, then the level of emotional functioning of the children will be enhanced.

The sub-hypotheses derived from the main hypothesis were:

- If an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, their ability to be in contact with their emotions will be enhanced.
- If an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, their ability to discriminate between different emotions will increase.
- If an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, they will gain the ability to verbalise and "own" their emotions.

In the following sections, the results of the study will be discussed in relation to the hypothesis and sub-hypotheses. The main aspects that relate to the sub-hypotheses that will be discussed are:

- Emotional expression and the development of an emotional vocabulary which relate to sub-hypotheses two and three.
- The levels of emotional awareness and the general effectiveness of the EA Programme as applied within a child and youth care centre as associated with sub-hypothesis one.

3.5.1 Emotional expression and the development of an emotional vocabulary

The effect of emotional states on people's daily lives is emphasised by Crowley (2014:3978). The expression of emotions takes up a central role in constructively regulating one's own affective state (Macklem, 2008:3). The developer of the EA Programme (Knoetze, 2014:212) cites Blom (2004) and states that the EA Programme is founded on Gestalt play therapy techniques aimed at encouraging emotional expression, as some children do not possess the awareness of or abilities to express emotions. This is highly relevant for children placed in a child and youth care centre, who tend to present with inappropriate emotional expression skills and diminished emotional competencies due to their exposure to trauma prior to and within the care setting (Howe, 2005:147; McAuley & Davis, 2009:152; Otto, 2006:78; Van Wyngaard, 2009:5; Willis, 2011:70-74).

The EA Programme resulted in the expansion of the emotional vocabulary of the respondents. The acquisition of an emotional vocabulary and emotional knowledge is regarded as a key component of emotional competence (Beck et al., 2012:503; Wranik et al., 2007:394). Techniques based on the Gestalt play therapy approach (Knoetze, 2012:140-141) were implemented throughought the EA Programme with the aim of

enhancing the respondents' emotional vocabulary. The expansion of their emotional vocabulary would subsequently improve their verbal skills to express emotions and prevent inappropriate emotional expression and expression of emotions through behavioural challenges (Knoetze, 2012:141). The empirical results for the experimental group indicate that the frequency of lower level emotional responses (level zero, one and two) decreased, while higher level emotional responses (level three, four and five) increased from the pre- to the post-test, as demonstrated in Figures 3.1, 3.2, 3.2, 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6. These results verify that the objective of the EA Programme, to improve emotional vocabulary and expression skills, was achieved.

The slight increase in level five responses, but more substantial increase in level four responses of the experimental group as demonstrated in Figures 3.5 and 3.6, is suggestive of the respondents' limited ability to be aware of the emotions of others; thus to demonstrate empathy. A level five response is obtained when two distinguishable level four responses are given. There were a substantial number of level four responses evident in the post-test of the experimental group. Level four responses entail that respondents were required to use complex cognitive abilities to process how the other person might feel and to accommodate more than one emotion related to a certain experience.

It is noted that children who were exposed to maltreatment are prone to have inhibited brain development in areas related to empathy and emotional regulation (Cameron & Maginn, 2009:15; Howe, 2005:99; Music, 2011:93). Exposure to trauma could also influence the secondary appraisal process. This process relates to assessing a situation and considering various possible emotional outcomes (Wranik et al., 2007:397-398). Children in middle childhood are generally able to apply secondary appraisal processes (Beck et al., 2012:505; Cowie, 2012:17; Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:275), which are related to higher order cognitive processes situated in the cortex and sub cortex (Holodynksi & Friedlmeier, 2006:47). However, chronic stress affects the functioning of the amygdala and the hippocampus (Coates, 2010:395; Zillmer et al., 2008:260) and, due to the interrelatedness of the different brain areas (Hastings et al., 2014:655; Siegel, in Music, 2011:87) it could possibly affect higher order reasoning skills situated in the cortex. The effect of trauma on brain functioning could thus have an effect on the cognitive processes that are associated with level five responses. The low frequency of level five responses in the research results suggests that the EA Programme did not enhance the experimental group's ability to express empathy. The researcher is of the opinion that prolonged and more intensive exposure to an emotional awareness programme, such as the EA Programme, might contribute to the development of enhanced awareness of the emotions of others, which is associated with level five responses.

The finding that the experimental group was able to utilise more complex emotional language is supported by the results related to the occurrence of weak and strong emotion words, as discussed in paragraph 3.4.2.3 in this chapter. The effect of the EA Programme on emotional expression and emotional vocabulary substantiates their acquisition of an expanded emotional vocabulary. The findings indicate that the experimental group used less weak words and more strong words to describe their emotional states after being exposed to the EA Programme. This confirms the attainment of a more elaborate emotional vocabulary. It is important to note that the respondents attended the same school and were being cared for in the same child and youth care centre, which served to minimise the effect of external variables on the research findings.

The minimal decrease of weak emotion words, but substantial increase in strong emotion words in the experimental group is indicative that they still utilised weaker emotion words in conjunction with more descriptive emotion words. The slight increase of the occurrence of strong emotion words in the comparison group could possibly be attributed to their interaction with the respondents of the experimental group as they lived in the same child and youth care centre and attended the same school. The impact of the social context and interaction on the development of emotions, as discussed in Chapter two, stressed the influence of the specific context on a person's emotional capacities (Hastings et al., 2014:827; Lemerise & Harper, 2014:2234). The post-test results indicate that the respondents from the experimental group utilised a comprehensive variety of strong emotion words more frequently than in the pre-test, as elicited by the LEAS-C. This evidence supports the assumption that the experimental group developed a more expanded emotional vocabulary after completing the EA Programme.

The developmental phase of middle childhood is characterised by major advances in terms of cognition and improved learning abilities (Charlesworth et al., 2011:189). Their improvement in attention span, comprehension of abstract concepts, ability to consider various points of view and development in terms of language are key capacities of children in this phase of development (Charlesworth et al., 2011:186; Louw & Louw, 2007a:220; Sigelman & Rider, 2010:189). Considering these indicators of normative development, literature also elucidates the developmental delays and emotional disturbances of children exposed to maltreatment and placed in residential care (Howe, 2005:157; Van Wyngaard, 2009:4; Willis, 2011:70-74).

Being in a constant state of stress or hypervigilance, an absence of emotional understanding, a tendency to dissociate or suppress emotions are identified as some of the risk factors children placed in a child and youth care centre suffer as a result of neglect and

abuse (c.f. Brentro et al., 2009:34; Cicchetti & Ng, 2014:1197, 1215; Goodyear-Brown, 2010:28; Howe, 2005:13; Music, 2011:94) as was discussed in Section 2.4 of Chapter two. These children's capacity for emotional regulation is compromised as they lack the skills to accurately identify and cognitively process emotional signals to direct their decision-making and ultimately their conduct (Music, 2011:205-206). The respondents in the experimental group were still able to demonstrate progress in the development of emotional expression and vocabulary abilities despite these risk factors. The EA Programme was presented for only eight weeks during two sessions of an hour each per week. The effect of exposing children in a child and youth care centre to more intense and elaborate emotional stimulation, similar to the EA Programme, might further improve their emotional understanding and expression skills.

The researcher concludes from literature (c.f. Charlesworth et al., 2011:186; Louw & Louw, 2007a:220; Sigelman & Rider, 2010:189) that the phase of middle childhood encompasses abilities that encourage comprehensive emotional learning. The knowledge and skills pertaining to emotional capacities can be further addressed during adolescence in order to support advanced emotional regulation and emotional intelligence into adulthood. Due to the risk factors in their lives, these skills are specifically important to children placed in a child and youth care centre.

As indicated in the above discussion, the research findings verify sub-hypotheses two and three as, after the implementation of the EA Programme for children in middle childhood in the specific child and youth care centre, the respondents demonstrated enhanced abilities to distinguish between different emotions (sub-hypothesis two) and to verbalise and "own" their emotional states (sub-hypothesis three).

3.5.2 Emotional awareness

Emotional awareness is a subjective internal process during which a child deliberately contemplates his or her inner state of mind with regards to an emotional experience (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:273). Emotional awareness encompasses a person's ability to be aware of emotions in the self and in others (Goleman in Lantieri & Goleman, 2008:18). A cognitive knowledge of emotions is therefore required for children to be aware of when an emotion is experienced, how an emotional experience influences thoughts and behaviour, and how to optimally apply emotional regulation strategies (Stegge & Terwogt, 2007:282).

The cognitive component of emotional awareness received attention in this study as a determining factor to evaluate the effect of the EA Programme on the cognitive abilities pertaining to emotional awareness. In other words, the study evaluated if the EA

Programme could promote the emotional awareness of children in middle childhood placed in a child and youth care centre by determining if the skills related to emotional awareness could be developed. Emotional awareness plays a central role in emotional competence and emotional regulation (Wranik et al., 2007:394). As mentioned in the previous discussion, this is regarded as specifically important for children placed in a child and youth care centre in the light of the unique challenges they face.

The empirical findings of the study indicate that the levels of emotional awareness in the comparison group were consistent from the pre- to the post-test. The positive effect of the EA programme on the levels of emotional awareness on the experimental group is confirmed by the fact that the experimental groups' level of emotional awareness increased by five percent (5%). This increase (5%) is significant when compared to the absence of an increase of emotional awareness in the comparison group, especially when considering the multiple risk factors and challenges present the respondents face in their specific context. The developer of the EA programme (Knoetze, 2012:207) recorded a 20% increase in the levels of emotional awareness of Grade 3 pupils after the EA Programme was implemented in an educational setting. The slighter increase in the current study could be attributed to risks and challenges related to the unique context of the child in the child and youth care centre (c.f. Brentro et al., 2009:35; Cicchetti & Ng, 2014:1197, 1215; Goodyear-Brown, 2010:28; Howe, 2005:13; Music, 2011:94).

The researcher, who also presented the EA Programme, observed that the participants who attended the programme were in general resistant to complete the more cognitive inclined activities. They required external motivation in tasks in which they were required to read, write or verbally give short speeches on topics. Willis (2011:157-158) studied the overall development of children in middle childhood placed in residential care and her findings corroborate the researcher's observation; the mentioned author found the children's vocabulary to be below average, while they demonstrated difficulties in concentration and completing tasks. From a Gestalt theoretical perspective, these challenges could be attributed to contact boundary disturbances, which prevent children to effectively make contact in the here and now (Blom, 2006:32; Knoetze, 2012:31; Oaklander, 2006:7). The researcher observed from her field notes that the respondents displayed introjection as a contact boundary disturbance as they internalised messages from the environment onto the self, as for example "I cannot do an oral speech" and "I am not good at writing" when facilitating reading, writing or verbal tasks (Blom, 2006:32). The researcher also observed that the respondents were prone to ascribe specific emotions onto others instead of owning the emotion themselves by stating for example that they do not get angry, but will then refer to another group member and state that the specific group member frequently gets angry.

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This contact boundary disturbance is known as projection. In essence, despite the presence of risk factors and contact boundary disturbances, the EA Programme had a positive effect on the participants' emotional awareness amidst their unique challenges and developmental characteristics.

This evidence supports sub-hypothesis one in that the EA Programme enhanced the levels of emotional awareness of the participants, who were children in middle childhood placed in a child and youth care centre.

The researcher agrees with Otto (2006:140) that children placed in residential care are in need of stimulation and interventions aimed at developing their emotional capacities. Previous traumatic experiences and the removal from their home environment may contribute to a disrupted sense of overall awareness and emotional awareness. The essential role of programmes and services, such as the EA Programme, aimed at enhancing the emotional awareness of children placed in child and youth care centres, is supported by the research findings.

3.5.3 The effectiveness of the Emotional Awarness Programme in a child and youth care centre

The discussion up to this point suggests that the Emotional Awareness Programme (EA Programme) had a positive effect on the emotional capabilities of the respondents in the experimental group. The specific emotional capabilities on which the EA Programme focused was to enhance the emotional awareness of children in middle childhood placed in a child and youth care centre.

The emotional difficulties and delays in development that are characteristic of children who have been placed in child and youth care centres in South Africa are highlighted by two local studies (Otto, 2006:147; Willis, 2011:178-179). Otto (2006:147) specifically notes that the child in middle childhood placed in a child and youth care centre exhibits the need for emotional stimulation as they lack emotional knowledge, insight and awareness.

However, delays in terms of their overall development as an effect of maltreatment needed to be considered when the participants were asked to complete cognitive tasks which they might experience as more challenging during the rendering of the EA Programme. The facilitator needed to normalise these tasks and present them in a way that did not remind the respondents of school. The possibility of manifestation of contact-boundary disturbances in terms of the Gestalt theoretical approach was also considered during the facilitation of the EA Programme.

The respondents were generally cooperative during the implementation of the EA Programme as well as the research process. They verbalised their enjoyment of the group sessions and the researcher observed their willingness and enthusiasm to attend the sessions. The respondents did however need extra motivation to complete activities that required them to read, write or prepare an oral presentation by themselves. The researcher presented these activities in a less threatening manner in that two or three children worked together on these activities to reach the objectives of the modules in the programme. In the view of the Gestalt theoretical framework this could be considered as resistance and is a normal part of change according to the layers of the personality. The researcher was able to effectively work through resistance and as the group sessions progressed the children were more willing to complete these linguistic activities on their own. A further motivational factor for presenting the EA Programme in a child and youth care centre is the respondents' positive experience of the programme and the opportunity to address insufficient contact making skills in children.

