The experiences of social justice by learners in schools

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my mother, Witness Buyisile Ngema, for instilling the culture of learning in me. And to my loving wife, Coleen Siphumelele Mtshali for supporting me in my academic journey, and my beautiful children, Nqobile and Mholi Ngema, who have given me the urge to become a better person for their future.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Vukile Msizi Ngema (student number: 11354853), hereby declare that my dissertation, *"The experiences of social justice by learners in schools",* which I am submitting to the University of Pretoria" f*or attainment of the degree, "Masters in Education",* has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my own work in design and execution, and that all the material from published sources contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

Signature…………………………………………………..

Date: August 2017

ABBREVIATIONS

ANC   African National Congress

DoE   Department of Education

GDE   Gauteng Department of Education

HOD   Head of Department

LO   Life Orientation

NP   National Party

RCL   Representative Council for Learners

RSA   Republic of South Africa

SASA   South African Schools Act

SGB   School Governing Body

SMT   School Management Team

TRC   Truth and Reconciliation Commission

DEFINITION OF TERMS AS USED IN THE STUDY

Adolescence: A stage during which learners acquire knowledge, skills, experience, and values, and form social relationships that will help them as individuals to fully participate in the affairs of society. This stage occurs spans the age period 10 to 19 years.

Capabilities approach: A philosophical approach to social justice which is based on the premise that all learners should be given equal opportunities for reaching their maximum capabilities in school as well as in society.

Hidden curriculum: A set of norms, values, and beliefs which, although transferred to learners without a formal structure or set rules, lead to positive social relationships in the school and classroom.

Life world orientation: A concept that is used by educators to understand individual learner perceptions informed by everyday experiences.

Social justice: A fair distribution of educational resources, such as infrastructure, funds, human rights and learning opportunities.

Social pedagogy: A professional social field in which pedagogues (educators) are held responsible for the holistic development of learners.

ABSTRACT

This study is based on the assumption that the complexities associated with racial and cultural integration has impacted on the ways in which learners at urban secondary schools understand/interpret social justice. The research question, 'How do adolescent learners give meaning to the concept of social justice in schools?' which directs this study, is informed by this assumption. The purpose of the study, informed by this question, was to explore and describe the ways in which participating adolescent learners give meaning to and experience the concept of social justice at their schools.

A qualitative research approach and a phenomenological research design were regarded as most appropriate to an exploration of learner experiences of social justice. Data was collected by means of focus group interviews: ten learners from one former Model C school in the Tshwane South District discussed and shared their views on social justice as a phenomenon at this school. Their views were subsequently transcribed, analysed and interpreted to determine the manner in which they experience and ascribe meaning to social justice at their 'urban' secondary school. Indications from this analysis are that adolescent learners at this school attach different meanings to the concept of social justice. A whole range of meanings were attributed to social justice: retribution, restoration, consideration, human rights, respect for authority, and human entitlement. Based on these findings, my recommendations in this regard are that educators should play a role in promoting, protecting and instilling human rights in schools.

KEY WORDS

Adolescent learners

Life world orientation

Hidden curriculum

Social justice

Socially just

Socially unjust

Social pedagogy

Urban schools

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION, RESEARCH PROBLEM AND METHODS

1.1   Introduction

In Chapter 1, I present a brief background of the study, indicate the rationale for and purpose of the study, and state the research questions. I also briefly discuss the concept of social justice, the research design, and research methods. Finally, I present the limitations of this study.

1.2   Back ground to the study

South African history is characterised by the segregation of Black and White people during apartheid (Kros, 2010). During apartheid, Black people were zoned according to their languages in the urban townships (Wells, 2009; MacDonald, 2006) and, by implications, were not allowed to live in the areas reserved for White people (Christie & Collins, 1982; Nkomo, 1981).

This political situation also affected the educational system in South Africa in a number of ways. In the first instance, Black parents were not afforded the opportunity to enrol their children at the schools of their choice (Nkomo, 1981). In the second instance, Black and White learners were not allowed to attend the same schools (Wells, 2009). In 1994, when the African National Congress (ANC) was voted into power, it promulgated the South African Schools Act [SASA] (Act 86 of 1996) which effectively abolished the segregation of Black and White learners mandated by apartheid legislation in this regard. Since the promulgation of SASA (Act 86 of 1996) the integration of Black and White learners at the same school has become common practice. Section 5 of this Act ensures that there is no discrimination regarding the admission of learners on the grounds race and language. Consequently, former Model C schools are now diversified in terms of ethnicity, culture and religion.

1.3   Rationale

The increasing diversity reflected in urban South African schools since 1994 has exposed learners to different cultures, religions, home languages and a multiplicity of other differences. Given the plethora of factors impacting on learners' construction of their own identities, their life world orientation has become complex. It would not be

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illogical to infer that the complexities associated with racial and cultural integration and the effect these have on learners' construction of their identities and their life world orientation would have an effect on their perception and experience of social justice at the schools they attend. It is in this regard that a study of this nature is important. Firstly, it could alert policy developers at national, provincial and school level to the importance of acknowledging and including learners' views in the design of policies, such as learner codes of conduct. Secondly, it could help curriculum developers to understand learners' curriculum concerns. Thirdly, it could sensitise teachers to differences in learner perceptions regarding just and unjust classroom and school practices.

1.3.1   Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe the ways in which participating adolescent learners give meaning to and experience the concept of social justice at their school. Informing this purpose is the assumption that adolescent learners can make sense of the concept of social justice and is able to describe what they experience as just and unjust practices at the school they attend. I would argue, therefore, that the findings of this study have relevance for policy makers, school managers and educators in the sense that it would give them a better understanding of the role that learner perceptions of social justice play in incidences of conflict and violence in general.

1.3.2   Research questions

Indications from the literature I reviewed (see Chapter 2) are that very little has been done to research and/or address the phenomenon I investigated in this study. During the focus group interviews, participating adolescent learners reaffirmed the sensitive nature of social justice, typically describing/interpreting their negative experiences at school in terms of their own understandings of social justice.

It was differences in interpretations like these which convinced me that a study like mine was essential if an answer was to be found to my research question, namely, "How do learners understand the concept of social justice?"

In order to answer the afore-mentioned research question, I set myself two sub-questions, namely:

- What are the practices that learners regard as just experiences in their school?
- What are the practices that learners regard as unjust experiences in their school?

1.4   Social justice in schools

Social justice is a concept derived from the underpinning principles of social pedagogy. These underpinning principles include the happiness and well-being of learners, promoting learners' capabilities and the promotion of social justice by abolishing social inequalities (Stone, 2010; Petrie, Boddy, Cameron, Wigfall & Simon, 2006). Nieuwenhuis (2011) asserts that social justice in education should be treated not as a theoretical abstraction, but as a way of life that governs all aspects of a person's humanity.

In this regard, Power and Taylor (2013) maintain that social injustice as experienced by learners at schools does not only arise from poverty, but also from misrecognition. Misrecognition includes various aspects of social injustice, such as cultural domination, being regarded as invisible, and being regularly criticised or belittled (Power & Taylor, 2013). Misrecognition in education exists, for example, in curriculum which promotes dominant values, thereby oppressing the values of culturally marginalised groups (Power & Taylor, 2013). It also exists in the cultural and linguistic marginalization of learners as reflected in the separation of learners from their peers during school hours and/or the overrepresentation of certain learner groupings during special education events (Hernandez, 2010). In other words, learners' perceptions of social justice depend on the way in which a school's academic curriculum/programme integrates community culture and socio-economic status (Ho, Sidanius, Pratto, Levin, Thomsen, Kteily & Sheehy-Skeffington, 2012).

Social justice as part of the underpinning principles of social pedagogy is, therefore, a principle of fairness (Rawls, 1971). If social justice is to be lived every citizen needs to involve him/herself in the protection and promotion of social justice values, principles and ideals (Nieuwenhuis, 2010).

To human beings that are marginalised, the achievement of social justice seems impossible. In developing countries, which are faced by geo-historical and scarcity challenges, social justice is obstructed (Nieuwenhuis, 2011). One approach to overcoming such marginalization and/or obstruction is to ensure that educators treat the learners in their care fairly / justly. Only then will the holistic development of learners become a reality (Stone, 2010). It is to this purpose that adolescent learners in South African schools are explicitly taught about the values of social justice in the Grade 10 to 12 Life Orientation curriculum (DBE, 2006) and implicitly exposed to these in the school's hidden curriculum (see Chapter 2).

1.5   Research design

'In this study, the 'research design' in this study could be regarded as a plan which guided me, as the researcher, in my efforts to collect, analyse and interpret data which would provide me with answers to my research questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Guided by the purpose of this study - to explore the manner in which adolescent learners understand and experience social justice in their school, I adopted an exploratory qualitative approach, one which allowed me to use a phenomenological research design. Both the exploratory qualitative approach and the phenomenological research design I used are discussed in the sub-sections that follow.

1.5.1   Exploratory qualitative approach

An exploratory qualitative approach is a scientific enquiry that produces data in a verbal form (Punch, 1998). Verbal data is obtained from the natural settings in which participants find/locate themselves (Bowen, 2008; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Put differently, the findings of an exploratory qualitative investigation emerge from the real world of the participants (Singh, 2007).