The EA Programme that was implemented in the study was developed for and applied in an educational setting (Knoetze, 2012:217). An objective of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the EA Programme in a different context; a child and youth care centre. The positive impact of the EA Programme on the emotional awareness of the respondents in the experimental group is an indication that the programme could be an effective intervention in a context which provides alternative care for children who were often exposed to trauma.

It is recognised that children being cared for in child and youth care centres most likely experienced trauma in their families of origin, as well as due to the placement in alternative care (Cowie, 2012:2; Howe, 2005:3; Kjelsberg & Nygren, 2004:19; Willis, 2011:29). Research indicates that trauma has a significant impact on brain functioning, which negatively affects the child's psychosocial functioning (Brendtro et al., 2009:32, 34; Cameron & Maginn, 2009:15; Goodyear-Brown, 2010:28; Music, 2011:203, 205-206). Due to the neurobiological changes in the brain as a result of trauma (Coates, 2010:395; Howe, 2005:12-13; Zillmer et al., 2008:260), the pervasive effects of trauma on the functioning of the child in a child and youth care centre cannot be overlooked.

A need for the development of emotional expression and regulation skills of children placed in child and youth care centres is therefore emphasised by the researcher, as these children exhibit severe challenges in this regard, which then negatively affect other domains of their functioning. The acquisition of an emotional vocabulary, knowledge and insight could allow these children to learn the skills to express their emotions more appropriately. The constructive expression of emotions could further provide them with an opportunity to gain

insight into their own traumatic pasts and subsequently into their own behaviour. The Gestalt concept of holism corroborates this assumption that other parts of functioning are influenced if one part is changed (Blom, 2006:23). In other words, enhancing emotional skills could have an impact on the total functioning of the child. The researcher is of the opinion that emotional awareness can form the groundwork for the further development and possible better future outcomes of children placed in child and youth care centres.

Evidently, the findings of the study endorse the relevance of presenting the EA Programme in a child and youth care centre. The research findings also indicate that the EA Programme can support youth care centres to meet the requirement stipulated in Sections 191 and 197 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005, which state that developmental programmes must be rendered by child and youth care centres.

The importance and relevance of emotional learning in the educational context is emphasised by Knoetze (2012:218) who, as the developer of the EA Programme, found an increase in emotional awareness after the experimental group in her study was exposed to the programme for only seven weeks. In the current study the respondents of the experimental group were exposed to the EA Programme for the duration of eight weeks. The researcher is of the opinion that more prolonged and more frequent exposure to the programme could have further advantageous effects for children in child and youth care centres.

3.6 SUMMARY

Chapter three commenced by giving an outline of the research methodology that was applied in the study, as well as the ethical considerations relevant to the research. The research findings were presented, focusing on the effect of an emotional awareness programme on the emotional awareness of a group of respondents in a child and youth care centre. Data was obtained by the means of a standardised measuring instrument, the LEAS-C, which was used for the pre- and post-test for the experimental and comparison group. For the purpose of data collection, the experimental group was exposed to an emotional awareness programme, developed by Knoetze (2012). The research findings indicate that the experimental group demonstrated an increase in the utilisation of higher level emotional words, an expansion in their emotional vocabulary, and higher levels of emotional awareness. These results confirmed the hypothesis for the research: If an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, then the level of emotional functioning of the children will be enhanced. The researcher will present conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the research, in Chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood within the context of a specific child and youth care centre. Emotional awareness is regarded as the starting point in the development of emotional intelligence and constructive emotional regulation skills. Emotional intelligence and emotional regulation are interrelated elements that form the basis for the emotional competencies that are needed to enhance children's psycho-social functioning. These skills play a role in the development of pro-social skills and the nurturing of meaningful social relationships. In other words, emotional competencies assist a person to navigate their social world successfully.

Children placed in child and youth care centres are specifically at risk to develop destructive and poor emotional expression and regulation skills. Their exposure to maltreatment before being admitted to the centre as well as their entry into alternative care have a significant impact on how these children interpret and respond to daily social interactions. Literature describes that maltreated children are hard-wired to react to stimuli according to a fight, flight or freeze response. Important cognitive processes whereby an analysis of emotional content of a situation and personal emotional experience are needed to generate constructive responses in everyday life. These processes are bypassed due to the neurobiological effects of trauma these children have been exposed to. In addition to the trauma they have been exposed to, the institutionalised caregiving environment offers restricted opportunities for sensitive emotional attunement in which parents usually play a vital role. The limited availability of a caregiver and children's complex emotional issues often translate into complicated and challenging behaviour, which can obstruct sensitive input from caregivers that develop emotional capacities in children.

This study emphasised the importance of emotional awareness as a basic skill to further develop other emotional capacities. The aim of the study, namely to evaluate an emotional awareness programme that was developed for children in middle childhood, was achieved by evaluating an already existing EA Programme (Knoetze, 2012) in accordance with the goal of the study, which was "to evaluate an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre in the North-West Province." The EA Programme was developed from the Gestalt theoretical framework and encompasses Gestalt play therapy principles and techniques in the activities of the program. Gestalt as a

theoretical framework also rendered itself as the most relevant point of departure for the study.

The specific objectives of the study were:

- To conceptualise emotional awareness theoretically with specific emphasis on children in middle childhood within a child and youth care centre;
- To evaluate whether an emotional awareness programme will enhance the ability of children in middle childhood to be in contact with their emotions;
- To evaluate whether an emotional awareness programme will increase the ability of children in middle childhood to discriminate between different emotions;
- To evaluate whether an emotional awareness programme will enhance the ability of children in middle childhood to verbalise and 'own' their emotions;
- To draw conclusions about the applicability of the EA Programme within a child and youth care centre.

Pertaining to objective one, three main concepts that were specifically relevant to this study were discussed in Chapter two. Extensive literature were reviewed on the three concepts, namely: emotional capacities related to emotional intelligence and emotional regulation with specific emphasis on the role of emotional awareness; the developmental phase of middle childhood; and the child placed in the child and youth care centre.

The implementation and evaluation of an emotional awareness programme as objectives two, three and four, were discussed as the research methodology, ethical considerations and empirical results in Chapter three. Conclusive findings and recommendations about the EA Programme receives attention in this chapter, addressing objective five.

A main hypothesis and three sub-hypotheses guided the interpretation of the findings of the study in evaluating whether the EA Programme was effective in enhancing the level of emotional functioning of the respondents. The main hypothesis was: If an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, then the level of emotional functioning of the children will be enhanced.

The sub-hypotheses were:

- If an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, their ability to be in contact with their emotions will be enhanced.

- If an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, their ability to discriminate between different emotions will increase.

- If an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, they will gain the ability to verbalise and "own" their emotions.

The researcher presents the following conclusions based on the findings of the study, as discussed in Chapter three, and the understanding of the phenomenon of emotional awareness gained from the literature review in Chapter two.

4.2 CONCLUSIONS

In order for the study to be finalised, the following conclusive statements can be made from the literature review and empirical findings:

- The Gestalt theoretical approach upholds the concept holism that views a child or person consisting of various interrelated parts and proposes that if one of the parts is altered, the person's whole being changes. The manner in which the person interacts with surroundings and within the inner self is by establishing contact, based on the person's awareness. The Gestalt concepts of holism and awareness were the most relevant concepts of this approach in the study. Holism highlighted the importance of considering multi-faceted aspects of the development of the child in middle childhood, and of contemplating contextual influences such as being exposed to trauma and the institutionalised caregiving environment, when viewing a child as a holistic being. A central objective of the research was to enhance the emotional awareness of respondents. Awareness is considered a central departure point of the Gestalt theoretical approach. Awareness is crucial for effective contact and self-regulation. Together, these two concepts indicate that enhancing one aspect of a child's functioning, namely emotional awareness, could in effect enhance the child's overall functioning within the self and within the environment.

    In the light of the above, the Gestalt approach served as the most suitable theoretical framework for the study as it allowed the researcher to focus on the child as a whole entity, thus the different developmental domains of children in middle childhood, as well as on the unique environmental influences of the child and youth care centre. According to the Gestalt theory, enhanced awareness supports the development of constructive organismic self-regulation. Children exposed to trauma and placed in institutions are

particularly at risk to display destructive self-regulation skills. The role that emotional awareness plays in effectively regulating one's emotions corroborates the main objective of the Gestalt theory.

- The research approach that was followed endorses the research study in the sense that the objectives as well as the ultimate goal of the study were obtained in the most ethical and objective manner possible. The quantitative method of enquiry rendered itself as an effective manner to execute the research study with. The quasi-experimental research design, with the inclusion of an experimental and a comparison group, and the use of a standardised measuring instrument enhanced the validity and reliability of the findings.

- The standardised measuring instrument, the LEAS-C (Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale for Children) developed by Bajgar and Lane (2003) is specifically constructed to quantify the levels of emotional awareness of children. The instrument is age-appropriate for children in middle childhood, as the questions are compiled on a level that is understandable and easy to complete for children. The questions are universal and appeal to children from different backgrounds. A version of the questionnaire that was translated into Afrikaans by the developer (Knoetze, 2012) of the EA Programme, was utilised as the respondents schooling language was Afrikaans.

Further, the questionnaires were completed as a group-administered questionnaire to create a similar atmosphere to all respondents and minimise the manipulation of test results. The children were also easily accessible at the same point in time and location; making the group-administered questionnaire time and cost effective. The literature in Chapter two suggests that children in institutionalised care struggle academically, thus the researcher was available during the administration of the questionnaire to clarify possible misunderstandings in such a way to minimise possibly influencing their responses and without disrupting the larger group.

These attributes of the LEAS-C as well as the group-administered completion of the pre- and post-tests, therefore support the empirical findings.

- The study focused specifically on middle childhood as a developmental stage. This stage marks the initiation of rational thought processes and children's ability to consider more than one point of view. The importance of children's cognitive abilities was considered during the study, as the respondents were required to be able to read and write on a certain level to be able to complete the questionnaire and participate in the EA Programme. Based on the sampling criteria for the study, the respondents were selected according to the requirement that they were grade three to six pupils in a

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mainstream Afrikaans school. These attributes of the respondents allowed the execution of the research to be effective. From the perspective of Erik Erikson's theory on psychosocial development, an essential task in middle childhood is to demonstrate a measure of competence. The cognitive abilities of children in middle childhood as well their inherent need to demonstrate competence, supported the relevance of an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood and played an important role in their participation in the programme.

Although the EA Programme has been developed taking into account the cognitive and psychosocial development of children in middle childhood, children in child and youth care settings may find some of the activities more challenging because of the effects of their exposure to trauma and placement in alternative care.

- Children placed in a child and youth care centre present with an urgent need to develop the skills to enhance their socio-emotional functioning. The normative functioning and the acquisition of emotional capacities of children in middle childhood are influenced by the specific context in which they develop. The contextual influences that were considered in this study is the impact of maltreatment and neglect as well as the placement in a child and youth care centre. Literature emphasises that children exposed to maltreatment are often at risk to develop inefficient and ineffective emotional capacities. The caregiving environment of a child and youth care centre also provides limited opportunities for the progression of emotional skills. Therefore, children being cared for in a child and youth care centre can greatly benefit from emotional awareness programmes that can support their acquisition of positive socio-emotional skills.

- Emotional awareness was a central aspect measured in this study. The overall levels of emotional awareness of the experimental group increased with five percent (5%) whilst the levels of emotional awareness of the comparison group were consistent from the pre- to the post-test. The EA Programme increased the levels of emotional awareness of the respondents in the experimental group, supporting the hypothesis of the study. This conclusion is indicative of the successful implementation of the EA Programme in the context of a child and youth care centre.

- The improvement of emotional awareness of the participants in the study might be indicative of further advantageous effects if children in a child and youth care centre have the chance of longer and more intensive exposure the EA Programme. The EA Programme was presented in two sessions per week, each one hour long, over a period of two months. Due to the effects of trauma and residential care on their psychosocial

functioning, children in child and youth care centres may need a longer exposure to the EA Programme in order to optimally acquire the benefits of the programme.

- The progress in terms of expression, understanding and regulation of emotions during the stage of middle childhood indicates the need for the attainment of more complex emotional skills specifically in this stage of development. The expansion of an emotional vocabulary and emotional language is a core component of functional emotional expression and effective emotional regulation skills. The EA Programme that was evaluated in the study facilitated the attainment of these skills of the participants that were exposed to the programme. The LEAS-C is structured to score feedback according to ascending levels of emotional content; level zero being a low response and level five the highest response. The research findings indicate that the frequency of higher emotional responses increased in the experimental group. Also, the variety of strong emotion words used to label experiences was more in the post-test than the pre-test for the experimental group, whilst the number of strong emotion words stayed the same in the comparison group. The objective of the EA Programme, to enhance the emotional functioning of the respondents, as stated in the main hypothesis for the study, was thus confirmed.

- The EA Programme enhanced the level of emotional functioning of the respondents. Section 191 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 stipulates that programmes must be rendered for children residing in child and youth care centres. These programmes should focus on various developmental domains namely the physical, mental and emotional development of the child, and consider the child as a holistic entity. Based on the confirmed effectiveness of the EA Programme in this study, the programme can be used to attain the requirement of the Children's Act in terms of programmes for children in child and youth care centres.

- The research findings confirmed the main hypothesis as well as the three sub-hypotheses of the study. The main hypothesis of the research stated that, if an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, then the level of emotional functioning of the children will be enhanced. This hypothesis was confirmed by the study.

  The following outcomes were found regarding the sup-hypotheses set by the study:

  o If an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, their ability to be in contact with their emotions will be enhanced. The research results verified that the EA Programme

improved the respondents' ability to be in contact with their emotions as they displayed higher levels of emotional awareness after exposure to the programme. Emotional awareness underlies children's ability to be contact with their emotions.

o If an emotional awareness programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, their ability to discriminate between different emotions will increase. The respondents were able to give more complex and differentiated emotional responses, higher level responses according to the LEAS-C, after completing the EA Programme; proving this sub-hypothesis to be true.

o If an EA Programme is implemented for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre, they will gain the ability to verbalise and "own" their emotions. The empirical findings suggest that the respondents who were exposed to the programme demonstrated a more elaborate emotional vocabulary and an increased frequency in which they applied stronger emotion words to express themselves.

The verification of the main and sub-hypotheses proves that the EA Programme can be applied as an effective intervention in the context of a child- a child- and youth care centre. Considering the theoretical underpinning of emotional awareness, it is argued that the children acquired more constructive emotional regulation skills and emotional intelligence. The focus on emotional awareness to develop other emotional capacities of children in a child- and youth care centre can promote their holistic functioning in order to assist them to achieve better outcomes.

- It can be concluded that the contributions of the study is meaningful in the area of social work service delivery to children being cared for in child and youth care centre settings.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations can be made considering the empirical results of the study:

- The empirical findings suggest that the EA Programme (Knoetze, 2012) can be an effective intervention to enhance the emotional awareness of children in middle childhood placed in a child and youth care centre. Enhanced emotional awareness, as a core element of emotional intelligence, could contribute to the socio-emotional capacities and functioning of children in these settings. It is recommended that the EA Programme

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be implemented and evaluated at child and youth care centres within the wider South African context.

- The exposure to the EA Programme over a period of eight weeks resulted in respondents demonstrating higher levels of emotional awareness and a more advanced emotional vocabulary. It is recommended that children in a child and youth care centre should have a longer period of exposure to the programme, given the effects of trauma and alternative care on their functioning. In the same vein, it is recommended that the programme be presented in small groups and that the activities that require reading and writing is facilitated in a non-threatening manner to minimise the chances of resistance when children may find it too challenging when requested to read or write with other group members.

- As the programme focused on children in middle childhood, it is recommended that the EA Programme be evaluated with younger children as well as with adolescents. This could lead to the adaptation of the programme for children of different ages.

- It is recommended that the EA Programme be evaluated child and youth care centre settings with respondents that speak languages relevant to the South African context, other than English and Afrikaans.

- As foster care is another long term alternative care option for children, the researcher recommends that the EA Programme also be evaluated for children who are placed in foster care.

- This study evaluated an emotional awareness programme by utilising a quasi-experimental design, namely the comparison group pre- and post-test design, with no random selection. To further evaluate the effectiveness of the programme, it is recommended that randomised longitudinal studies be conducted to establish the long-term effects of the EA Programme on the levels of emotional awareness by applying a true experimental design.

- In this study the researcher noted the impact of the caregiving environment on children's emotional development. In the context of a child and youth care centre, the severe impact of trauma and institutionalisation on children's behaviour and emotional functioning is significant and relevant. The researcher recommends that social workers and child and youth care workers be informed on the impact of trauma on children and trained in terms of how they can support and nurture the emotional and behavioural capacities of these children. Further research can also be undertaken on the effect of

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the care-giving context within a child and youth care centre on the development of emotional capacities of children who are residents.

4.4 ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

4.4.1 Goal

The goal of this study was to evaluate an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre in the North-West Province. The EA Programme (Knoetze, 2012) was previously implemented in a school setting. This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of the EA Programme when applied within a child and youth care centre. The EA Programme was presented to children between the ages of seven to 12 years and enrolled in grades three to six in mainstream Afrikaans education, all residing at a child and youth care centre in the North-West Province. A quasi-experimental research design was followed to measure the effect of the EA Programme on the levels of emotional awareness of respondents who were assigned to either an experimental or comparison group. Both groups completed a pre- and post test to measure their levels of emotional awareness and the experimental group was exposed to the EA Programme after the pre-test. The empirical findings indicate that the EA Programme had a positive effect on the levels of emotional awareness and emotional expression skills of the participants in the experimental group. The research substantiated that the EA Programme was effective in enhancing the emotional awareness of children in middle childhood in a specific child and youth care centre in the North-West Province; thereby achieving the goal of the study to evaluate the specific programme.

4.4.2 Objectives

Each objective of the study as well as the extent in which it was accomplished is discussed:

- Objective one: To conceptualise emotional awareness theoretically with specific emphasis on children in middle childhood within a child and youth care centre.

This objective was obtained by providing a literature review in Chapter two on emotional awareness, middle childhood as a developmental phase as well as the specific context of a child placed in a child and youth care centre.

- Objective two: To evaluate whether an emotional awareness programme will enhance the ability of children in middle childhood to be in contact with their emotions.

The research results as given in Chapter three indicate that the levels of emotional awareness, in other words the ability of the experimental group to be in contact with their own emotions, increased. Objective two of the study was thereby achieved.

- Objective three: To evaluate whether an emotional awareness programme will increase the ability of children in middle childhood to discriminate between different emotions.

Discriminating between different emotions entails that respondents are able to give feedback in terms of more complex emotional responses. Objective three was achieved in the sense that Chapter three demonstrates how respondents exposed to the EA Programme were able to provide more differentiated emotional feedback.

- Objective four: To evaluate whether an emotional awareness programme will enhance the ability of children in middle childhood to verbalise and 'own' their emotions.

The respondents of the experimental group demonstrated an increase in their emotional vocabulary in terms of frequency as well as the variety of words they used to describe emotional states. This finding was discussed in Chapter three, and the objective was thus achieved.

- Objective 5: To draw conclusions about the applicability of the EA Programme within a child and youth care centre.

This objective is achieved by the conclusions and recommendations the researcher presented in Chapter four.

4.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Emotional awareness forms an integral part in the development of emotional capacities that promote pro-social behaviour and the development of constructive problem solving skills. Emotional awareness is regarded as the foundation of acquiring emotional intelligence and the ability to effectively regulate one's own emotions. In the developmental phase of middle childhood children attain the cognitive abilities to understand their own emotions and the emotions of others. This developmental phase is specifically relevant to focus on the acquisition of emotional capacities, which also positively impact other domains of functioning.

Children placed in child and youth care centres are specifically at risk to present with ineffective emotional skills due to previous exposure to trauma and the placement in alternative care. Providing services that aim to develop the emotional awareness of children in middle childhood residing in a child and youth care centres, could address the emotional

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and behavioural problems these children are likely to portray and thus address a significant issue in social work service delivery.

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APPENDIX A

EMOTIONAL AWARENESS PROGRAM

KNOETZE (2012:140-162)

7.3 EMOTIONAL AWARENESS PROGRAM

The Emotional Awareness Program is developed to address different emotional aspects that are essential for the expansion of emotional knowledge in order to grow to be emotionally aware. The researcher identified aspects most applicable for developing insight regarding emotion and its effect on the daily life of the learner in the middle childhood phase. These aspects aim to achieve six main goals, namely to:

Build and strengthen the relationship between the educator and the learners

An environment where the learners feel that they are in a safe and secure connection within their relationship with their educator is beneficial for the learners to develop emotional awareness.

Supply knowledge of different emotions

Emotional awareness is achieved when a learner is able to distinguish between different emotions and possesses the ability to associate different experiences with the specific emotion that would accompany it. Knowledge of different emotions and their consequences is thus the first step in acquiring emotional awareness.

Obtain emotional language

Emotional language enables learners to express the feelings that they feel inside but are not able to describe due to a lack of emotional vocabulary. Emotions of emotional trauma need to be expressed in some way and if not through the correct means, it would be expressed through deviant behaviour, aggressiveness, overreacting in emotional situations.

Develop and show empathy

When learners are acquainted with different emotions and their effect on their lives, they are also able to recognize and understand these emotions in others. It is therefore important to have them understand what empathy is and how it is a useful asset in one's relation with others.

Develop emotional regulation

The mere knowledge of emotion and the ability to become aware of certain emotions in one's daily life would not benefit much without the ability to regulate these emotions to one's best interest. This entails the ability to assess a situation and anticipate the emotion which it might bring about. The emotional knowledge that one already has will serve as a guide to the manner in which the emotion is to be handled, but emotional regulation will determine whether the learners would be able to use this knowledge to their advantage and to the best interest of the situation.

Acquire and expand problem solving and decision making skills

Emotions usually occur along with certain decisions or problems. Problem solving or decision-making techniques are hence hand in hand with emotional growth and the expansion of emotional knowledge. The program therefore focuses on this skill and attempts to teach the learners how to address problems, make decisions and acquire solutions to their problems.

These goals were integrated into seven different modules with different activities aiming to achieve the goal of the module, namely:

- Build and strengthen relationship with learners.
- Knowledge of different emotions.
- Emotional language.
- Empathy.
- Emotional regulation.
- Problem solving.
- Summarizing and termination.

The remaining part of this chapter focuses thus on the seven modules, their activities and content as a translated summary of the actual program.

7.3.1   Module 1: Build and Strengthen Relationship with Learners

Activity 1.1:	"Who am I?"
Goal of activity	Learners can internalise much more and much quicker if it is presented within a relationship and atmosphere where they feel secure and safe. In order to achieve this it is therefore necessary that learners come to the understanding that they are recognized as worthy and hold a significant and special place within their class. This module thus fertilizes the soil for the seeds that are to be sown during the course of the program. Learners are directed to discover their own uniqueness and they experience that others take note of them, and are interested in them in their effort to get to know each other better.
Activity	Each learner has a turn to be "friend of the day". This entails a series of activities, which introduces the learner to the class, focussing on deeper aspects than the basic name, age, address or academic achievement. A form with questions on interests and other relevant matters is to be completed by each learner. A photo of "friend of the day" is then attached to the form and displayed on a bulletin board for that day. The rest of the class also has the task of gathering information from the "friend of the day" with the result that the learner is the main attraction for that day and experiences that he/she is important and special to the rest of the class.
Material needed	"Who am I?" checklist. Photo of each learner. Instructions to the educator to conduct the discussion on "friend of the day".
Activity 1.2:	Class Compliments
Goal of activity	Solidarity and a sense of belonging are of utmost importance to learners in this developmental phase. If learners experience themselves to be part of a successful group (class), the positive feeling of being successful and worthy will spill over to the individual's mindset regarding his/her behaviour, involvement and input. The goal of this activity is thus to promote group cohesion through highlighting the class' collective successes and achievements. This joint recognition thus aims at the underlying goal, namely individual self-confidence and contentment with oneself.
Activity	The educator and other personnel make an effort to compliment the class

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	different emotions and utilizing it in the correct context.
Activity	Each learner receives an Emotion Bingo Card and ten individual Emotion Labels, which they pick out of a bag without peeping at the pictures. The educator calls one emotion at a time if a learner has that emotion, it is placed on the Bingo Card. The first learner who has four in a row (horizontally, vertically or across) calls "BINGO". That learner then gets to answer a question on the emotion that completed his "BINGO". The educator asks the questions from the "Bingo question card" supplied to her.
Material needed	Bingo play set. Instructions to the educator.
Activity 2.2	**Memory match**
Goal of activity	To recognize emotions and group them together. This activity causes the learners to recap on the new emotion words that were taught to them and the acquired knowledge is then reinforced through a fun game.
Activity	Learners play this game in pairs. Each pair receives a Memory Match play set and the rules. The educator explains the objective of the game to the learners.
Material needed	Memory match play set. Instructions to the educator.
Activity 2.3	**Speech**
Goal of activity	Emotions were identified, recognized, reinforced and inculcated. It is now expected that learners should be able to expand on emotions and appropriately discuss an emotion, as it would occur in daily life. Learners are thus guided to own the knowledge that they have obtained and to apply that knowledge according to their comprehension of the situation that is chosen for the speech. Parents usually assist in the preparation for speeches and discussions regarding emotions and obtained knowledge between learner and parent are also aroused through this activity.
Activity	Each learner draws a card from a bag with 30 cards, each with a different

	on different aspects conveying their good behaviour, exemplary work in class, academic achievement, manners, obedience. A chart for this purpose is affixed in the class and learners are encouraged to write the compliments they get on the chart. This activity is to be preceded with an explanation by the educator that he/she wanted them to share in the pride that he/she experiences when her class is complimented by the headmaster.
Material needed	"Class Compliment Chart". Instructions to the educator.
Activity 1.3:	**My rights in class**
Goal of activity	To strengthen relationships in class through highlighting the concept of personal rights and that everyone is allowed to expect respect, but also carries the responsibility to respect the rights of others.
Activity	A story about an animal classroom, where everything went wrong due to monkey's doing, is read to the class. The story hints to specific rights and responsibilities, which the educator will utilize afterwards to direct the class in compiling a set of "rights" for the learners in the class.
Material needed	"My rights in class" chart. "Chaos in animal land" story. Instructions to the educator.