My choice of an exploratory qualitative research approach enabled me to explore and understand the phenomenon under investigation (Johnson & Christensen, 2012) as lived and felt by participating adolescent learners (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Slavin, 2007). By creating the opportunity for me to collect verbal descriptions of the ways in which these learners understand and experience the concept of social justice in their school (Monette, Sullivan & De Jong, 2014), the qualitative research approach put

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me in a position where I could explore and describe their opinions, beliefs and attitude on social justice as 'lived experiences' (Stake, 2010; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Moreover, in adopting the exploratory qualitative approach, I became the main research instrument: that is, data collection, analysis and interpretation were my responsibility. This enabled me to establish a rapport with the participating adolescent learners (Babbie, 2013), thus familiarizing me not only with their perspectives on social justice but also on the reasons informing their perceptions of the practices they experienced as just and/unjust in their school (Slavin, 2007).

Finally, the use of an exploratory qualitative approach presented me with the opportunity to report my research findings in a more interpretive manner. To this purpose, and to ensure that my research findings would reflect participating learners' interpretation of experiences, I presented my findings in learners' own words. In doing so, I ensured that my portrayal of learners' experiences reflected not my perspective on social justice but theirs (Turner, 2014; Babbie, 2013; Slavin, 2007).

1.5.2   *Phenomenological research design*

The phenomenological research design adopted in this study represented an approach to scientific inquiry in which lived and felt experiences of the adolescent learners concerned were studied (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010). Commonalities between learners' lived experiences were analysed and interpreted with the aim of drawing conclusion about the phenomenon under investigation (Monette *et.al.,* 2014; Seidman, 2013). Rooted as it is in the interpretive approach, the phenomenological research design rests on the premise that what people experience as their 'realities' are based on their perceptions and experiences (Monette *et.al.,* 2014; Holloway *et.al.,* 2010). Thus, in using this design in the exploration of learners' lived experiences and perceptions of the phenomenon being investigated (Monette *et.al.,* 2014), I was able to determine what they regard as the 'reality' of social justice reality at their school. Moreover, in that the design I chose, allowed me to also describe the practices which learners experienced as socially unjust/unfair (Seidman, 2013), I was able to view and interpret these from their perspective.

The phenomenological research design does not, however, lend itself to the generalization of findings to the larger audience (Patton, 1990), therefore my findings are applicable only to the learners who participated in my study and the context in which this investigation took place. Put differently, it offered me the possibility of developing plausible insights about the phenomenon being investigated by bringing me in direct contact with the life world being researched (Seidman, 2013). In doing so, it enabled me to understand the concept of social justice through the eyes of the participating adolescent learners (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and to understand the practices that they regard as just and unjust from their point of view (Seidman, 2013; Patton, 1990).

1.6   Research method

The research method I employed in my investigation of social justice as experienced by participating learners included sampling, data collection and data analysis techniques typical of qualitative research (Stake, 2010; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

1.6.1   Sampling

For the purpose of this study, sampling is a process I used to select a group of learners as research participants and a research site at which the data could be collected (Johnson & Christensen, 2012; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Slavin, 2007). Although the majority of South African schools would qualify for participation in this study it was not possible to include all of them. For this reason, purposive sampling was regarded as the most suitable sampling technique for this study. As the name implies, 'purposive' sampling involves the selection of research participants which could be regarded as representative of a particular phenomenon, group, incident, location or type in relation to a key criterion (Ritchie, Lewis & Elam, 2003).

Informed by this definition, I purposively selected one former Model C high school in the Tshwane South District in Pretoria. Informing my choice of a Model C school was empirical evidence that, during Apartheid, access to schools like these were restricted to White learners (Carter, 2012). As indicated in the background to my study, the so-called former Model C schools became more divers in terms of economic and social background, race, culture, religion and sexual preference after

the 1994 democratic election (Woolman, 2013; Tihanyi, 2006). It was for this reason that I regarded learners at schools like these as 'rich' data sources.

My choice of adolescents as research participants, that is, young people between the ages of 10 and 19 (Mwale, 2010; Edberg, 2009), was informed by the fact that adolescents are assumed to be psychologically mature. That is, they have developed the ability to form their own understanding of social life, sexual orientation, and issues of social justice, human rights and their responsibilities as children (Mwale, 2010). For the purpose of this study I purposively selected Grade 11 adolescent learners between 15 to 17 years (DoE, 2006) who would, in terms of the afore-mentioned assumption already have developed their own understanding of these matters.

My decision to select adolescent learners in Grade 11 was also informed by the fact that (a) in biological terms, they are perceived to be mature and able to make sense of just and unjust behaviours; and (b) they are currently the recipients of Life Orientation lessons meant to equip them with the skills, knowledge, and values they would have to apply to their lives in order to become responsible citizens (Fargher & Dooley, 2012). By implication, they were learners who were supposed to have a well-developed understanding of social justice (Heese, 2010).

1.6.2 Data collection

Relevant literature was reviewed to determine what different researchers have to say about strategies which could be employed in the investigation of challenging situations, like social justice as experienced by South African adolescent school learners. Informed by insights gained from my literature review I decided that focus group interviews would be the most suitable mode of inquiry for the purpose of this study. Because they are planned discussions, with participants describing and/or commenting on their personal experiences with regard to the phenomenon (Grey, 2014; McMillan & Schumacher, 2014; Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013), they enable researchers to collect data generated during research participants' interaction with one another (Hatch, 2002).

Focus group interviews enabled me, as a researcher, to enter the private and sensitive lives of adolescent learners (Babbie, 2013; Guest *et.al.,* 2013; Seidman,

2013). They also helped me to explore the beliefs and points of view that adolescent learners in this study hold about the concept of social justice in their schools (Liamputtong, 2011). Moreover, they enabled me to probe for more responses from the participants, especially when the group dynamics generated responses that I was not expecting (Rubin & Babbie, 2011; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Focus group interviews were particularly productive in the sense that they broke down inhibitions that would otherwise discourage participants from disclosing information (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Moreover, they activated forgotten details of experiences, thus widening the range of learner responses.

Like any other data collection method, focus group interviews also has its drawbacks, the most common one being the potential domination of discussions by the more outspoken individuals, group-think, and the difficulty of determining the viewpoints of less assertive participants (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Hatch, 2002). In order to overcome these challenges, I encouraged adolescent learners that participated in this study to maintain their focus during discussions, but I was careful not to apply too much control in case this would inhibit participants' from openly sharing their own perspectives (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Hatch, 2002) with their peers.

1.6.3   Data analysis

The data obtained from the adolescent learners was analysed and interpreted (Vogt, Gardner, Haeffele & Vogt, 2014) against the background of the research problem stated earlier. Therefore, the transcribed responses of the adolescent learners were analysed in accordance with predetermined categories (Vogt *et.al.,* 2014; Seidman, 2013; Hatch 2002) - the manner in which they understood the concept of social justice, and the just and unjust practices they had experienced in their school. I coded learners' descriptions of the phenomenon to determine differences and similarities between the codes with a view to identifying possible patterns (Sharma-Brymer & Fox, 2008; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). I then grouped related patterns into categories from which I expected specific themes to emerge. Finally, I compared the emerging themes with insights I gained from literature (see Chapter 2) on social justice, and the practices that adolescent learners regard as just and unjust experiences (Guest *et.al.,* 2013).

1.7 Limitations

Initially, I intended to use a nested sample within a sample for the comparison of results as this would have a significant impact on the number of cases the study intended to cover. The homogeneous samples would have met the intended criterion because adolescent learners who belonged to the same subculture (i.e. ethnicity) or had the same characteristics (i.e. gender, religion) would generate data that would, once analysed and interpreted, provide give a detailed picture of the phenomenon under investigation (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Hatch, 2002).

Based on the anticipated sample, the focus group interviews were expected to take place on at least two afternoons in order to avoid disturbance of the school's daily program. Each interview was expected to last for at least one hour but, in case participants' responses were more comprehensive than expected, provision would be made for differences in the length of interviews. This initial plan was not, however, executed, due to the small number of participants – ten only - who were willing to be part of this study (see Chapter 3). The ten learners that were willing to participate in this study were then asked to continue with the planned focused group interviews.

1.8 Conclusion

This study was conducted in three stages. The first stage consisted of a literature review, which was aimed at formulating the concept of social justice, and at gaining a better understanding of the practices that adolescent learners abroad and locally regard as just and unjust practices. The second stage was data collection, with one former Model C school in Tshwane District being purposively selected. Also, Grade 11 adolescent learners were purposively selected as research participants. The final stage involved data analysis, resulting in the restructuring of the research findings on participating adolescent learners' perceptions and experiences of social justice.

My research report, i.e. the report of my study comprises five chapters, each focusing on a particular aspect or area of inquiry.

Chapter 1 - Introduction, research problem and methods

Chapter 1 serves as an orientation to the study. Its purpose is to provide a brief background to the study, the rationale for and purpose of the study. It also includes

the research questions, briefly discusses the concept of social justice, and justifies the selected research design and research methods. Finally, it indicates what the limitations of the study are.