7.3.2 Module 2: Knowledge of Different Emotions

Activity 2.1	**Emotion Bingo**
Goal of activity	In order to develop emotional awareness one needs to be able to distinguish between different emotions. It is further necessary to acquire the ability to associate different experiences with the emotion it would bring about. This activity focuses thus on acquiring the correct word for

	List of questions. Instructions to the educator.
Activity 3.2	**Emotional vocabulary**
Goal of activity	Bruce (2010:6) defines emotional literacy, as "a developed awareness and understanding of one's own and the emotions of others. This information guides our thinking and is expressed in our communication and thinking". Developing emotional language has benefits at school and at home. Acquiring emotional vocabulary enables learners to efficiently express themselves and therefore aids their overall perception of themselves, their friends, the world around them and their position within this environment in which they have a part to play.
Activity	Flashcards containing different emotions portrayed in different situations where the emotion might be experienced are used to guide the learners in identifying the emotion involved. The aim is to find emotion words to replace words like sad, glad, good, bad. E.g, glad to ecstatic, bad to dreadful, good to fabulous and sad to gloomy. Each learner chooses one positive and one negative emotion with the assignment to search for situations where these emotions occur, during the day. A paragraph is then written on the next day on the emotion and the situation where it occurred.
Material needed	Flashcards on emotional situations. Instructions to the educator.
Activity 3.3	**Charades**
Goal of activity	Expand emotional vocabulary.
Activity	Emotion picture cards are drawn from a bag and the learners are expected to determine the emotion depicted according to the knowledge attained with the flashcard activity. The emotion is then demonstrated with a game of charades. They are thus not allowed to demonstrate elementary emotions like sad, glad or bad – they need to utilize higher-level vocabulary. The person who correctly determines the emotion has the next turn.

	emotion on it. The learner prepares a speech on the topic, "The day when I was _____". E.g, the day when I was sad / the day when I was ashamed / the day when I was confused.
Material needed	Topic cards. Instruction to the educator.

7.3.3 Module 3: Emotional Language

Activity 3.1	**"Zaki's balloon full of mixed up feelings"**
Goal of activity	Developing the learner's emotional language with a broadened emotional vocabulary. This is achieved through the identification of emotions (that they had already learned) in a story. The aim is to develop the ability to identify these emotions in the context of a practical example and weigh the positive and negative traits of the emotion. This promotes the learners' comfort with the emotional language being taught to them.
Activity	Read the story of "Zaki's balloon full of mixed up feelings" and discuss the learner's feelings regarding the story (the educator helps organize their thoughts and puts them on the right track). Read the story again and this time the learners have to write all the emotions they can identify down. A competition can determine who gets the most with a small prize (toffee) for the winner. The educator conducts a listening test afterwards and incorporates more questions on the emotions involved and the context in which they were experienced. This serves as the normal listening test for the week but also reinforces the knowledge regarding emotions.
Material needed	Story.

| Material needed | Discussion material for the educator. Empathy pictures. |

| **Activity 4.2** | **Development of empathic feelings** *"Bessie must stay dry"* |

| **Goal of activity** | To illustrate a practical example of empathy in a manner easily comprehendible to kids of this age. The goal of this activity is for the learners to develop an understanding of empathy and recognition thereof, should they experience it in their lives. |

| **Activity** | The story is read to the class. This story is about a family dog that became old and frail and the attempts of a boy to ensure that she stays dry when she has to go out. His planning regarding this originates from his own discomfort in when he finds himself in wet weather. This story thus illustrates the concept of attempting to feel what another is feeling and reacting accordingly to assist them.

A list of questions is discussed afterwards and the educator ensures that the class comprehends and buys into the idea of being empathetic to others. |

| **Material needed** | Story. Instructions to the educator. |

| **Activity 4.3** | **Reinforcement – Construct sentences** |

| **Goal of activity** | Learners in this developmental phase require sufficient repetition of a concept before owning it and incorporating it into their daily lives. This activity's goal is to furnish the learners with the opportunity to put the information they received concerning empathy to practice from their own viewpoint and disposition regarding it. This activity also serves as a measuring instrument for the educator to determine whether the learners mastered the concept of empathy and to evaluate their ability to feel and show empathy. |

| **Activity** | Learners construct sentences on five themes provided to them on a |

| **Material needed** | Emotion picture cards. Instructions to the educator. |

7.3.4 Module 4: Empathy

This module is introduced with additional information to the educator on empathy and its value and essence in the lives of children. It further furnishes indicators on the empathic mindset of the educator in teaching this ability to learners.

| **Activity 4.1** | **Understanding emotions of others.** **Facial expression and body language** |

| **Goal of activity** | Introduce the concept of empathy and lay the foundation for the notion of how empathic reactions have value for oneself and others. |

| **Activity** | Explanation of what empathy entails with specific reference to four aspects, namely:
- the meaning of the word empathy;
- the ability to put oneself in the shoes of another;
- the capacity to attempt to understand what another person is feeling; and
- the correct reaction to another person's feelings according to the ability to understand what he/she is feeling.

This is followed by a discussion where the learners get to brainstorm their ideas on how to know what another person is feeling without that person telling what he/she is feeling.

When the learners had enough time to deliberate on this aspect they each receive a picture in which a situation is depicted where a person is comforted by another in an empathic manner. Each learner has to write a story of what happens in the picture and concludes the story by stating the best empathic reaction for the situation. |

	empathetically towards the person experiencing the problem.
	It is explained to the learners that they showed empathy in this activity and they are encouraged to keep on practicing this ability in situations around them.
Activity	Learners prepare a speech on one of three provided topics. Example: You were best friends with Diana/David since you were both in pre-school. From the beginning of this year, you also became friends with Anne/Aaron. Yesterday Diana/David told you that she does not like Annie/Aaron and that you should not be friends with him/her either. Annie/Aaron sits alone on the playground during breaks and looks very sad due to this decision. What are you going to do?
Material needed	Emotions in bag. Emotion situations for group activity. Speech topics. Instructions to the educator.

7.3.5   Module 5: Emotional Regulation

Emotional regulation is the ability to express a variety of emotions in the correct context and to react in the correct manner on each emotion. Learners who have emotional regulation abilities easily adapt to new situations or to people unknown to them. They consist of high frustration tolerance, are able to control their negative emotions and take the needs and preferences of others into consideration. Learners without emotional regulation abilities display limited emotion, signs of depression, excessive tearfulness, an inability to cope, excessive worrying and behaviour resulting from intense emotions (Wittmer, Doll & Strain in Charlesworth, 2010:327).

Identifying verbal expressions of emotions is the first step in acquiring emotional regulation. Learners may fail to express their emotions verbally because of their incorrect notion that other

	sentence sheet. These themes are compiled to encourage reactions where learners place themselves in another person's shoes. It will therefore evidently elicit empathic sentences from learners who understood empathic feelings and reactions from earlier activities.
Material needed	Sentence sheet with themes. Instructions to the educator.
Activity 4.4	**Empathy modeling and speech**
Goal of activity	Bodily awareness guides learners to self-knowledge and moves them to inner control and a better grasp on assertiveness and insight. This activity combines two aspects, namely namely further development of empathic abilities and bodily awareness techniques namely further development of empathic abilities through bodily awareness techniques. Different skills are thus utilized and a stronger sense of mastering is obtained.
Pre-activity	Learners choose an emotion card from a bag and demonstrate it to the class by only making use of facial expressions and body language (e.g. not only a depressed face but also hanging shoulders and an arched back). The educator instructs learners to demonstrate with their face and body how they feel. The rest of the class guess what is being demonstrated. When all the basic emotions were covered, the educator encourages learners to expand the emotions to higher-level feeling words, e.g. unhappy to miserable, gloomy, despondent or hopeless. When this is mastered the rest of the class stop guessing what the emotion is, but provide a reaction which will help, support or acknowledge the problem situation or troubled person. Learners divide into five groups and each group receives a situation to portray. The situation is to be played out and the group is to react

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people obviously know what they are thinking. They further do not possess the emotional vocabulary in which to express themselves or are too unsure of themselves to make use of the emotional vocabulary they do have (Kostelnik, Whiren, Soderman, Stein & Gregory, 2002:234).

Educators can motivate learners to express emotions in an acceptable manner by reminding them to make use of words that explain their feelings and needs. Phrases which can be utilized in emotional situations can be suggested by the use of examples from their frame of reference.

Regulating negative emotions, especially the potentially destructive and aggressive ones, is important in different facets of functioning. It should also be noted that the mere suppression of a negative emotion is not the desirable way to handle emotions as it usually brings about additional, negative repercussions. Emotional regulation is hence important to equip the individual with the capacity for prolonged healthy emotional discharge. It also aids in determining when emotional discharge is heading in a direction that will have negative consequences for themselves or others. It has been found that a well-adapted person should be able to experience an emotion like anger and express it efficiently. The skill that needs to be mastered is thus to be able to determine when and under which circumstances anger can be expressed and which form of expression is acceptable. This important concept of emotional regulation is thus to develop the ability to regulate unacceptable, impulsive behaviour when a strong emotion is experienced in an effort to control that emotion and the consequences thereof.

Activity 5.1	Visualisation
Goal of activity	Emotional regulation is a complicated concept for learners of this age but it is necessary and possible for them to take note of it. This activity thus aims to introduce learners to the idea behind emotional regulation and to explain it in a practical manner.
Activity	This activity should be performed in a place where it will not be interrupted, for example by someone entering the classroom or the intercom going off. The rugby field, gym class or tennis court away from the normal school activities would be a sensible choice.
	There must be enough space for everyone to lie down without touching each other. They close their eyes and listen while the provided text is read to them in a very calm, collected and tone-measured voice. This text commences with instructions aiming to relax the body and focus the learners' attention on the voice they hear and the content of the text. They are then systematically led into visualising the text that is read. The aim is that they experience this narrative as if they are experiencing it in real life. After the visualisation exercise is through, the activity is concluded with a discussion with prescribed questions, which aims to reinforce the concept of being in charge of emotions if one chooses to be. An uncomplicated explanation is given. This is then linked to the visualisation where the learner experienced the uneasy effect of being out of control when hit by a wave in the ocean. This is then compared to the follow-up in the visualisation and the feeling of mastering when the knowledge of the wave's strength was utilized to stand firm and strong against it. Because the wave's capability was known, the learner was not caught off guard, thrown down and hurt. The above is then compared to the way an emotional situation is handled and how this visualisation experience can serve as an example of preparing oneself to have emotional regulation abilities. The learners receive an activity where they have to sort nine pictures in the correct order to indicate the process of gaining control over a situation which was previously unknown – in other words acquiring control over the wave and control over emotional situations: "emotional regulation".
Material needed	Visualisation text. Clarification to draw the link between visualisation and emotional regulation. Pictures to reinforce the activity's message.

	Enact the incident on the flashcard by playing out a reaction to the event as if one knows and understands the emotion, and is prepared to handle it.
Material needed	Instructions to the educator and learner regarding the water bottle activity. Flashcards.
Activity 5.3	**Rehearsing emotional regulation in practice**
Goal of activity	Emotional regulation was illustrated on the learners' level and they were also involved in a situation that depicted the advantage of regulating emotions. They were further personally included when they role-played emotional regulation within certain prescribed situations. This activity thus aims to put the learners to the challenge of implementing the whole process of emotional awareness by recognising emotions, analysing them and reacting with emotional regulation (to it).
Activity	Distribute the "Win the Wave" worksheet. The learners are instructed to identify incidents where they or someone else was knocked over by the "wave" and they have to come up with a better reaction or solution to that problem. The other side of the worksheet is for incidents or situations where they or someone else was able to see the "wave" that was approaching and reacted with a plan (emotional regulation) and therefore "won the wave". This activity is to be done over two school days or during a weekend at home. The learners can be encouraged to educate the rest of the family on how to see the wave of emotions when it approaches and how to keep standing through it. This provides the opportunity for the educator to recap the steps with them when giving the assignment. Explaining this at home is a further method of repetition for the learners and will aid their perception and insight regarding it.
Material needed	Win the wave worksheet. Instructions to the educator.

Activity 5.2	**Reinforcement of concept**
Goal of activity	A practical experience of uncontrolled emotion. This activity aims to reinforce the content of the previous activity.
Activity	The educator negotiates with one learner to act out a prescribed event, where the learner overreacts to a bottle of water that is accidentally spilled. What to do and say and how to handle the situation is prescribed and planned in such a manner that the rest of the class would experience feelings of disbelief, dismay and maybe even panic as a result of this behaviour. The designated learner runs out of the class as if he/she cannot handle the situation any further. When the learner returns later on, a similar incident occurs and the learner then handles the situation with assertiveness, emotional control and awareness, in total contrast to the previous behaviour. The educator then informs the class that this was a performance and not the learners' true reaction. A link is drawn to the visualisation exercise and the content that was taught regarding the ability to control and regulate emotions. The whole incident is analysed through specific questions to the learners and the two different reactions of the "actor" are discussed. Their feelings and experiences during the enactment are examined to illustrate the value of emotional regulation for oneself and with regard to one's relationships. The learners are divided into groups of three to four pupils. Flashcards that illustrate emotional incidents are then given to each group with the instruction to construct a role-play. The role-play should have two parts: Enact the incident on the flashcard by playing out an unmitigated reaction to the event.

and apply it.
- Evaluate the outcome/solution and if unsuccessful go back to step two.

These steps are then also reformulated in child-friendly language (in the program) with descriptions of what it entails and with a graphic presentation in the form of "The decision making tree". It is further also linked to the figure building activity – for thorough comprehension by the learners.