Chapter 2 - Social justice

This Chapter provides a brief historical overview of South Africa's political and educational history, and describes the current state of South African schools. It also describes the theoretical framework in which the concept of social justice is located, and defines key concepts used in the study. Finally, it discusses the findings of international and local empirical studies on the just and unjust practices that adolescent learners have experienced in their schools as presented in the literature that was reviewed.

Chapter 3 - Research design and methodology

In this chapter, I present the exploratory qualitative framework which was used to learn more about adolescent learners' experiences, perceptions, thoughts, feelings and choices in this study. I present the design of the study and the research paradigm in which it is framed. I also provide an overview of my data gathering, sampling and analysis procedures. This chapter is concluded with an outline of what I did to ensure that research ethics were maintained.

Chapter 4 - Research findings

The aim of the fourth chapter is to present the analysis of participating adolescent learners' responses regarding the manner in which they understand and experience social justice in their school. The analysis was done in terms of predetermined categories, which started with a coding of learners' descriptions of social justice - a process aimed at establishing differences between the codes through the identification of emerging patterns, the grouping of related patterns into categories, and the development of themes which lend themselves to the answering of the research questions.

Chapter 5 - Conclusion and recommendations

In Chapter 5, I present the insights I gained from my research findings, indicating how these findings support the argument presented in the research report. I unravel

the bits of information discussed in other parts of the study and draw inferences from insights gained during the inquiry. These inferences, in turn, form the basis for the conclusions I reached about participating adolescent learners' understanding and experiences of social justice. I indicate, moreover, what significance of the study is, according to my understanding, comment on the implications of the findings, and make recommendations regarding further research based on the findings of this study.

CHAPTER 2
THE EXPERIENCES OF SOCIAL JUSTICE BY LEARNERS IN SCHOOLS

2.1   Introduction

In this chapter, I present a brief historical overview of South Africa's political and educational history, as well as of the current state of South African schools. I also discuss the theoretical framework, clarify concepts related to or informing social justice, define the terms, 'life world orientation' and 'adolescent learner' as used in this study, discuss educational change in South Africa, and review the studies done by both international and local researchers on the life world orientations of adolescent learners in terms of their perceptions of fair and unfair practices in their schools.

2.2   Historical Overview

When the National Party (NP) gained political power in 1948, its government designed laws that segregated South African people on the basis of race, language and culture (Kros, 2010). As a result of laws as the Bantu (Black) Homelands Citizens Act of 1970 and the Urban Bantu Council Act (Act 79 of 1961), Black people were zoned into homelands and townships established in terms of the tribal groups to which they belonged (Wells, 2009; MacDonald, 2006). The tribal zoning of In accordance with tribal zoning dictates Black people - Zulu, Northern and Southern Sotho, Tsonga and Venda speaking people could only live in places where the same language was spoken (Nkabinde, 1997).

Zoning also had an impact on the education of black learners. The NP's Bantu Education Act (Act 47 of 1953) was specifically aimed at (a) separating Black learners from the main, well-resourced education system of White learners (Nkabinde, 1997); (b) providing Black learners with the skills they would need to service their own people in the homelands and townships, and (c) ensuring that they would work as manual labourers under white people (Christie & Collins, 1982; Nkomo, 1981). To achieve this, the NP government built schools in the homelands and townships that were meant for learners belonging to specific tribal groups (Gouwens, 2009; Butler, Rotberg & Adams, 1978). Religious English speaking

missionaries theoretically 'disrupted' this educational system by establishing missionary schools and colleges that would provide Black learners with a better version of Bantu Education than that offered by the NP (Saayman,1991; Comaroff & Comaroff, 1986). The NP government closed those institutions in 1966, placing them under the rule of the State (Ball, 2006).

The mono-cultural/ mono-racial schools established in terms of the Bantu Education Act (Act 47 of 1953), by emphasizing ethnic differences, exposed Black and White learners alike only to a single culture, language and race (Grosjean, 2010; Banks, 2015). It follows that, because neither black nor white learners had the opportunity to learn about the heritage, culture, religion and social background of learners belonging to other groups at school they developed different, 'mono-cultural' understandings of what social life was or should be like (Romano, 2008).

All of this changed in 1994 when the ANC, under the leadership of Nelson Mandela, gained political power (Ferree, 2010). Naturally, "South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994 was accompanied by challenges of democratisation and transformation across the various spheres of society" (Nieuwenhuis & Sehoole, 2013: 1). To deal with those challenges the ANC government designed and introduced a new democratic Constitution for the country in 1996, one which was intended to replace existing segregation Acts and policies. Section 3 of the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) gave all the people of the new Republic of South Africa a common citizenship. Section 21 of the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) also gave Black people the right to freedom of movement and the right to reside in any place of their choice within the borders of South Africa.

To correct existing injustices in the South African schooling system, the ANC government introduced SASA (Act 84 of 1996). This Act was aimed at the creation of a new non-racial and equal education system based on the Constitution as a basis of non-racial and equal education, past racial divisions and inequalities were specifically addressed in Section 5(4) of this Act (Act 84 of 1996). In terms of this section a) admission of learners should be done on an equal basis. That is no learner should get a special preference over the other; (b) learners would not experience any form of discrimination in the schools; (c) the admission of individuals and groups of learners in any South African schools would be fair, without

discrimination against any race, culture, religion or language; (d) schools would recognise different cultures, religions, and languages as well as the economic and social backgrounds of learners, and (e) the schools would take the physical, psychological and mental development of learners into consideration.

Section 5 of SASA (Act 84 of 1996) gave parents the freedom to enrol their children in the schools of their choice for the first time in the history of South Africa. As a result, schools, especially those in urban areas, became multiracial and multicultural (Mo & Lim, 2012), that is, they integrated learners from different cultures and races (Randolph, 2013; Howard, 2006).

South African urban schools have therefore been characterised by their diversity – in terms of race and language – since 1994 (Banks, 2015; Teeger, 2015). Learners are now exposed to different cultures, religions, home languages, sexual orientations, and other forms of diversity (Francis, 2012; Msila, 2013; 2014). By implication, the plethora of factors now impacting on learners' construction of their own identities and life world orientations, learners' understanding of social norm, values and issues have become increasingly complicated (Norton, 2013; Kumaravadivelu, 2012).

It is this complexity, and the fact that little has to date been done in this area (Holland, 2015), which motivated me to conduct a study which has the exploration of adolescent learners' understanding and experience of social justice in urban diverse secondary schools as purpose.

2.3   The theoretical framework and concept clarification

The theoretical framework of this study is social pedagogy, a theory "was developed in the midst of diverse social, political and cultural conditions as well as different semantic systems" (Hämäläinen, 2012: 5). The German educationists Karl Mager and Adolph Diesterweg, who were also educational politicians, were the first people to use the concept, 'social pedagogy' during the mid-1840 and early 1850s' (Hämäläinen, 2012).

Arguing that social pedagogy could be used to address social problems occurring in educational systems (Hämäläinen, 2003), Mager posited that, as a theory of education, it could be used to explain the social lives of the learners, while

Diesterweg posited that it could be used to address issues of poverty, social exclusion, and social inequality in education (Hämäläinen, 2012).

Following Karl Mager and Adolph Diesterweg were a number of other theorists who applied social pedagogy to different social contexts, such as the field of social work (Eichsteller & Holthoff, 2012; 2006). Their utilization of social pedagogy resulted in different cultures ascribing different meanings to the term / concept, 'social pedagogy'. It is, therefore, difficult to find a single definition for the term (Eichsteller & Holthoff, 2012; 2006; Hämäläinen, 2012). Because of this I will refer to different authors' definitions in my description of social pedagogy in the section which follows.

2.3.1   Defining social pedagogy

Since it is difficult to find a single definition of social pedagogy (Eichsteller & Holthoff, 2012; 2006; Hämäläinen, 2012) as indicated above, I will start my discussion by defining the terms, 'social' and 'pedagogy' separately. The term, 'social' is used with reference to the social life of a child, which includes his/her relationships and spiritual world (Petrie, 2011). Furthermore, it deals with a child's personal feelings, understanding of other people's feelings and needs, and the mechanism of interacting positively with others (Singer, Golinkoff & Hirsh-Pasek, 2006; Bukowski, Newcomb & Hartup, 1998). The term, 'pedagogy' is derived from a *Greek* term, where the prefix *pais*, translates to 'a child' and the suffix '*agein'*, to leading and/or upbringing a child (Eichsteller & Holthoff, 2010; Smith, 2009; Petrie *et.al.,* 2006).

With the meanings of these two terms as basis, social pedagogy can, therefore be defined as a professional social field in which pedagogues (educators) are responsible for raising a learner as a whole (Bird & Eichsteller, 2011; Petrie, 2011; Petrie *et.al.,* 2006). This process, 'raising a learner as a whole', is illustrated in a Diamond Model (see Figure 2.1 below), which is based on the premise that individuals must be treated according to their own personality (Petrie *et.al.,* 2006) of the Diamond Model, raising a learner as a whole signifies that the educator must consider (a) the learner's well-being and happiness, i.e. educators must respond to the individuals needs of a learner during and after teaching and learning; (b) focus on holistic learning, i.e. educators must support the individual learner until he/she reaches his/her full potential; (c) teacher/learner relationships – i.e. the educator

must create a positive relationship between a learner and him/herself; (d) learner empowerment – i.e. educators must lead learners in such a way that they take responsibility for their own actions, and (e) learning as a positive experience – the premise on which the Diamond Model rests - throughout the teaching and learning period.

The Aims of Social Pedagogy – the Diamond Model

Well-being & happiness

Empowerment

Positive experiences

Relationship

Holistic learning
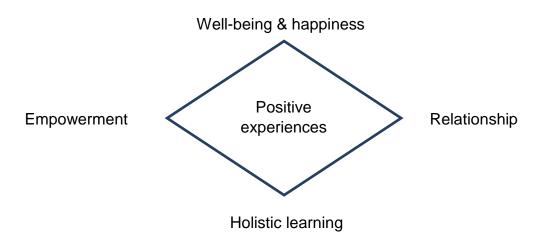
Figure 2.1: Illustration of diamond Model

For the purpose of this study, social pedagogy can be defined as a theory that requires educators to improve learners' cognitive development, emotional wellbeing and social skills, while guiding them in the forming of relationships with one another (Bird & Eichsteller, 2011; Petrie, 2011). To maintain social pedagogy as a theory to education, educators would, however, require *Haltung* skills, which are regarded as critical to the holistic development of learners (Cameron, Petrie, Wigfall, Kleipoedszus & Jasper, 2011).

2.3.2 *Haltung skills*

Haltung is a German term that roughly translates to 'ethos', 'mind-set', or 'attitude' (Eichsteller & Holthoff, 2012). "*Haltung* describes how educators can bring their own values and beliefs into the teaching profession in order to develop a learner academically and socially" (Eichsteller & Holthoff, 2012: 33).

According to Stone (2010), *Haltung* values encourage educators to (a) accept and understand the life world orientation of an individual learner; (b) allow learners to play with and love one another; (c) inspire, love and sympathise with learners; (d) value all the learners equally in a humanistic and democratic manner; (e) understand that a learner is an expert of his/her life, and (f) respect learners' individual histories and social backgrounds (Stone, 2010). These *Haltung* values are central to the underpinning principles of a social pedagogy that guides educators in the development of the learner as a whole (Eichsteller & Holthoff, 2012).

2.3.3   *Underpinning principles of social pedagogy*

According to Petrie *et.al.,* (2006) social pedagogy is underpinned by nine principles which could guide educators in their efforts to develop the learner in his/her totality. These principles are: (a) educators should by all means support the cognitive and physical development of a learner; (b) educators must always refer to learners' indigenous knowledge; (c) since educators are professionals, they are encouraged to improve on their pedagogic skills in relation to the dynamic changing world; (d) educators should share their life experiences with learners in order to prepare them for the future; (e) educators should make use of group work in order to encourage learners to form authentic relationships with one another while learning; (f) through the hidden curriculum, educators should encourage human rights and social justice among their learners; (g) educators should respect the contribution made by a learner during teaching and learning, and (h) educators should use a friendly communication strategy during their interaction with learners.

Stone (2010) offers a slightly different summary of the underpinning principles of social pedagogy, emphasizing (a) happiness and wellbeing - raising a child as a whole means that educators should also understand the emotional and spiritual side of a learner; (b) reflective practice - educators must be able to learn from their past teaching experiences in order to improve on their current teaching techniques; c) relationships - it is the educator's duty to encourage learners to form authentic relationships based on mutual respect, love and fairness; (d) sharing life space - educators must teach learners to learn about and respect other peoples' cultures and religions; (e) social justice - it is the aim of social pedagogy to eradicate social exclusion and inequalities by using educational strategies which will give learners

equal opportunities to attain their capabilities; (f) head, heart and hands (holistic approach) - the heart part means that educators should be aware of their emotions and they should try to ensure that these do not harm the relationships they have with the learners. The hands are concerned with the learners' group work, which educators can use to help them form authentic relationship while learning, and (g) positive experiences- educators should create a positive learning experience in order to help the learners achieve their capabilities.

For the purposes of my study, the following two principles underpinning social pedagogy informs my view of social justice as a concept: (a) through the hidden curriculum, educators should encourage human rights and social justice among their learners (Petrie *et.al.,* 2006), and (b) social justice as an aim of social pedagogy implies the eradication of social exclusion and inequalities that may take place in the society through the use of educational strategies that will give learners equal opportunities to attain their capabilities (Stone, 2010). The concept, 'social justice' is discussed in the next section.

2.4   Social justice

The term, 'social justice', can be traced back to the very first social contract theories, developed by the likes of Hugo Grotius (1625), Thomas Hobbes (1651), Samuel Pufendorf (1673), John Locke (1689), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1762) and Immanuel Kant (1797) during the 17th and 18th century (Falaky, 2014; Nieuwenhuis, 2010). The meanings that these theorists ascribed to social justice according was informed/shaped by their particular beliefs and cultural orientations (Hytten & Bettez, 2011), thus further complicating the definition of social justice as a concept (Hytten & Bettez, 2011; Tapper, 2013 & Zajda, 2006; Furman & Gruenewald, 2004; Bogotch, 2002). I will, therefore use different theorists' views on social justice as basis for my summary of the concept in the section which follows.

2.4.1   Defining social justice

Social justice is a concept that is used with reference to the justifiable equal rights of individuals in a society (Fleurbaey, 2018; Barry, 2005; Miller, 1999; Rawls, 1971) and/or with reference to the imperative to afford disadvantaged people in society equal the same rights and opportunities as those afforded to the advantaged

(Fleurbaey, 2012; Barry, 2005; Miller, 1999; Rawls, 1971). According to Barry (2005), social justice implies the abolition of inequalities which may exist in a society. Zajda (2006), elaborating on this view, posits that social justice is a feature of societies governed by democratic principles and/or the upholding of human rights. According to Nieuwenhuis (2010: 283), social justice is an "ideal vision that must become a way of life that permeates all aspects of being human" while Rawls (1971) argues that it is an act whereby institutions justly/fairly distribute resources to its people.

In the context of this study, the term, 'social justice', is used to refer to the fair distribution of educational resources, such as infrastructure, funds, human rights and learner opportunities (Opotow, 2012; Brighouse, 2000). For the resources to be fairly distributed it is imperative that notions of what a society is, should recognise/acknowledge that it is "made up of interdependent parts, with an institutional structure that affects the prospect of each individual member and is capable of deliberate reform by an agency such as the State" (Miller, 1999: 6). It follows that schools should, therefore, be guided by social justice principles if educational resources are to be fairly distributed, human rights protected, and equal opportunities provided to all its learners (Rawls, 1971).

2.4.2   Principles of social justice

According to Tikly and Barret (2011), there are three principles of social justice that should inform the way in which schools manage issues related to educational resources, human rights, equal opportunities. These are: (a) the principle of redistribution, which should ensure that resources required for quality education are equally available and distributed to all learners; (b) the principle of recognition, which places the responsibility on schools not only to identify and support learners who are orphans, victims of HIV and Aids, and/or are vulnerable in any way but also to acknowledge and accommodate different cultures, religions, races and sexual minorities, and (c) the principle of participation, according to which schools should give individual learners equal opportunities to participate in any event of their choice and to voice their opinions on what they regard as fair or unfair without fear of intimidation. One of the approaches that could be used to determine whether or not

this is the case in any of all schools is the capabilities approach (Gale & Molla, 2014; Fennell, 2013; Nussbaum, 2011; 2003), which is described below.

2.4.3   The Capabilities approach

The 'Capabilities Approach' is a theory that was first developed during the 1980s and 1990s by the Nobel Laureate economist and philosopher Amartya Sen, and further developed later by Martha Nussbaum **(**Gale & Molla, 2014; Wilson-Strydom, 2011). It was Nussbaum who mooted that it was a person's capability which determines the value of his/her life because it determines the quality of life to which s/he is entitled in a socially just society (Sen, 2009; Nussbaum, 2008). Since it explicitly states the principles applicable to the development of individuals in society (Unterhalter, Vaughan & Walker, 2007), the capabilities approach could serve as a philosophical frame of reference for the identification and/or assessment of the manner in which or the extent to which social justice issues like equity and individual entitlement are addressed in an organisation, an institution, or a society (Nussbaum, 2003).

2.4.4   Principles of capabilities approach

According to Sen (2009; 1999; 1992), the capabilities approach is based on five principles: the attainment of freedom in relation to an individual's benefits/advantages in society; the ability of the individual to convert resources to his/her or other members of society's benefit; the happiness which individuals derive from being provided with these resources; the balance between materialist and non-materialist factors in ensuring human welfare in the society and, lastly, the equal and fair distribution of resources, human rights and opportunities individuals within a society.

The principles on which the capabilities approach rests could assist schools in their attempts to ensure that learners are accorded the rights and freedoms they need to enjoy their school lives (Sen, 1999) and that they develop the capabilities they need to later have full and satisfying lives as adults (Nussbaum, 2011). In other words, schools could use the list of capabilities identified in the capabilities approach as core requirements for a satisfying and dignified life entitlements for human flourishing and living life with dignity (Nussbaum, 2000) to guide the way they handle their learners and/or their social justice issues. In doing so, schools would ensure that

learners at their school are accorded basic freedoms, that their human rights are not violated, and that they are fairly and equally provided with the resources and opportunities they need to reach their maximum potential (Nussbaum, 2011). Moreover, the list of capabilities could also be used to guide the development of school policies which would ensure the holistic development of learners as indicated in social pedagogy (Brighouse, 2004).