Solution

Plans & Decisions

Problem

The educator draws 'n rough sketch of the decision-making tree on the black board and explains that this is an easy way to remember the steps to problem solving. The idea is that a problem, which occurs in the roots of the tree, will have an effect on the branches and leaves of the tree when the problem is transported to them via the trunk. A problem (roots) should thus be addressed through plans and decisions (trunk) to provide solutions (healthy branches and leaves).

The educator works on two or three examples of problem solving with the learners in the form of a class discussion.

- Example in child-friendly language
  What is the problem?: My dog is lost
- Plans that may solve this problem:

7.3.6	Module 6: Problem Solving and Decision Making

Activity 6.1	Generate a problem
Goal of activity	This simple activity aims to highlight that potential problems should be dismantled logically and systematically to understand it better before attempting to solve it. The idea is that a systematic approach to a problem promotes solving the problem. If there is no plan or method in the way a problem is approached, the probability of solving it successfully is limited. Emotions play an important role in problem solving. One finds that learners with weak emotional associations find it hard to make even undemanding decisions, for they are uncertain about how their choice would make them feel. This activity is a practical introduction to the systematic approach to a problem in order to highlight the process of problem solving.
Activity	Learners divide into groups of five or six learners. Each group receives a pre-built figurine with the instruction to observe it and then take it apart. They most probably will not pay much attention to the way it was constructed and where each part fits. When they are finished, they are instructed to rebuild it to the exact figurine that they received. The learners will attempt to rebuild it correctly but will most likely be unsuccessful. If they realize that they cannot succeed or that it has pieces left over, they are introduced to the correct process of approaching a problem or decision in contrast to just jumping in and taking unmitigated steps. The correct process is as follows: - Identify the problem - Generate solutions - Evaluate possible solutions and decide on the best plan of action

	idea is to put the steps in problem solving in figurative description and reiterate the "problem solving tree".
	Step 1: Identify the problem (roots)
	Step 2: Devise plans (trunk)
	Decide on the best plan and implement it (trunk transport plan to branches and leaves)
	Step 3: Solution (branches and leaves grow, and the tree is happy and healthy, but if not go back to step 2)
Material needed	The story of Maraai Maroela tree. Poster of "The decision making tree." Instructions to the educator.
Activity 6.3	Assess problem solving skills
Goal of activity	Assess the learners' problem-solving skills and their ability to apply it.
Activity	Each learner receives a worksheet with the problem solving steps. They will be solving three problems with this:
	1st: A fictional problem – guided by the educator.
	2nd: A problem that they have personally experienced previously maybe with friends, bad test results, friction at home.
	3rd: An example problem they go search for at home, in break time or amongst their friends.
Material needed	Worksheets. Instructions to the educator.

	Go search all the dog's hiding places. Ask the neighbours if they saw the dog. Put notices of your lost dog in the neighbourhood
	• Decide on the best plan for your problem and implement your decision:
	You realize that the dog has only been gone for a very short time and may therefore not be too far away. You look under the bed, in the cupboard, in the dirty washing and behind the T.V, but still cannot find him.
	• Think about this solution, if it did not solve your problem – go back to step 2:
	You thought the dog was in the house but did not find him there, so you need to try another plan. The learner goes back to his/her plans and go on to his/her second plan, "go ask the neighbours". The neighbours did see him being hit by a car. He was not hurt badly, but it seemed like his leg was broken. The driver stopped and drove away with the dog, so they advise him/her to check with the vet. The learner contacts the animal clinic and they indicate that a dog with a broken leg was delivered to them. The learner's parents take him/her to the vet and he/she finds the dog. PROBLEM SOLVED!
Material needed	Figurine to take apart and rebuild. Poster of decision making tree. Instructions to the educator.
Activity 6.2	Problem solving skills
Goal of activity	Learners are guided to make decisions in the correct manner to emphasize the steps in problem solving.
Activity	The story of Maraai Maroela tree is read to the learners and the concept of problem solving is discussed according to the content of the story. The

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7.3.7	Module 7: Summarizing and termination
Activity 7.1	**Revision of different emotions**
Goal of activity	Revision of the emotions that were learned and reinforcing the different meanings and experiences that are linked to each of them.
Activity	Guide the learners in their attempt to name as many emotions as possible and thereafter provide short explanations of what each emotion entails. The learners are guided past the elementary emotions like angry, scared, sad, glad and happy. The aim is to broaden their focus to more complicated and complex emotional experiences, like: • disappointed – I got bad marks in a test • anxious – there is a noise outside my window • betrayed – my brother told my mom that I broke a glass • surprise – grandma came to visit unexpectedly • humiliated – I fell in front of the other kids and they laughed at me • concerned – my dog is ill • tolerant – I listen patiently to my friends' daily complaint about her sandwiches • inferior – a educator said to me that I am the naughtiest kid in her class • affectionate – I think how much I love my grandma • excited – we're going on holiday • envious – my friend invites another girl to play with us and I am scared that she would push me aside The activity further aims to enhance the comprehension of learners regarding the vast difference between the ways your body experience different emotions. The learners write the emotions that they can recall on the worksheet "Emotions for smart kids" and add a situation which would evoke the emotion in the column provided for it. In the next activity the learners receive the worksheet "Emotions in colour". The learners are guided to allow themselves to experience the bodily sensation each of these situations brings about. They are led to feel as if they are really giving a loving hug to mom and therefore experience the warm loving feeling it brings about. The "emotions in colour" worksheet has different emotions written in different fonts. After the learners experienced the emotion according to the instructions provided in the program they choose the emotion in the font that best fits the experience that the emotion brought about. The word is then coloured in the colour that the learner feels goes well with the emotion. In this manner the right brain is incorporated in settling this emotion and its bodily effect for the learner. This will further prepare them not to feel overwhelmed when specific emotions are experienced in future. Each emotion is dealt with separately as prescribed in the program.
Material needed	"Emotions for smart kids" worksheet. "Emotions in colour" worksheet. Instructions from program.
Activity 7.2	**Revision of different emotions**
Goal of activity	Emphasize higher level emotions.
Activity	Learners divide into pairs and play "Your face – my face" with the aids and instructions provided in the program. This game analyses the learners' knowledge of different emotions and their ability to demonstrate and describe it correctly. This is done through a fun game, which actively involves every learner and serves as a measuring instrument for the educator to determine if the emotions are correctly understood and incorporated by the learners.

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Material needed	"Your face – my face" game. Instructions in program.
Activity 7.3	**Revision**
Goal of activity	Evaluate the learners' ability to match higher-level emotions correctly.
Activity	Each learner receives a form with different emotion words to cut out. The form also contains a list of different emotional events. The learners need to match the emotion that would be the result of the event in the list, correctly. Another activity in the same manner is also included in this session. A discussion of the correct answers follows; there will be instances where different emotions will be applicable to the same situation – depending on the learners own experience of it. The aim is that learners should display a thorough comprehension of the emotional effect of these practical situations and the specific emotions accompanying it.
Material needed	Emotional awareness checklist A and B. Instructions to the educator.

7.4 SUMMARY

The emotional awareness program is developed in language and with activities that can be utilized for learners from grade one to grade seven. Younger learners will only spend more time on every activity and handle it at a slower pace where older learners will be able to grasp the concepts much faster. The educator involved will also present the program to older learners in a different manner than it is presented to younger learners.

The Emotional Awareness Program covers six aspects which promote emotional growth and abilities and which aim to guide the learners to enhanced emotional awareness. The program was developed in its current form with features to enable the researcher to measure the learners' progress and to fit into a given time frame. It was therefore limited to a seven-week programme,

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APPENDIX B

LEVELS OF EMOTIONAL
AWARENESS FOR CHILDREN
(LEAS-C)

Name: _____

Male: _____ Female: _____

Age: _____

Grade: _____ School: _____

Today's date: _____/_____/_____

Instructions

On the following page certain situations are described. There are two people involved in every situation - you and another person. Please describe how you would feel in the situation. Then describe how you think the other person would feel. You must use the word "feel" in your answer. It does not matter if your answer is short or long, and it does not matter if you make spelling mistakes. There is no right or wrong answer. All you must remember is to write about is how you and the other person would feel.

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1. You and your friend run an important race for which you have both practiced for a long time. When you are almost at the winning line you sprain your ankle, fall on the ground and cannot run any further.

   How will you feel?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   How will your friend feel?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. You and your mother come home in the evening. When you turn in to your street you see fire engines parked close to your house.

   How would you feel?

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

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How would your mother feel?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. You and your friend decide to save your pocket money to buy something special. A few days later your friend tells you that he changed his mind and has spent his money.
    How would you feel?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    How would your friend feel?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

4. Someone who usually says bad/ugly things about you comes to you and says something nice/good about you.
    How would you feel?

    _____

    _____

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_____

_____

_____

_____

How would the other person feel?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Your dad tells you that your dog was run over by a car and had to be put down at the vet.
   How would you feel?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How would your dad feel?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. You and other children are running around at break time. You and another child run into each other and both fall hard onto the ground.

    How would you feel?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    How would the other child feel?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

7. The dentist tells you there are problems with your teeth which requires immediate attention. The dentist makes an appointment for you for the next day.

    How would you feel?

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

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How would the dentist feel?

_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

8. Your teacher tells you that your work is not good and it must improve.
   How would you feel?

_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

How would your teacher feel?

_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

9. You have become good friends with a new child in class. You often play together and you feel
   you know each other very well. One day he/she invites you to his/her house. You find out that
   they are very rich and your friend has everything you always wanted. Your friend tells you that

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he/she kept it a secret because he/she was afraid that children would only want to be his/her friend because they were interested in his/her money.

How would you feel?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How would your friend feel?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. A team is being formed and most of the players have been chosen. There are two children which have not been chosen yet and you are one of them but only one more player is needed. How would you feel?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How would the other child feel?

_____

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_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. Your friend shares chips with you and other children. You discover he has given more chips to the others than you.

How would you feel?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How would your friend feel?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. Your best friend comes to visit you after being away for a few weeks.

How would you feel?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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How would your friend feel?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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VLAKKE VAN EMOSIONELE BEWUSSYNSSKAAL VIR KINDERS (LEAS-C)

Naam: _____

Manlik ☐ Vroulik ☐

Ouderdom: ____

Graad: _____   Skool: _____

Vandag se datum: _____/_____/_____

Aanwysings

Op die volgende bladsye word verskillende situasies beskryf. By elke situasie is twee mense betrokke – jy en `n ander persoon.  Beskryf asb. hoe jy in hierdie situasie sal voel.  Beskryf ook hoe jy dink die ander persoon sal voel.  Jy moet die woord "voel" in jou antwoorde gebruik.  Dit maak nie saak of jou antwoord kort of lank is nie, dit maak ook nie saak as daar spelfoute is nie.  Daar is nie `n regte of verkeerde antwoord nie. Al wat jy moet onthou is om te skryf hoe jy en die ander persoon sal voel.

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1. Jy hardloop in `n belangrike resies saam met jou maatjie saam wie jy al lank geoefen het.
   Toe jy amper by die wenstreep is swik jy jou enkel, val op die grond en kan nie verder
   hardloop nie.

   Hoe sal jy voel? _____

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

   Hoe sal jou maatjie voel? _____

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

2. Jy en jou ma kom in die aand huistoe. Toe julle by julle straat indraai sien jy
   brandweerwaens wat naby julle huis geparkeer is.

   Hoe sal jy voel? _____

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

   Hoe sal jou ma voel? _____

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

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3. Jy en jou maatjie besluit om julle sakgeld te spaar om saam iets spesiaal te koop. 'n Paar dae later vertel jou maatjie jou dat hy van plan verander het en sy geld gebruik het.

Hoe sal jy voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Hoe sal jou maatjie voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Iemand wat voorheen lelike dinge van jou gesê het kom na jou toe en sê iets mooi/goed.

Hoe sal jy voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Hoe sal die ander persoon voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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5. Jou pa sê vir jou dat julle hond deur `n motor raakgery is en dat die veearts hom moes uitsit.

Hoe sal jy voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Hoe sal jou pa voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. Jy en `n klomp ander kinders hardloop pouse rond.  Jy en `n ander kind hardloop in mekaar vas en julle val albei hard op die grond.

Hoe sal jy voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Hoe sal die ander kind voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. Die tandarts sê vir jou dat daar probleme met jou tande is wat dadelik moet aandag kry. Die tandarts maak vir jou`n afspraak vir die volgende dag.

Hoe sal jy voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Hoe sal die tandarts voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. Jou juffrou sê vir jou dat jou werk nie goed is nie en moet verbeter.

Hoe sal jy voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Hoe sal juffrou voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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9. Jy het groot maats met `n nuwe kind in julle klas geword. Julle speel baie saam en julle voel dat julle mekaar al baie goed ken. Eendag nooi sy jou na haar huis toe. Jy vind uit dat hulle baie ryk is en dat jou maatjie alles het wat jy nog altyd wou gehad het. Sy sê vir jou dat sy dit `n geheim gehou het omdat sy bang was dat die kinders net in haar sou belangstel oor haar geld.

Hoe sal jy voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Hoe sal jou maatjie voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. `n Span word gekies en die meeste van die spelers is reeds gekies. Daar is twee kinders oor wat nog nie gekies is nie en jy is een van hulle, maar daar is nog net een speler nodig.

Hoe sal jy voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Hoe sal die ander kind voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. Jou maatjie deel chips met jou en ander kinders. Jy kom agter dat hy meer chips vir die ander kinders as vir jou gee.