2.4.5 *The list of capabilities*

According to Nussbaum (2003) the eight capabilities related to the human rights and entitlements of learners are quality of life; bodily/physical health; bodily integrity; sense, imagination and thought; emotions; practical reasoning; other species, and play. The relation of each of these capabilities to social justice as argued in the capabilities approach is briefly described in the list that follows.

- Quality of life – Learners must be put in a position that will allow them to live lives that worth living till the end of their days.
- Bodily health – Learners must be taken good care of and provided with proper shelter to ensure that their general and productive health is sound.
- Bodily integrity – Learners must be able to move from one place to another without any fear or disturbance. They must be protected against any form of violence, such as assault, sexual assault and domestic violence, and allowed to choose their own sexual preferences.
- Senses, Imagination, and Thought – Learners must be given the opportunity to use their senses, to imagine, to think and reason. All of these actions must be performed in a truly human way, informed and cultivated by an adequate education inclusive of include literacy and basic mathematical and scientific training. Learners must be encouraged to freely use their imagination and thoughts in connection with their experiences, in order to produce works and events of their own choice in religion and music. By implication, their right to freedom of expression should be guaranteed.
- Emotions – Learners should form attachments to things and people outside themselves, encouraged to love those who love and care for them and allowed to grieve for them in their absence.

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- Practical reasoning – Learners must be able to demonstrate the knowledge learnt from their surroundings, such as their homes.
- Other specie – Learners must show concern and care for animals, plants, and the world of nature.
- Play – Learners must have the opportunity to play, laugh and enjoy recreational activities.

It is Nussbaum's list of capabilities above I used in my study to determine adolescent learners' understanding and experiences of social justice or injustice at urban secondary schools.

2.5   Adolescent learners

As indicated throughout my study, I used adolescent school learners as my research participants. The word, 'adolescent', is derived from the Latin word, '*adolescere'*, which is defined as 'to grow up' (Macmillan's Dictionary, 1981). Adolescence refers to the stage of development in which a child finds him/her self from his/her 10th to 19th year (Mwale, 2010; Edberg, 2009). It is during this stage that adolescent children develop methods by means of which they and acquire knowledge, skills, experience, values, and social relationships that will help them as individuals to eventually participate fully in the affairs of the community (Edberg, 2009). It is also the stage during which they "discover" themselves as someone who is "unique, uncertain, and questioning … [their] position in life" (Kohlberg & Gilligan, 1971: 105).

According to Kohlberg (1975), adolescence is universally the stage during which children develop moral values. Gilligan (1982), focusing on differences in the way male and female adolescents do this, posits that males define and/or experience morality and, by implication, the values on which it is based, in terms of justice and fairness while females do so in terms of compassion and sacrifice. According to Gilligan (1988), male views on justice as an element of morality are informed by their perceptions of fair and unfair behaviour in the way people relate to or interact with one another. Female views, on the other than, are informed by the value they attach to compassion and sacrifice, specifically in situations where one or more 'vulnerable' people are in need of protection and care (Gilligan, 1988). According to Ford and Lowery (1986), the integration of these two (male and female) moral orientations is

critical to a better understanding of the moral development of adolescents. It is, however, the life world orientations of adolescents (Jennings & Niemi, 2015; Mezirow, 1997) that are used as basis for the exploration of adolescent research participants' understanding of justice and fairness in my study.

2.6   Life world orientation

The term, 'life world orientation', is used as "a synonym for everyday orientation" (Grunwald & Thiersch, 2009: 132) and/or to describe the "everyday life of citizens" (Spatscheck, 2012; Grunwald & Thiersch, 2009). In addition to this, according to Deinet (2007), life world orientation is also used to determine how individuals' perceptions are informed by their everyday experiences.

The life world orientation of the individual can only be fully understood if it is viewed from the perspective of 'situated' life or living conditions, which include his/her ethnic background, culture, religion, language, family and friends (Eichsteller and Holthoff, 2012). This is important because each person is different and has developed unique survival mechanisms which must be respected and understood (Eichsteller & Holthoff, 2012). Applied to education, this means that educators who know and understand learners' life world orientations are in a better position to understand and support individual learners on ways of leading their daily lives (Spatscheck, 2011) than those who do not. Moreover, according to Deinet (2009), the holistic development of learners is dependent on educators' knowledge and understanding of their regional life worlds.

My study explores the life world orientation of adolescent learners in terms of their understanding and experiences of social justice in diverse urban secondary schools. Because South African schools have not always been diverse, and because the life worlds of learners in the new schooling system differ markedly, I also discuss the changes which have taken place in the South African education system since 1994. My purpose in doing so is primarily to explore the ways in which learners at these diverse schools understand social justice as a concept and a phenomenon at their school.

2.7   Educational change in South Africa

Since 1994, educational expenditure has increased substantially, with more than twenty percent of the national budget currently being allocated to education. The purpose of this increase is not only to accrue possible economic benefits but also to politically redress past inequalities and injustices as part of the reconstruction of the education system (Adams & Bell, 2016; Baily & Katradis, 2016). The changes brought about by the April 1994 elections in South Africa reflects the kind of shift from authoritarian to democratic rule that has also occurred in many other countries (Christie, 2016; Naicker & Mestry, 2016).

Since 1996, every South African's personal and group rights have been protected by the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996), the supreme law of the country. Not only does the Constitution guarantee the protection of language, religious, cultural, and education rights but it also accords individuals and groups numerous liberties and freedoms, including freedom of expression. To ensure that these rights and freedoms would be protected and promoted by the State a range of Acts and policies have also been developed.

2.7.1   The South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996)

The South African Constitution, Section 9(3) (Act 108 of 1996), was designed to ensure that none of the people in the Republic of South Africa would be subject to discrimination on the basis of race, gender, pregnancy, marital status, age, ethnic or social origin, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture and birth.

The 1995 White Paper on Education and Training, informed by these Constitutional principles, laid the basis for the creation of a new, non-racial, education (DoE, 1995). Aimed as it was at ensuring the provision of equal learning opportunities and educational rights and promoting non-discrimination, the White Paper served as basis for the development of new education and training policies which were aimed at addressing the under- and inequitable development perpetrated by Bantu education (DoE, 1995).

The publication of the White Paper was followed in 1995 by the promulgation of SASA (Act 84 of 1996). Like the White Paper, it was aimed at (a) redressing past injustices in education through the creation of a new educational system; (b) ensuring the provision of high quality education for all learners and the laying of a strong foundation for the development of all the learners' talents and capabilities; (c) promoting the democratic transformation of society; (d) fighting against racism, sexism and other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance; (e) promoting an understanding of and the protection of cultural, religious and languages diversity, and (f) protecting the rights of learners, parents and educators.

Chapter 2 of SASA (Act 84 of 1996), focusing specifically on respect for the rights of the learners, stipulated the rules and regulations to which schools and learners would be subjected in the new system. First, school attendance would be compulsory for all children 7 years and older. In terms of the Act, it would be the responsibility of parents to ensure that their children go to school. Exemption – partial or conditional – from compulsory attendance could only be given by Heads of Department (HoD) and only if it were in the best interests of the learner. Second, admission to public schools had to be fair to all the learners irrespective of their race. Third, the language policy of public schools should not in any way discriminate against learners on the basis of race. Fourth, although religious observance at schools was not prohibited, its attendance should not be compulsory. Fifth, school codes of conduct could only be adopted after the SGB had consulted with the learners, parents and the educators associated with the school. Sixth, while the governing body of a school may, on reasonable grounds and as a precautionary measure, suspend a learner suspected of serious misconduct from attending the school, such suspension may only be enforced after the learner had been granted a reasonable opportunity to make his/her representations in this regard to the governing body. Seventh, corporal punishment was prohibited: any educator who administered corporal punishment would be guilty of an offence and liable to conviction and sentencing. Eight, a Representative Council for Learners (RCL), on which learners from Grade 8 onwards who are enrolled at the school could serve, had to be established to represent all the learners of the school.

In addition to the post 1995 educational Acts and policies, the Department of Education (DoE) called on all educators to advocate/apply the values and principles

of social justice (Francis & Le Roux, 2011) in their lives (Nieuwenhuis, 2011) and in their places of work. These values and principles include the fair distribution of educational resources, respect for and protection of human rights and the creation of equal opportunities for all learners (Brighouse, 2000; Christie, 2012 Opotow, 2012; 2011). By 'living' these values and principles, educators would ensure that learners are, as advised in social pedagogy (Petrie *et.al*, 2006), exposed to them through the hidden curriculum (Horn Jr, 2014; Warren, Roberts, Breunig & Alvarez, 2014; Resh, 2012) and, hopefully adopt them as their own.

2.7.2 *The hidden curriculum for social justice*

The phrase, 'hidden curriculum', was established during the 20th century (Fantini & Weinstein, 1968) by John Dewey (1859 – 1952), and subsequently used and expanded by the education philosopher Philip W. Jackson (1928 – 2015) and other educationalists (Granger, Cunningham & Hansen, 2015). According to Jackson (1990), the hidden curriculum refers to the 'rules, regulations, and routines of things educators and learners must learn if they are to make their way with minimum pain in the social institution called the school'. It is, therefore, the hidden curriculum, although it has no formal structure, which determines/establishes norms, values, and beliefs informing the operation of schools and which, by implication, are transferred to the learners and results in the maintenance of positive social relationships in the school and classroom (Giroux,1983).

One of the responsibilities of educators is the creation of a socially just environment in their classrooms schools. Notions of fairness conveyed and learnt through the hidden curriculum could be used by educators in trying to understand the life world orientation of adolescent learners (Cropanzano, Fortin & Kirk, 2015). Their behaviour towards their profession, other staff members, learners and parents would therefore be part of the hidden curriculum. The ways in which they distribute learning material, include or exclude learners, punish them, and respond to different cultures, religions, languages and sexual orientations (Miles, 2015; Peguero, 2012) could all be experienced as either fair or unfair by learners. In both cases, these would have an impact on the way learners perceive social justice and, by implication, on their moral development and behaviour (Resh, 2012; Anyon, 1980).

School practices experienced as fair by learners not only help learners to understand what is regarded as appropriate school behaviour (Miles, 2015; Willis, 1977) but also contribute to the development of moral criteria and their ability to create socially just experiences for themselves (Mncube, 2013) and others. By treating one another fairly, compassionately and respectfully (Leiter, 2014; Karten, 2009; Willis, 2007), they will not only be behaving 'morally' (Staub, 2013) but will also be contributing to a pleasant, inclusive and supportive school environment. Implied in such behaviour is adolescent learners' 'moral responsibility' to show respect for other learners' cultures, religions, sexual orientation, and for those in positions of authority figures at their schools (Leiter, 2014; Karten, 2009; Willis, 2007). In addition to this, they could, by involving themselves in RCL or SGB activities, take part in decision-making that affects them and their fellow learners directly SASA (Act 86 of 1996), thus ensuring that learners concerns are addressed and learner voices heard.

The section which follows serves as a summary of my review of literature dealing with studies conducted by international and local researchers on the life world orientation of adolescent learners and their experiences of fair and unfair practices at urban schools characterised by learner diversity.

2.8 The life world orientation of the adolescent learners in terms of the just and unjust practices in the diverse secondary schools

In this section, I focus on literature dealing with the life world orientation of adolescent learners, with specific references to their experiences of just and unjust practices at urban diverse secondary schools. The insights I gained from my literature review in this regard are presented here in terms of two categories – fair and unfair practices. Under each category I present the studies done by international as well as local researchers.

2.8.1 *Practices that adolescent learners regard as fair at international urban secondary schools.*

The practices that adolescent learners experience as fair at international urban secondary schools are classified under the following themes: sympathy and friendship, exclusion, physical education, religious observance, and discipline.

a)   Sympathy and friendship

Adolescent learners in European and American urban schools regard sympathy as an important value on which friendship should be based (Daniel, Dys, Buchmann & Malti, 2015; 2014). The friendships they regard as fair and authentic (Kingery, Erdley & Marshall, 2011). are those in which everybody sympathises with one another (Graham, Munniksma & Juvonen, 2014; McGill, Way & Hughes, 2012).

Adolescent learners in multiracial urban schools agree, indicating that mutual sympathy results in the forming and maintaining of friendships that are not based on race, culture, religion or sexual orientation (Munniksma, Scheepers, Stark & Tolsma, 2016; Turner & Cameron, 2016; Graham *et.al.,* 2014; McGill *et.al.,* 2012.

b)   Exclusion

The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children give all adolescent learners in European and American urban secondary schools the right to be included in and given equal and fair education (Holland, 2015) in schools of their choice. Even so, adolescent learners in New Zealand urban secondary schools feel that it is fair to exclude learners with mental problems (O'Driscoll, Heary, Hennessy & McKeague, 2015) from certain schools. According to them, "including these individuals would threaten cohesive peer dynamics and impose a personal cost on them within the peer group" (O'Driscoll *et.al,* 2015: 65).

A form of exclusion that adolescent learners experience in American, Asian and European urban secondary schools is based on sexual orientation (Bostwick, Meyer, Aranda, Russell, Hughes, Birkett & Mustanski, 2014; Mustanski, Van Wagenen, Birkett, Eyster & Corliss, 2014). Adolescent boys at some of these schools thought that it was fair to exclude gays or lesbians from their social school lives (Heinze & Horn, 2014; Maher, 2013; Hitti, Mulvey & Killen, 2012; Toomey, McGuire & Russell, 2012). Adolescent learners from Chinese urban secondary school are of the same view, arguing that homosexuality is against their religion (Feng, Lou, Gao, Tu, Cheng, Emerson & Zabin, 2012).

c)   Physical education

Physical education in America, Asia and the United Kingdom has become part of the curriculum (Van Deventer, 2015). When adolescent learners were asked whether or not they considered its inclusion into the curriculum as fair practice (Conklin, 2014), they indicated that its inclusion had no bearing on issues of fairness: physical education, according to them, was a necessity because it helped them to learn about and better understand other learners' culture (Conklin, 2014).

Apart from the opportunity that sport gives them to learn about and understand other adolescent learners' cultures, adolescent boys in American secondary schools perceive it as an activity that helps them stay out of trouble (Veliz, Boyd & McCabe, 2015; Busch, Loyen, Lodder, Schrijvers, van Yperen & de Leeuw, 2014). Adolescent girls, on the other hand, value sport as an activity that helps them to reduce their weight (Grant, Young & Wu, 2015).

d)   Religious observance

Adolescent learners view religious observance in American, European and Australian urban secondary schools as a fair opportunity to socialise with other adolescent learners, rather than as devotion or as a means to identify with certain religious practices (Krauss, Ismail, Suandi, Hamzah, Hamzah, Dahalan & Idris, 2013; Cheadle & Schwadel, 2012). Because they treat religious observance as part of their socialisation (Niens, Mawhinney, Richardson & Chiba, 2013), they find it easy to adapt to the main religion of the school.

Christian and Muslim adolescent learners at these schools have a positive attitude towards religious practices at urban secondary schools because they view it as a platform from which they can express their own opinions without being unfairly judged (Grundel & Maliepaard, 2012), hence teaching them to respect the views of other adolescent learners (Grundel & Maliepaard, 2012).

e)   Discipline

Adolescent learners in Asian urban secondary schools perceive discipline as fair in the sense that it could be used as a tool for the maintenance of social and professional relationships between learners and educators (Yuen, Lau, Lee,

Gysbers, Chan, Fong & Shea, 2012). According to them, fair disciplinary measures also help to improve academically (Tymms, Curtis, Routen, Thomson, Bolden, Bock & Summerbell, 2016; Wissinger & De La Paz, 2016). Adolescent learners attending American multiracial schools also regard positive punishment at schools as one of the methods used to teach them obedience to the rules of the school and later, to the rules of society and their country, in order to become responsible citizens (Thapa, Cohen, Guffey &Higgins – D'Alessandro, 2013).

Adolescent learners at European and Asian schools regard punishment as fair if it is administered equally (Germán, Gonzales, Bonds McClain, Dumka & Millsap, 2013), whereas those at Canadian urban secondary schools regard it as fair because it is appropriate to the offence/s they committed (Gregory, Clawson, Davis & Gerewitz 2014; Mitchel & Bradshaw, 2013).

2.8.2 *The practices that adolescent learners regard as fair experiences in South African urban secondary schools*

Indications from literature on South African adolescent learners' perceptions of fair and unfair practices are that they experience discipline, physical education, medium of instruction, and curriculum as fair practices.

a)   Discipline

Adolescent learners from South African townships and multiracial schools alike perceive the policy that replaced corporal punishment as just (Meinck, Cluver, Boyes & Loening – Voysey, 2016). They perceive the abolition of corporal punishment as a fair practice (Gershoff, Purtell & Holas, 2015) because it does not inflict pain on their bodies (Zuze, Reddy, Juan, Hannan, Visser & Winnaar, 2016).

The alternatives to corporal punishment, according to them, do not result in their hating the educators who are disciplining them (Murray & Milner, 2015) or absenting themselves from school for fear of being violently punished (Zuze *et.al.,* 2016). In addition, these non – violent punishments make it easy for them have good relationships with their educators (Gershoff *et.al.,* 2015).

b)   Physical education

Adolescent learners in South African multiracial schools regard participation in sport activities as a just practice because it enables them to learn and understand other learners' cultures (Sedibe, Kahn, Edin, Gitau , Ivarsson & Norris, 2014; Van Hout, Young, Bassett & Hooft, 2013) and contribute to their health (Mchunu & Le Roux, 2010; Pule, Drotsky, Toriola & Kubayi, 2014). Coloured boys in South African urban secondary schools added that their participation in sporting activities helped them stay out of trouble (Kruger & Sonono, 2016). Moreover, a sport like soccer gave them the opportunity to be recognised by professional teams in which they could play once they are done with school (Sedibe *et.al.,* 2013). White adolescent learners, however, perceive sport as a way to relax (Malan & Van Deventer, 2013).

c)   Medium of instruction

South African urban secondary schools situated in Johannesburg and Pretoria include adolescent learners with different home languages (Blankstein *et.al.,* 2016), hence the language of instruction is determined by the educator concerned: if she/he is English, instruction will therefore be in English (Blankstein, *et.al.,* 2016). Indications are, however, that most of the multiracial urban schools in these cities use English as the medium of instruction (Barrett & Bainton, 2016). Adolescent learners perceive this as fair practice (Desai, 2016) because, unlike Afrikaans, English is a universal language (Taylor & von Fintel, 2016).

d)   Curriculum

Adolescent learners at urban secondary schools perceive Life Orientation (LO) as a fair subject (Shefer & Macleod, 2015) because it teaches them about issues related to sexual orientation and being human (Shefer & Macleod, 2015), issues that have an effect on their daily lives (Shefer & Macleod, 2015). They believe, moreover, that LO can change heterosexual adolescent learners' negative attitudes towards those who are inclined to homosexuality, i.e. gay and lesbian learners (Roman, Davids, Moyo, Schilder, Lacante & Lens, 2015).