Hoe sal jy voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Hoe sal jou maatjie voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. Jou beste maatjie kom jou sien nadat hy/sy vir `n paar weke weg was.

Hoe sal jy voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Hoe sal jou maatjie voel? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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APPENDIX C

LEAS

Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale

AGREEMENT

In exchange for use of the Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale (LEAS) and a copy of the scoring manual, I agree, if requested, to provide photocopies of all the raw data that I collect as well as my scoring for each item. I also agree, if requested, to provide basic demographic and clinical data, when available, on each subject who completes the scale. Furthermore, I agree not to make the LEAS or the scoring manual available to other investigators without first obtaining permission from the authors.

2014 | 03 | 12

Date

AllWaal

Signature

Alet de Waal

Name (printed)

Please complete the following information:

Name: Alet de Waal
Address: P.O. Box 216, Bothaville, 9660
Phone: 0784228781
Fax: 086 6068411
Email: alettazietz@gmail.com

Please return this form to:

RICHARD D. LANE, M.D., PH.D.
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHIATRY
UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
TUCSON, ARIZONA 85724-5002
U.S.A.

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APPENDIX D

SAVF
RETHABILE KLERKSDORP
KINDERHUIS
CHILDREN'S HOME

Rosinstraat 7 Rosin Street, Freemanville
Posbus 2981
Klerksdorp
2570

☎ 018 464 1888/9
📠 018 462 2459
📧 rethabile.kinderhuis@telkomsa.net
📧 betsg@telkomsa.net
www.savf.co.za

001-465 NPO

2 July 2014

FOR ATTENTION: **TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

REASON: **MS. A. DE WAAL**

The following student, Ms. A. de Waal, student number 11266822, from the University of Pretoria requested to conduct her research at our oganization. She is student enrolled for a degree in MSW (Play Therapy).

The title of the sutdy is: Evaluation of an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre in the North West Province.

Hereby the organization gives permission to the mentioned sudent to conduct her research at SAVF Rethabile Klerksdorp Children's Home.

Kind regards.

A. KENT (MS)
MANAGER

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APPENDIX E

Faculty of Humanities
Research Ethics Committee

5 August 2014

Dear Prof Lombard

Project:	**Evaluation of an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre in the North-West Province**
Researcher:	**A de Waal**
Supervisor:	**Dr MP le Roux**
Department:	**Social Work and Criminology**
Reference numbers:	**11266822**

Thank you for the application that was submitted for ethical consideration.

I am pleased to inform you that the above application was **approved** by the **Research Ethics Committee** on 31 July 2014. Data collection may therefore commence.

Please note that this approval is based on the assumption that the research will be carried out along the lines laid out in the proposal. Should the actual research depart significantly from the proposed research, it will be necessary to apply for a new research approval and ethical clearance.

The Committee requests you to convey this approval to the researcher.

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely

Prof Karen Harris
Acting Chair: Postgraduate Committee &
Research Ethics Committee
Faculty of Humanities
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
e-mail:Karen.harris@up.ac.za

Research Ethics Committee Members: **Dr L Blokland;**Prof Prof M-H Coetzee; Dr JEH Grobler; Prof KL Harris (Acting Chair); Ms H Klopper; Dr C Panebianco-Warrens; Dr Charles Puttergill, Prof GM Spies; Dr Y Spies; Prof E Taljard; Dr P Wood

APPENDIX F

Faculty of Humanities
Department of Social Work & Criminology

Researcher:	Alletta de Waal
Degree:	Master of Social Work (Play Therapy)
Contact details:	078 422 8781

GUARDIAN: INFORMED CONSENT

Name of participant: ....

1. **Title of study**
   Evaluation of an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre in the North-West Province.

2. **Purpose of the study**
   The purpose of the study is to evaluate a previously developed emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood to enhance their levels of emotional functioning.

3. **Procedures**
   The child (respondent) will be requested to complete the *Levels of Emotional Awareness Scale for Children (LEAS-C)* in determining the child's level of emotional functioning. The *LEAS-C* will be completed as a pre-test and post-test. An emotional awareness programme will be offered to children and will be implemented as a weekly programme. During the seven modules, implemented over a seven-week period, the children will participate in individual and group activities.

4. **Possible discomfort**
   I understand that participating in the research study will mean exploring and sharing both positive and negative emotions, as well as emotional and social experiences. I trust that the researcher will do her best to minimise emotional discomfort. If I feel at any point that the child is not comfortable with the activities in the emotional awareness programme, the researcher could be approached or the child could withdraw from participation in the emotional awareness programme. If necessary, the researcher will refer the child (respondent) for counselling to the social worker at the child and youth care centre.

5. **Benefits of the study**

I understand that there may not be any immediate benefits resulting from participating in the research study. The emotional awareness programme may however assist the child to be in contact with his/her emotions; to discriminate between different emotions; to verbalise and take ownership of his/her emotions. The implementation of the emotional awareness programme may also improve the child's relationship with others.

6. **Right of participation**

I have the right to withdraw the child from the research study at any time. I understand that there will not be any negative consequences resulting from such withdrawal. Alet de Waal will respect my decision.

7. **Financial compensation**

I am aware that there is no financial or other form of compensation for the child's participation in the research study.

8. **Confidentiality**

Reports will be compiled to record the progress of the sessions. Alet de Waal will be the only one to have direct access to these reports. I understand that all names, details and other information will be known only to Alet de Waal and will be kept confidential. The child's name will not appear in the research report or in any other publication. The research information will be stored in a safe place at the University of Pretoria for 15 years. The results of the study may be used for further studies.

9. If I have any questions I can contact Alet de Waal on 078 422 8781.

I understand my rights as the parent/guardian of a research respondent and would like to help with this study. I understand what the study is about, why and how it is being done.

....
Signature: Guardian

....
Date

....
Signature: Researcher

....
Date

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APPENDIX G

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UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe
Department Maatskaplike Werk & Kriminologie

Navorser:	Aletta de Waal
Graad:	MMW in Spelterapie
Kontakbesonderhede:	078 422 8781

DEELNEMER SE INGELIGTE TOESTEMMING

Naam van deelnemer: ……………………………………………..

1. **Titel van die studie**
   Evaluering van 'n emosionele bewustheidsprogram vir kinders in die middelkinderjare in 'n kinder- en jeugsorgsentrum in die Noordwes Provinsie.
   ("Evaluation of an emotional awareness programme for children in middle childhood in a child and youth care centre in the North-West Province").

2. **Doel van die studie**
   Die doel van die studie is dat Alet de Waal 'n program kan toets wat vir kinders tussen die ouderdomme van sewe en 12 jaar oud kan help om hul gevoelens te verstaan.

3. **Werkswyse**
   Ek sal gevra word om 'n vorm met vrae oor gevoelens (emosies) in te vul. Ek sal die vorm twee keer invul. Ek sal ook vir sewe weke aan 'n program by die kinder- en jeugsorgsentrum deelneem. Ek sal aktiwiteite in 'n groep en op my eie doen.

4. **Moontlike ongemak**
   Ek verstaan dat as ek aan die studie deelneem, ons oor positiewe en negatiewe gevoelens sal praat en ook oor my ervarings. As ek enige tyd ongemaklik voel terwyl ons die aktiwiteite doen, kan ek vir Alet de Waal sê en sy sal my na die maatskaplike werker by die sentrum laat gaan.

5. **Voordele van die studie**
   Die program waaraan ek deelneem sal my help om my gevoelens (emosies) beter te verstaan.

6. **Reg tot deelname**
   As ek op enige tyd wil ophou om aan die program deel te neem, kan ek vir Alet de Waal sê dat ek nie meer wil aangaan nie. As ek besluit om op te hou, sal niemand my blameer nie.

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7. Vergoeding

Ek verstaan dat ek nie enige geld of geskenke sal kry as ek aan die studie deelneem nie.

8. Vertroulikheid

Notas sal gemaak word oor deelname aan die program. Alet de Waal sal die enigste persoon wees wat die notas sal lees. My regte naam sal nie in die notas of op die vorms wat ek invul, geskryf word nie. Die inligting oor die studie sal vir 15 jaar in 'n veilige plek by die Universiteit van Pretoria gebêre word. Die uitkomsste van die studie kan later vir ander studies gebruik word.

9. As ek enige vrae het, kan ek dit vir Alet de Waal vra of ek kan ons sentrum se bestuurder vra om vir haar te bel by die nommer 078 422 8781.

Ek verstaan my regte as ek aan die studie deelneem en ek wil graag met die studie help. Ek verstaan waaroor die studie gaan en waarom en hoe dit gedoen word.

....
Handtekening: Deelnemer

....
Datum

....
Handtekening: Navorser

....
Datum

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APPENDIX H

LEAS Scoring Manual & Glossary

Contents:

I. Guidelines for LEAS Scoring

I. GUIDELINES FOR LEAS SCORING

The LEAS consists of 20 scenarios which are each rated on a 5-point scale. These scores are summed to generate a maximum possible total score of 100. The guidelines described below address how the 5-point rating for each scenario is made.

There are three separate ratings which must be made for each scenario: (1) self, (2) other, (3) total. The ratings for "self" and "other" are made in exactly the same way: the description of emotion for each person is assigned the level score from 0 to 4 which is the highest level achieved for that item. Thus, there is one "self" score from 0 to 4 and one "other" score from 0 to 4 for each scenario. Every feeling mentioned in a scenario can potentially be rated for "self" or "other."

In making these ratings, the criteria listed below should be followed explicitly. Emotion which is implied by or can be inferred from a response but which is not explicitly stated should <u>not</u> be scored. If a feeling is explicitly mentioned but denied, e.g., I wouldn't feel embarrassed, it is scored as if the emotion in question <u>was</u> present. If a feeling is not specifically attributed to self or other but to "someone" or "one," it is <u>not</u> rated. Similarly, if emotions are described which are not a response to the scenario per se but rather reflect the general belief system of the respondent, the emotions are <u>not</u> rated. If only one word is listed, attribute it to the self. Incidental comments contained in the description which convey emotion such as "I hope" <u>are</u> rated if they are embedded in the emotional response.

All words in the glossary are classified according to the level that they best fit. If there is another level that they might also fit less commonly, that secondary level is indicated in parentheses. Words must be interpreted in relation to the scenario, e.g., pain in the first scenario is scored 1, while in scenario 12 is scored 3.

The "total" score for each item is the highest of these two ("self" and "other") scores, except in the case of two level 4 scores in which case the

LEAS Scoring Manual & Glossary

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guidelines for level 5 should be followed. All of the scoring guidelines for these ratings are listed below.

LEVEL 0

At least one of the following guidelines must be met:

1.   **No response** given to the item.

2.   Description of a **thought or impression which reflects an act of cognition** without any indication of the emotional reaction which followed from the cognitive act. A good rule of thumb here is if the word "think" can substitute for the word "feel" without any change in meaning, e.g. I would feel that they were wrong; I would feel that the remarks were justified.

3.   Words that describe **cognitive states**, e.g. puzzled, confused, uncertain. Included here is "I expect..." because "expect" is a cognition.

4.   Words that reflect **conclusions reached from evaluative judgments** which do not consistently have an associated positive or negative emotional tone, e.g. adequate, alone, justified.

LEVEL 1

At least one of the following guidelines must be met:

1.   Explicit, simple statement that the person would **feel nothing**, a statement that the **respondent does not know how the person in question would feel**, or a statement acknowledging the possibility of **having feelings without specifying what they are**, e.g. closed, denial, indifferent.

2.   Any **bodily sensation or physical feeling**, e.g. I'd feel pain, tingling, achy, nauseated.

LEAS Scoring Manual & Glossary

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LEVEL 2

At least one of the following guidelines must be met:

1.   An **action tendency, if it is demonstrative of an emotion**, e.g. "I'd feel like punching the wall." A response would be scored here if the person felt like doing something which required mediation by the voluntary motor system. Actions per se are not rated as feelings. Included here are comments such as "feeling so much that I would probably only be able to sit and stare at my stereo" (i.e. catatonic).

2.   Reference to a conscious state which is **global** in nature and focuses on a key word whose usual meaning is **not emotional**, e.g. I'd feel ... good, bad, upset, awful, terrible, great, weird, etc. Words such as "strong" or "weak" would be scored here if they did not clearly refer to a physical state.

3.   **Personality traits which have an inherent action component** where the person is the initiator of the behavior, e.g., authoritarian, pompous, patriotic, defensive, greedy, haughty.

4.   **Passively experienced actions** with emotional connotations, e.g. abandoned, offended, soothed, manipulated, appreciated.

5.   **Actions that inherently convey emotion**, e.g. mope, laugh, cry, soothe, console.

6.   **Nonspecific emotions** that cannot be categorized with any one primary emotion, e.g. irritated, upset, aroused.

7.   Words that reflect **cognitions that have distinctly positive or negative emotional connotations**, e.g. fortunate, triumphant, unworthy, lucky.

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LEVEL 3

At least one of the following guidelines must be met:

1.   Emotions that have a **well-differentiated** connotation, e.g. happy, sad, angry, want, anticipate, disappointed, etc.

2.   Words which are **closely allied to specific emotions**, e.g. pissed off, look forward, dying for, let down.

3.   Words that inherently **convey an exchange of emotion**, e.g. sympathize, empathize, commiserate.

4.   **Complex emotions** such as "remorse" are scored here if it is the only emotion mentioned.

5.   **Single words which refer to multiple emotions** would be scored here if the multiple emotions were not specified or referred to in some way, e.g. "I'd feel ambivalent."