Adolescent learners also revealed that LO helps them understand which practices that infringe on their human rights (Roman *et.al.,* 2015), and informs them about the

different platforms they could use to report incidents like these (Manu, Maluleke & Douglas, 2016).

2.8.3 *The practices that adolescent learners regard as unfair experiences in the international urban secondary schools*

Practices and incidents at school experienced as unfair by adolescent learners at international urban secondary schools include lack of sympathy, exclusion, religion, bullying, and sexual harassment.

a)   *Lack of sympathy*

Adolescent learners attending American, Asian and American urban secondary schools perceive friendships that lack sympathy as unfair (Foshee, Benefield, Puvanesarajah, Reyes, Haberstick, Smolen & Suchindran, 2015; Niolon, Kuperminc & Allen, 2015; Foshee, Reyes, Vivolo-Kantor, Basile, Chang, Faris & Ennett, 2014) because, according to them, it is caused by individuals who are self-focused and self-indulgent (Foshee *et.al.,* 2015; Niolon *et.al.,* 2015). These individuals, they argued, did not care about the friendship but only about themselves (Schwartz, 2012). In justifying their claim, they argued that individuals who were unsympathetic towards their friends (Taylor, Mumford & Stein, 2015; Alexander, Hutchison, Clougher, Davis, Shepler & Ambroise, 2014; Manning, Longmore, Copp & Giordano, 2014) inevitably hurt the latter emotionally (Manning *et.al.,* 2015).

b)   *Exclusion*

Adolescent learners in American and European urban schools perceive the exclusion of adolescent learners with mental or psychological problems as unfair (Ellenbroek, Verkuyten, Thijs & Poppe, 2014) and discriminatory (Cressen, Gupta, Ahmed & Novoa, 2015; Killen & Cooley, 2014; Benner & Graham, 2011). They argued that God would like adolescent learners with mental or psychological problems to be given the same opportunities as those not suffering from the same problems (Ellenbroek *et.al,* 2014; Killen & Cooley, 2014).

c)   *Religion*

Adolescent learners in American and Australian urban secondary school regarded it as unfair to discriminate against learners who do not belong to the religion practised

by the majority of learners at the school (Khishfe & BouJaoude, 2016; Scharmann & Southerland, 2016). In this regard, Jewish learners attending American and British urban secondary schools revealed that they experienced prejudice and criticism from educators and learners alike (Moulin, 2014). The reason for this, they indicated, could be ascribed to the belief that the Jewish religion is misleading and illusory (Howley & Tannehill, 2014), a belief that also results in the unfair misrepresentation of their religion in teaching and learning (Moulin, 2014).

d) Bullying

Adolescent learners from European, Australian and American urban secondary schools perceive bullying as an unfair act because, according to them, it undermines the rights of those who are being bullied (Horner, Asher & Fireman, 2015; Adeoye, 2013; Cassidy, Brown & Jackson, 2012; Bradshaw, Waardrop & O'Brennan, 2013). They indicated that all bullying, regardless of the type (i.e. traditional or cyber bullying) is unfair (Napoletano, Elgar, Saul, Dirks & Craig, 2015). Adolescent learners who had themselves been bullied felt that bullying was unfair because it caused them embarrassment (Birkett, & Espelage, 2015; Salmivalli, 2014).

Adolescent learners' perception of bullies is that they are people who suffer from emotional problems, have a low self-esteem (Evans, Smokowski & Cotter, 2014; Reece, Bissell & Copeland, 2015) and/or seek attention and popularity in the school (Reece *et.al.,* 2015).

e) Sexual harassment

Adolescent boys in American and European urban secondary schools indicated that they saw nothing wrong with touching girls' buttocks (Jamal, Bonell, Harden & Lorenc, 2015; Page, Shute & McLachlan, 2015). Adolescent girls who had been touched in this way without their consent perceived it as unfair to them (Schnoll, Connolly, Josephson, Pepler & Simkins – Strong, 2015). They indicated, moreover, that other forms of sexual harassment they had experienced at school – sexual name calling, unwanted sexual jokes and gestures – were also unfair to them (Berkowitz, De Pedro & Gilreath, 2015).

Furthermore, Adolescent boys from Nigerian and Zimbabwean urban secondary schools revealed that they perceived the touching of girls' body parts as having fun

(De Vries, Eggers, Jinabhai, Meyer-Weitz, Sathiparsad & Taylor, 2014). However, the adolescent girls felt that it was unfair for anybody to touch their bodies without their permission (Pettifor, MacPhail, Anderson & Maman, 2012), and therefore regarded it as sexual harassment (Berkowitz *et.al.,* 2015).

Also included in girls' perception of sexual harassment were boys raising a middle finger at them, sticking their tongues between two fingers as a symbol of sexual intercourse, winkling at them to show their interest in a girl, scratching the palm of the adolescent girl's hand during a hand shake in order to arouse her sexual feelings, and performing dance moves in a manner that suggested sexual activities (Museka & Kaguda, 2013; Espelage, Basile & Hamburger, 2012).

g)   Extra-mural activities

In American urban secondary schools, girls regarded as unfair the fact that certain sport codes, such as Netball, were given less exposure than others – Basketball and American football, for example (Glennie & Stearns, 2012). Some girls also regarded it as unfair that they were being forced to participate in sport (Stiglbauer, Gnambs, Gamsjager & Batinic, 2013; Wang & Eccles, 2012), especially if it led to their being teased by other adolescent learners about their body structure and/or inability to perform well in the sporting code concerned (Stiglbauer *et,al.,* 2013; Wang & Eccles, 2012). This sentiment was also expressed by obese adolescent boys and girls at Asian secondary schools (Fitzgerald, Fitzgerald & Aherne, 2012).

h)   Discipline

Afro-American (Black) and Latino American adolescent learners at urban multiracial schools experienced it as unfair that White learners were less harshly punished than they were (Peguero, Shekarkhar, Popp & Koo, 2015; Skiba, Horner, Chung, Karega Rausch, May & Tobin, 2011). In justifying their claims in this regard, they indicated that they were more likely to be suspended or expelled from school than their white counterparts (Skiba *et.al.,* 2011) even if the offence they committed was the same. According to them, they are simply regarded as a problem that must be solved by the school authorities (Howard, 2013).

i)   Sexual orientation

In Ghanaian urban secondary schools, learners understand homosexuality as a sexual condition that is not only unethical but also a sin (Allotey, 2015). 'Straight' adolescent learners at Nigerian urban secondary schools also perceive gays and lesbian as people who are seeking attention by going against the will of God (Chinwuba, 2014).

2.8.4   Experiences that learners regard as unfair in South African urban secondary schools

Practices which adolescent learners experience as unfair at urban secondary schools include social background, discipline, participation, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, and racism.

a)   Social background

Adolescent learners at South African urban secondary schools indicated that, because wealthy parents could take their children to the best schools (Hernandez, 2013), the education system was unfair. According to them, the quality of education is therefore determined by the amount of money a learner's parents have, and that this is unfair to other, less wealthy learners (Msila, 2013). More specifically, according to them, it was unfair to learners who have to attend overcrowded township schools because their parents did not have the financial means to ensure that they received education of a high quality (Dalvie, Sosan, Africa, Cairncross & London, 2014; Msila, 2013).

Adolescent learners indicated that they were aware of the fact that learners living in suburban areas were exposed to education of a better quality than those living elsewhere (Cross & Whitelock, 2016). They also stated that it was unfair that government gave schools in the suburbs all the necessary educational materials (Hill, 2016), thus making former Model C schools the only schools with a proper infrastructure (Tucker, George, Reardon & Panday, 2016).

b)   Discipline

Adolescent learners perceive corporal punishment as unfair practice (Breen, Daniels & Tomlinson, 2015). According to them, corporal punishment constitutes violent

behaviour forcing them to obey the rules of the school (Mampane, Ebersöhn, Cherrington & Moen, 2014). They stated, moreover, that corporal punishment was the main reason for them often staying away from school (Mthanti & Mncube, 2014; Ncontsa & Shumba, 2013). They also indicated that corporal punishment made them feel defenceless, especially if the principal did not take any action against the educators who were administering it (Mafora, 2013).