6.   If **two or more feelings are expressed which are so similar in meaning that they cannot be readily distinguished**, i.e. LEVEL 4 criterion #2 is not satisfied (e.g. "at peace" = "relaxed" therefore is scored as LEVEL 3 not LEVEL 4).

LEVEL 4
(Two or more LEVEL 3 emotions which are distinguishable from each other)

At least one of the following guidelines must be met:

1.   **Opposing emotions** are described. Examples of opposing dyads include joy-sadness, interested-bored, anger-fear, surprise-anticipation, acceptance-disgust.

2.   **Qualitatively distinct emotions** are described. The test of whether a feeling state is distinct is if an outside observer could look at two people,

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each of whom is manifesting the facial expression of one of the emotions which is to be contrasted, and reliable identify who is feeling what (e.g. "at peace" = "relaxed" therefore would be scored as <u>LEVEL</u> <u>3</u> not <u>LEVEL</u> <u>4</u>).

3.   **Quantitatively distinct emotions** are described through the use of words that describe different emotions, not use of adverbs such as "more" or "less," e.g. "My feeling was somewhere between ecstatic and delighted." Another sufficient but not necessary criterion for making quantitative distinctions is that provided by #2 above.

4.   When **different reasons are given for a single emotional response**, e.g. I would feel angry with myself and angry with my neighbor.

<u>LEVEL</u> <u>5</u>

<u>All</u> of the following guidelines must be met:

1.   Each individual's emotional reaction meets level 4 guidelines. (**Self = 4 and Other = 4**)

2.   The reactions of the two **individuals are clearly different** from each other, either in specific content or overall tone. If the emotions which contribute to the level 4 score in each of the two individuals are the same, reasons should be given to account for differences in the overall tone of the two reactions.

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APPENDIX I

Level 0

absorbed	opgeneem
achievement, sense of-	sukses
adequate	voldoende
alerted	lewendig
alone	alleen
aloneness	eensaamheid
at fault	skuld dra
attentive	oplettend
aware	bewus
beaten	verslaan
bewildered	ontsteld
certain	verseker
complimented (2)	komplimenteer
confused	verward
conscious, self-	selfbewus
control, sense of-	beheersing (self)
control, under	beheer
coordinated	gekoördineerd
contemplative	oordenkend
deceitful	bedrieglik
deserves	verdien
deserving	verdiendstelik
detached	onbevange
detachment	onbevangenheid
different	uiteenlopend
disbelief	ongeloof
disbelieving	ongeloof
dishonest	oneerlik
disillusioned	ontnugter
distant	koel
diverted	ontspan
doubtful	onseker
dumbfounded	oorbluf
expect	verwag
expectations, raising-	verwagting
faith, have-	geloof
firm (2)	ferm
genuine (2)	eg
have faith	geloof
have faith in	vertroue
hindrance	hinder
honest	eerlik
ignorant (2)	onwetend/onkundig
indecisive	besluiteloos
insincere (2)	onopreg/huigel
intelligent (2)	intelligent
irresponsible (2)	onverantwoordelik
justified	geregverdig
matter of fact	
misinformed	oningelig

misled	mislei
mistaken	verkeerd/onjuis
neutral	neutraal
normal	normaal
oblivious	vergeetagtig
open to suggestions	oop vir voorstelle
open-minded	oopkop
pensive	peinsend
perplexed	verward
preoccupied	besig
productive	produktief
professional (2)	professioneel
puzzled	deurmekaar
raising expectations	skep verwagting
ready	gereed
reassurance	versekering
receptive	ontvanklik
reconcile (3)	versoen
removed	verwyder
respect	respek
responsible (2)	verantwoordelik
responsive	reaktief
restrained (2)	beteuel
righteous	regverdig
rolling my eyes	oe rol
self-conscious	selfbewus
sense of control	selfbeheer
sensitive (2)	sensitief
sincere (2)	opreg
skeptical	skepties
smart (2)	slim
stupid (2)	stupid
sure	seker
transparent	deursigtig
truthful	praat die waarheid
uncertain	onseker
uncoordinated	nie gekoördineerd
under control	onder beheer
understanding	verstaan
undeserving	onverdiend
unprofessional (2)	onprofessioneel
unsure	onseker
value	waarde
wonder	wonder

Level 1

alive	lewendig
apathetic	apaties
at-a-loss-for-words	sonder woorde
blood-pressure-goes-up	bloedruk styg
closed	geslote
denial	ontkenning
discomfort (2)	ongemak
disoriented	gedisorienteerd
distracted	afgetrokke/gesteurd
dizzy	duiselig
don't-know-what-the-person-feels	weet nie hoe iem voel
drained (3)	gedreineer
dumb	dom
exhausted	uitgeput
frail (2)	swak
groggy	duiselig
healthy	gesond
heart attack, like having a-	hartaanval (voel so)
heart beating	hartklop
heart in throat	hart in keel
heart racing	harklop jaag
hot	warm
hungry	honger
hurt (3)	seer
I-wouldn't-care-how-he-felt	sou omgee hoe hy voel
impartial	onpartydig
impassive	ongevoelig
indifferent	onverskillig
injured (2)	beseer
invigorated	verfrissend
it wouldn't matter	maak nie saak
lethargic	lusteloos
like-having-a-heart-attack	soos hartaanval he
nauseous	naar
no idea	geen idee
not feel anything	gevoeloos
nothing	niks
numb (2)	lam
one's-heart-goes-to-one's-throat	hart in die keel
pain (3)	pyn
relaxed (3)	ontspanne
revived	herleef/opfris
sensual	sensueel
sexually ready	seksueel gereed
sick (2)	siek
sleepy	vaak/lomerig
small (2)	klein
stresses	stres
strong (2)	sterk
suffer (3)	ly
suffering (3)	lyding
thirsty	dors
tired	moeg
unaffected	ongeaffekteer/onaangeraak
unfazed	
unhealthy	ongesond
weak (2)	swak
worn out	uitgewas
wouldn't matter	maak nie saak

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LEVEL 2

a duty to	verantwoordelikheid teenoor
aback, taken-	verras
abandoned	verlate
accepted	aanvaar
accepting	aanvaarbaar
accommodating	akkomodeer
accomplishment, sense of-	vervulling
acquisitive	hebsugtig
admiration	admireer/bewonder
advantage of, taken-	voordeel trek
aggressive	aggressief
agitated	opwinding
aimless	doelloos
alienated	vervreemd
aloof	afsydig
alright	als reg
altruistic	onselfsugtig
antagonistic	antagonisties/maak vyand
antsy	
apologetic	verskonend
appreciated	gewaardeerd
aroused	opwek
arrogant	arrogant
ass, like an-	
at-a-loss (unable to help)	
at ease	gemaklik
at-the-end-of-my/their-rope	moedeloos
attacked	aangeval
authoritarian	outoriter
awesome	verskriklik/awesome
awful	aaklig
awkward	ongemaklik/onbehendig
backed-into-a-corner	in `n hoek wees
bad	sleg
bad mood, in a-	slegte bui
badly	erg
begrudge	misgun
belittled	verkleineer
belligerent	oorlogsugtig
benevolent	liefdadig
best	beste
betrayed	veraai
better	beter
blame	blameer
blameworthy	afkeuringswaardig
boastful	opsnyerig (se woordeboek)
bold	dapper/kordaat/waagmoed
bothered	gepla
brave	braaf
brightening-up-my-day	my dag ophelder

bugged	
bummed	
bummed out	
burden, like a-	oorlas
burdened	belas
burned out	uitbrand
businesslike	
carefree	sorgvry
careless	agterlosig
catatonic	katatonies
caught	uitgevang
cautious	versigtig
challenged	uitdaging
chastised	kasty
cheap	goedkoop
cheated	gekul/verneuk
cheerful	opgeruimd
childish	kinderagtig
close	naby
closer	nader
clumsy	lomp
clutz, like a-	lomp persoon
cocky	eiewys
cold-hearted	hartvogtig
comfort	gemak
comfortable	gemaklike
comforted	troos
committed	pleeg
compelled	genoodsaak
competitive	kompeterend
complacent	selfvoldaan
complimentary	komplimenter
complimented (0)	gekomplimenteer
compromised	in gevaar gestel
conciliatory	versoenend
condescending	neerbuigend
confidence, loss of-	verloor selfvertroue
confident	hoopvol/vol vertroue
conflict	konflik
conflicted	konflikterende
congratulatory	gelukwensend
connection	konneksie
conniving	slinks
conscientious	pligsgetrou
considerate	konsidererend
console	troos
consoling	troos
constricted	ingeperk
contrite	berou
contrition	wroeging
cool	
cool, lose one's-	

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cope, unable to-	
courageous	dapper
coy	skaam
cranky	knorrig
crappy	waardeloos
crazy	mal
crushed	verpletter
cry, I would-	huil, ek sal-
curse	vloek
cynical	sinies
dead inside	dood van binne
deceived	verraai
decent	behoorlik/ordentlik
decimated	uitgewis
defeated	verslaan
defensive	verdedig
degraded	degradeer
demolished	verwoes/vernietig
dependable	staatmaak
dependent	afhanklike
deserted	verlate
desirous	gretig
desolate	eensaam/doods
destroyed	vernietig
determination	determinasie
determined	gedetermineerd
devastated	geteisterd
devilish	duiwelagtig
devious	agterbaks
disapproval	afkeurend
discomfort (1)	ongemaklik
disengaged	onbetrokke
disgrace	onteer
disheartened	mismoedig
disturbed	gesteur
dominant	dominand
double-crossed-	(if-betrayed) as verraai
down	af
downhearted	teneergedruk
dreadful	vreeslis
driven	gedrewe
dumb (1)	dom
dutiful	pligsgetrou
dying inside	dood van binne
ease, at-	gemaklik
ease, ill at-	ongemaklik
easy	maklik
edgy	nerwe (dun)
empowered	bemagtig
emptiness	leegheid
empty	leeg
encouraged	aangemoedig

endangered	gedreigde
energetic	energiek
energized	energiek
enticed	gelok
excellent	puik
exposed	blootgestel
fabulous	ongelooflik
fantastic	fantastied
fed up	keelvol
fine	fyn
firm (0)	ferm
flattered	gevlei
flexible	buigbaar
flustered	verbouereerd
fool, like a-	dom voel
foolish	dom
fortunate	bevoorreg
frail (1)	broos
freak out	freak uit
free	vry
friendly	vriendelik
fucked	
full of passion	passievol
funny	snaaks
gauche	vrypostig
generous	vrygewig
genuine (0)	opreg
giving	om te gee
gloat	spog
glorified	geprys
good	goed
good will	welwillendheid
gracious	grasieus
great	goed
greedy	gierig
grim	aaklik
grouchy	knorrig
grudge	wrok
grumpy	brom/nors
guarded	bewaakte
hardened	gehard
hassled	gejaagd
haughty	hoogmoedig
heel, like a-	
helpful	hulpvaardig
helpless	hulpeloos
helplessness, sense of-	hulpeloos
hesitance	huiwering
hesitancy	huiwerigheid
honorable	eerbare
honored	vereer
horny	

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horrible	verskriklik	king, like a-	koning, soos `n
humble	beskeie	klutz, like a-	lomp
hurried	gejaagd	laugh, I would	lag, ek sal
hurry, in a-	haastig	led on	aanleiding gee
hyped up	ophef	leery	handig
hysterical	histeries	left out	uitgesluit
I would cry	Ek sal huil	lied to	gejok vir
I would laugh	Ek sal lag	lifting spirits	gemoed lig
I would smile	Ek sal glimlag	like a clutz/klutz	
idiot, like an-	idiot, soos `n	like a failure	soos `n mislukking
idiotic	idioties	like a fool	soos `n fool/dwaas
ignorant	onkundig	like a heel	
ill at ease	ongemaklik	like a king	soos `n koning
ill-will	onwillig	like a knife was in my heart	soos `n mes deur my hart
impatient	ongeduldig	like a loser	soos `n mislukking
important	belangrik	like a queen	soos `n koningin
important, self-	belangrik, self-	like an ass	soos `n ….
imposed upon	opgele	like an idiot	soos `n idioot
impressed	beindruk	like-doing-something (voluntary)	iets doen (onwillekeurig)
in a bad mood	in `n slegte bui	like shit	elendig
in a hurry	haastig	lonely	eensaam
in control (of my daily activities) onder beheer		lose one's cool	verloor jou cool/beheer
in jeopardy	bereig	lose temper	verloor humeur
in shock	in skok	loss of confidence	verlies aan selfvertroue
inadequate	onvoldoende	lost	verlore
inclined	geneig	low	laag
incompetent	onbekwaam/onbevoeg	lousy	aaklig
inconsiderate	onbedagsaam/onnadenkend	loyal	lojaal
inconvenienced	ongemaklik	lucky	gelukkig
incredible	ongelooflik	manipulated	manipuleer
indebted (3)	verskuldig	mean	gemeen
indulgent	toegewend	miserable	misrabel/goor
ingratiating	innemend	missed	gemis
injured (1)	geskend	mixed up	deurmekaar
insecure	onveilig	mood, in a bad-	bui, in slegte
insensitive	onsensitief	mope	verknies
insignificant	onbenullig	motivated	gemotiveerd
insincere (0)	huigelagtig/onopreg	motivational	motiverend
insulted	beledig	moved	geraak
intelligent (0)	intelligent	naïve	naief
intimate	intiem	nasty	mislik
irked		nationalism	nasionalisme
irresponsible (0)	onverantwoordelik	need to …	behoefte aan
irritable	geirriteerd	need to defend	nodig om te verdedig
irritated	geirriteerd	need to help	behoefte om te help
isolated	geisoleerd	needed	nodig
jeopardy, in-	in gedrang	needy	afhanklik
jilted		negative	negatief
jingoistic		negatively	negatief
jolly	jolig	neglected	verwaarloos
keep your spirits up	gemoed lig	neglectful	verwaarlosend
kind	vriendelik	nerves	senuwees

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nice	lekker	rejected	verwerp/afkeur
numb (1)	lam	rejuvenated	vernuwe
obligated	verplig	reliable	betroubaar
obliged	verplig	reluctant	huiwerig
obnoxious	onaangenaam	repent	berou
odd	vreemd	repentant	berouvol
offended	tenagekom	reserved	gereserveerd
okay	OK	resolute	vasberade
on edge	op rand	resolve to	oplos
on guard	paraat	resolved to	opgelos
on-the-spot	blootgestel	resourceful	vindingryk
on-top-of-the-world		respectful	respek
opinionated	uitgesproke	responsible (0)	verantwoordelik
oppressed	onderdruk	restless	rusteloos
optimistic	optimisties	restrained (0)	terug gehou
ornery	oorgevoelig	restricted	verbode
ought to …	behoort te	reticence	aarseling
out of place	uit jou plek	rewarded	beloon
outstanding	uitstaande	righteous, self-	regverdig, self
overindulgent		robbed	besteel
overwhelmed	oorweldig	romantic	romanties
pampered	pamperlang	rotten	vrot
paralyzed	verlam	rude	onbeskof
passion, full of-	passievol	rushed	gejaagd
patient	geduldig	safe	veilig
patriotic	patrioties	sarcastic	sarkasties
patronized		secure	veillig
patronizing	neerhalend	self important	belangrik self
pessimistic	pessimisties	self-righteous	regverdig self
petrified	versteen	selfish	selfsugtig
pompous	deftig/statig	selfless	onselfsugtig
poorly	swak	sense-of-accomplishment	gevoel van prestasie (gevoel)
positive	positief	sense of helplessness	gevoel van hulpeloosheid
powerful	kragtig	sense of urgency	gevoel van dringendheid
pressed for time	gejaagd	sensitive (0)	sensitief
pressured	druk	serious	ernstig
professional (0)	professioneel	settled	gevestig
protected	beskermd	sexually turned on	
psyched		shafted	
pulled (in 2 directions)	trek	shaken	geruk
purposeful	doelgerig	sheepish	bedeesd
put down	afbreek	shit, like-	
put off	afsit	shitty	
put out	uitsit	shock, in-	skok. in
put upon	opsit	shocked	geskok
qualified	gekwalifiseerd	short tempered	kort humeur
queen, like a-	koningin, soos	shy	skaam
rattled	van stryk gebring	sick (1)	siek
ready to fuck		silly	laf
reassurance (0)	gerusstellend	sincere (0)	opreg
reassured	gerusstel	slighted	geminag
reckless	onverantwoordelik	small (1)	klein

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smart (0)	slim/intelligent	uneasy	ongemaklik
smile, I would-	glimlag, ek sal	unfortunate	betreurenswaardig
smug	selfvoldaan	unimportant	onbelangrik
sneaky		unlucky	ongelukkig
snobbish	snobberig	unnerved	ontsenu
snubbed		unprofessional (0)	onprofessioneel
solicitous	kwel	unprotected	onbeskermd
soothed	kalm	unreliable	onbetroubaar
special	spesiaal	unsettled	onrustig/ ontwrig
spirits up, keep your-	moed hou	untrustable	onbetroubaar
stabbed in the back	in rug gesteek	unworthy	onwaardig
steadfast	standvastig	upbeat	opgewek
stood up	opstaan vir	upset	ontsteld
strange	vreemd	urgency	dringendheid
stressed	gestres	urgency, sense of-	dringendheid, gevoel van
strong (1)	sterk	used	gebruikte
stunned	stomgeslaan	useful	bruikbaar
stupid (0)	stupid	useless	nutteloos/ onbruikbaar
sublime	verhewe	valued	gewaardeerd
successful	suksesvol	vengeance	wraak
suicidal	selfmoordneigings	victorious	oorwin
superior	superieur/beter/hoer	vindictive	wraaksugtig
superiority	meerderwaardigheid	violated	onteer/geskend
supported	ondersteun	virtuous	deugsaam
supportive	ondersteunend	vulnerable	kwesbaar
suspect	vermoed	weak (1)	swak
taken aback	verras	weighted	gewigtig
taken advantage of	gebruik maak	weird	weird/ vreemd/eienaardig
taken care of	versorg	welcome	welkom
tearful	tranerig	welcomes	verwelkom
tempered, short-	humeur, kort	well	goed
temptation	verleiding	well-being	welstand
tempted	verlei	willpower	wilskrag
tenderness	teerheid/deernis	wonderful	wonderlik
tentative	tentatief/ tydelik	worthless	waardeloos
terrible	verskriklik	worthwhile	moeite werd
threatened	bedreig	worthy	waardig
thrilled	opgewonde	wronged	verontreg/benadeel
tickled pink		zonked out	
timid	versigtig/ beskeie		
tolerant	verdraagsaam		
torn	verskeur		
touched	geraak		
trapped	vasgekeer		
triumphant	triomfantlik		
troubled	onrustig		
trustable/trusted/trustworthy	betroubaar		
turmoil	warboel/ontstuimig		
unable to cope			
unappreciated	nie gewaardeerd		
uncomfortable	ongemaklik		
understood	verstaan/begryp		

LEVEL 3

abashed	aangegryp
affection	toegeneentheid/liefde
affectionate	liefdevol
afraid	bang
aggravated	verswarend/ vererger
agonize	angstig hieroor
agony	angs
alarmed	verontrus/bekommerd
amazed	verstom/verbaas
ambitious	ambisieus
ambivalent	ambivalent/teenstrydig
amused	geamuseerd/vermaak
anger	woede
angered	kwaad gemaak/woedend
angry	kwaad
anguish	benoudheid
animosity	vyandigheid/wrok
annoy	irriteer
annoyance	irritasie
annoyed	geirriterend
annoying	irriterende
anticipate	verwag/voorspel
anticipated	verwag
anticipation	verwagting
anxious	angstig/bekommerd
appalled	ontsteld
appalling	ontstellend
appreciate	waardeer
appreciative	waarderend
apprehensive	bekommerd
ashamed	skaam
astonished	verstom
at peace	tevrede
awe	verwondering
bereft	stom geslaan
bitter	bitter
bitterness	bitterheid
bittersweet	bittersoet
bliss	geluk
bored	verveeld
broken hearted	gebreekte hart
calm	kalm
calm down	kalmeer
care	omgee
cared for	omgee vir
caring	versorgend/sorgsaam
chagrin	hartseer
cherish	koester/waardeer
cherished	gekoester
commiserate	kla

commiseration	
compassionate	deernis/meegevoel/barmhartig
concern	besorg
concerned	besorgdeid
concern, self-	
contempt	verag/minag
content	vergeneog
crave	begeer/smag
curious	nuuskierig
deflated	deflekteer/ uitgewas
dejected	moedeloos
delighted	bly/verheug
delirious	ylend
demoralized	ontmoedig
depressed	depressief
depression	depressie
desire	begeerte
desirous of	begerig van
despairing	wanhopig
desperate	desperaat
despise	verag
despondent	neerslagtig
devoted	toegewy
devotion	toewyding
disappointed	teleurgesteld
discontent	onvergenoegd
discouraged	mismoedig
disdain	minagting/veragting
disgust	afgryse
disgusted	afgryse, gevul met
dislike/d	hou nie van/ afkeer
dismayed	verskrik
dissatisfied	ontevrede
distaste	onsmaaklik
distraught	verbysterd
distressed	benoud
distrust	wantrouig
doomed	gedoem/verlore
drained (1)	gedreineer
dread	vrees
dreaded	gevreesde
dreading	sien op na..,
dying for	sterf vir
eager	gretig
eagerness	gretigheid
ecstatic	ekstaties
elated	verheug/opgetrek
embarrass	verlee
embarrassed	verlee
embarrassment	verleentheid
empathy	empatie
enjoy	geniet

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enjoyed	geniet	horror	verskrikking/gruwel
enjoying	te geniet	horror stricken	met afgryse gevul
enraged	woedend	hostility	vyandigheid
enthusiastic	entoesiasties	humorous feeling	grappig voel
envied	beny	humiliate	verneder/verkleineer
envious	afgunstig	humiliated	vernederd
envy	beny	humility	nederig
envying	nydigheid/afguns	hurt (1)	seer
euphoric	eufories	in love	verlief
exasperated	verbitterd	incensed	ontstoke / verstom
excited	opgewonde	indebted (2)	verskuldig
excitement	opwinding	indignant	verontwaardig
exhilarated	lewenslustig	inquisitive	nuuskierig
exhilarating		inspired	geinspireer
exhilaration		interest	belangstelling/belang
expectant	afwagting	interested	stel belang
exuberant	uitbundig	intimidated	intimiderend
fascinated	gefasineerd	intrigued (cf. fascinated)	gefassineer/geboei
fear	vrees	irate	kwaad
forgiveness	vergifnis	jealous	jaloers
frantic	woes	jealousy	jaloesie
frightened	bang	jovial	joviaal
frustrate	frustreer	joy	vreugde/blydskap
frustrating	frustrerend	jubilant	in die wolke / jubelend
fulfilled	vervul	jumping for joy	…van plesier
fuming		let down	steek gelaat
furious	woedend/kwaad	like	hou
futility, sense of-	nutteloosheid	liked	gehou
getting hopes up	moed skep	long for	verlang na
glad	bly	longing	begeer
gladness	blydskap	look forward	sien uit
gleeful	verheug	looks forward	
gloomy	somber	loss, sense of-	verlies
grateful	dankbaar	love	liefde
gratification	bevredigend	love, in-	verlief
gratified	tevrede	loved	geliefd
gratitude	waardering	loving	liefdevol
grief	rou/droefheid	mad	kranksinnig
guilty	skuldig	malicious	opsetlik
happiness	vreugde/blydskap	melancholic	melankolies
happy	gelukkig	mellow	sag/ gemaklik
hate	haat	miffed	
hated	gehaat	miss	mis
hatred	vyandskap	mixed up emotionally	verwarring /deurmekaar
hatred, self-	selfhaat	morose	ongeduldig
heartbroken	stukkend/hartseer	mournful	bedroef
hope	hoop	nervous	senuweeagtig
hopeful	hoopvol	nurturing	vertroeteling
hopefully	hopelik	outraged	woedend/verontwaardiging
hopeless	hopeloos	overjoy	
hopes up, getting-	hoop kry	pain (1)	pyn
horrified	afgryse	panic	paniek

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English	Afrikaans
paranoid	paranois
peace, at-	in vrede
peaceful	vreedsaam
peeved	hy was kwaad
perturbed	ontsteld
piqued	gewek
pissed off	
pity	jammer
pity, self-	selfbejammering
pleasant	aangename
pleasantly	aangename
pleased	verheugd
pleasure	plesier
prefer	verkies
preferred	verkies
pride	trots
proud	trots
rebellious	rebels
reconcile	versoen
regret	berou
regretful	berouvol
relaxed (1)	ontspanne
relief	verlig
relieved	verligting
relish	genot put
remiss	nalatig
remorse	spyt
reproach, self-	verwyt
resentful	gebelgd
resigned	bedank
revel	verlustig
reveled	verlustig
reveling	
revengeful	wraaksugtig
rueful	bedroef
sad	hartseer
saddened	hartseer
sadness	hartseer
satisfaction	tevredenheid
satisfied	tevrede
satisfy	tevrede
satisfying	tevredenheid
savor	geniet
scare	skrik/bang maak
scared	bang
scorn	spot
self concern	selfkommer
self hatred	selfhaat
self pity	selfbejammering
self reproach	selfverwyt
sense of futility	nutteloosheid
sense of loss	verlies

English	Afrikaans
sentimental	sentimenteel
serene	rustig
shame	skaam
smiling ear to ear	glimlag van oor tot oor
sorrow	verdriet/hartseer
sorry	jammer
startled	geskrik
stricken, horror-	met afgryse
suffer (1)	ly
suffering (1)	lyding
sullen	nors
supercilious	verwaand
surprise	verras
surprised	verras
suspicious	agterdogtig
sympathetic	simpatiek
sympathy	simpatie
take care	sorg vir / dra sorg
tense	gespanne
tension	spanning
terrified	vreesbevange
terror	vrees
thankful	dankbaar
ticked off	vies raak
tranquility	rustigheid
trepidation	angs/bewing
trust	vertrou
unconcern	onbetrokkendheid
uneasy	ongemakllik
ungrateful	ondankbaar
unhappy	ongelukkig
uptight	
vindicated (cf. relieved)	geregverdig/reg bewys
want	wil hê
wanted	wil hê
wants	wil hê
warm (affectionate)	liefdevol
wary	versigtig
weary	uitgeput/moeg
willing	gewillig
wish	wens
wishes	wense
woeful	ongelukkig
worried	bekommerd
worries	bekommernis
worry	bekommer
yearning	begeerte/verlange