Adolescent learners were of the opinion that some educators who abstained from using corporal punishment because it was abolished in South African schools (Hunt, 2014) replaced it with verbal abuse, such as name calling and sarcasm (Mncube & Harber, 2014; Naicker, Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2014). Learners who had experienced name calling felt that it was, for example to be called 'stupid' in front of their classmates (Ngakane, Muthukrishna & Ngcobo, 2012) and to be exposed to sarcasm aimed at humiliating or belittling them when they had done something wrong in the classroom (Mncube & Harber, 2014; Naicker, Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2014).

c) *Participation*

In South African schools, learners are allowed to be part of the (SGB) to ensure that their rights and interests are not neglected (Mncube, 2014), and that they have equal decision-making powers during policy deliberations (Mncube *et.al.,* 2014).

According to adolescent learners it was unfair, however that they were not given a fair chance to voice their opinions in the SGB (Mncube, 2013). They were also upset by the fact that they were at times not even invited to SGB meetings where decisions were taken (Mncube, 2013) and/or when sensitive issues, such as expulsion of a learner, were discussed. In these cases, they were often asked to move out of the meeting (Mncube, 2013; Mncube, Davies & Naidoo, 2014).

d) *Sexual orientation*

In South Africa, adolescent learners believe that it is unfair to discriminate against other learners on the basis of sexual orientation (Mostert, Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2012) because a person does not choose to be gay or lesbian (Mostert *et.al.,* 2012). Furthermore, adolescent learners from South African urban multiracial schools offered a solution to solve the discrimination of gays and lesbian, suggesting that the

curriculum must include a learning area based on homosexuality (Mhlauli & Muchado, 2015). They further stated that, if adolescent learners are informed about homosexuality, the unfair discrimination that is directed to the gays and lesbians would be reduced (Mhlauli & Muchado, 2015).

Gay and lesbian adolescent learners felt that it was unfair to be discriminated against because of a sexual orientation you did not choose (Benner, Crosnoe & Eccles, 2015). They also regarded it as unfair that when they reported name-calling to educators the latter did nothing to protect them (Mafora, 2013; Msibi, 2012).

e)   Racism

Adolescent learners in South African multiracial secondary schools indicated that they were aware of government efforts to create non-racial schooling environment (Wells, 2009; MacDonald, 2006). However, Black adolescent learners still perceived the treatment they got from school personnel at former Model C schools as different from that of White learners (Makoelle, 2014). Black adolescent learners in White-dominated schools also felt that it was unfair that most of the instructions are given in Afrikaans (Makoelle, 2014).

Furthermore, Black adolescent learners felt that White educators were biased against them (Botha, Myburgh & Poggenpoel, 2012). They cited examples of such bias when, for example, fights break out between a Black and White adolescent learners. According to them, the Black adolescent learner is typically blamed for starting the fight (Botha *et.el.,* 2012; Makoelle, 2014). Also, according to them, multiracial secondary schools only recognise the culture of White educators only (Makoelle, 2014).

2.9   Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented a brief historical overview of South African political and educational history, as well as the current state of South African schools. I also discussed the theoretical framework and clarified concepts drawn from social justice discourse. In this regard, the terms, 'life world orientation' and 'adolescent learner', were defined and discussed. Educational change in South Africa was described and studies done by international and local researchers on the life world orientation of

adolescent learners, in terms of their perceptions of fair and unfair experiences at their schools, was summarised.

In Chapter 3, I present the research design and methodology that I employed to answer the research questions stated in Chapter 1.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

In the current chapter, I present the research design and methods I adopted for the collection and analysis of data on the ways in which adolescent learners understand and give meaning to the concept of social justice and perceive just and unjust experiences at their school. Strategies used to ensure trustworthiness and maintenance of ethical considerations is also described.

3.2   Research design

In this study, I use the term, 'research design', to refer to the strategies that guided me in the collection, analysis and interpretation of data aimed at finding answers to the research questions which directed my study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). I also view it as "a plan, which moves from the underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of respondents, the data gathering techniques used and the data analysis done" (Creswell *et.al.,* 2007: 70).

Guided by the purpose of the study – an investigation of adolescent learners' understanding and experience of social justice in urban secondary schools, I adopted an exploratory qualitative approach to describe the phenomenon under investigation (Babbie, 2013). The exploratory qualitative approach adopted for this study is discussed in the sub-section that follows.

3.2.1   *Exploratory Qualitative research*

The exploratory qualitative research approach adopted in this study enabled me to gain an understanding of the underlying opinions of adolescent learners participating in this study regarding the concept, 'social justice' (Blaikie, 2009; Saldaña, 2015). It also enabled me to comprehend the just and unjust practices as experienced by the adolescent learners in this study (Blaikie, 2009). In addition, exploratory qualitative research put me in the position to form a holistic picture of the just and unjust practices experienced by participating adolescent learners at their school (Creswell & Clark, 2007). In return I was able to report in detail, from these learners'

perspectives, the manner in which they understand and experience social justice (Gitlin, 2014; Creswell & Clark, 2007).

Like any research design, exploratory research also has its limitations. These include the fact that the data obtained through exploratory qualitative research cannot be generalised to a larger population (Flick, 2009). To overcome this limitation, I studied and interpreted the responses of the sample (Wilborn, Farnham, Marutzky & Knapp, 2013). I then generalised the findings I obtained from the sample to the population represented by the sample (Wilborn *et.al.,* 2013; Flick, 2009).

Another potential limitation was that my previous knowledge and the beliefs I have about social justice could constitute bias during my interpretation of results (Saldaña, 2015; Gitlin, 2014). I overcame this limitation by suppressing the previous knowledge and beliefs I have about social justice in order to ensure that they do not play any role in the interpretation of the results of this study (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Schwandt, 2007). In order to ensure this, I shared the audio recording and transcripts of the responses I obtained from participating adolescent learners with my supervisor and co-supervisor (Saldaña, 2015; Gitlin, 2014). They then compared these to the findings of the study to ensure that my own beliefs about and knowledge on the phenomenon did not interfere with my findings (Schwandt, 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

3.3   Phenomenological research design

The study was conducted in terms of a phenomenological research design, which is rooted in the interpretive approach (Monette *et.al,* 2014). This paradigm is based on the assumption that the reality of adolescent learners in terms of social justice emerges from their perceptions (Monette *et.al,* 2014) and experiences (Schwandt, 2007). The phenomenological research design employed in this study enabled me to gain an understanding of participating adolescent learners' life world orientations in terms of social justice (Hennik *et.al,* 2011). It also enabled me to describe the just and unjust practices that the participating adolescent learners were experiencing in their school (Seidman, 2013; Cresswell, 2008; Patton, 1999; Welman & Kruger, 1999).

When I adopted the phenomenological research design I was aware of its limitations. One of them is the interest that participants may or may not have towards the phenomenon (Patton, 1990). For example, if they were not interested in the phenomenon, they might not respond to the research questions (Patton, 1990). In order to overcome this limitation before it could even occur, I employed focus group interviews as my data collection instrument. The compassion of the focus group gave the adolescent learners in this study confidence and interest necessary for them to participate in peer discussions on the phenomenon (Welman & Kruger, 1999). In addition, the group dynamics that existed during the discussions played a role in maintaining adolescent learners' interest in and focus on social justice issues being discussed (Rubin & Babbie, 2011; Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

3.4   Research methods

In this study, the research methods were the tools I employed to collect relevant data on the manner in which adolescent in this study understand and experience social justice in their school (Stake, 2010; Rubin & Babbie, 2011). These tools, which included sampling, data collection and analysis, are discussed in the sections which follow (Babbie, 2013).

3.4.1   Sampling

Sampling is a process I used to select the research site (a school) and the sample (group of adolescent learners) that represented the population of the school where data was collected (Wilborn *et.al.,* 2013; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Slavin, 2007). The selected group of adolescent learners was a mixture of boys and girls, therefore, the views that the group of the selected adolescent learners offered were described in terms of these two perspectives (Wilborn *et.al.,* 2013).

The sampling process used in this study, which included the selection of a research site and research participants, is discussed in the next sub-section.

3.4.1.1   Sampling strategy and selection of research site

The majority of South African secondary schools would have qualified to be selected as research sites. However, since it was not possible to include all of them. I adopted

purposive sampling as a suitable sampling strategy in this study (Marutzky & Knapp, 2013). As the name implies, the primary focus of a purposive sampling strategy is to select the members of a sample with the 'purpose' to represent a particular location (research site), group (population), and incidents in relation to the collection of data in a diverse environment (Ritchie, Lewis & Elam, 2003). Using purposive sampling, I intentionally selected a school and a group of learners who were representative the population of adolescent learners at the school where data would be collected (Creswell, 2008).

More specifically, I purposively selected one former Model C high school in the Tshwane South District (Pretoria) to which I was an outsider. My choice of this particular school was informed by empirical evidence that during the apartheid government, such schools were reserved for White learners (Carter, 2012; Soudien & Sayed, 2003). However, soon after the first democratic elections in 1994, Model C schools, including the one I selected, became diverse in terms of ethnicity, culture, religion and socio-economic background (Tihanyi, 2006; Woolman, 2013).

Another reason for my choice was that the selected school is situated in the urban suburb between Johannesburg and Pretoria. In this study, an urban suburb is regarded as a residential area that is a part of the city (Hollow, 2011). The parents whose children are enrolled in the school come from different provinces of South Africa, which is the reason it includes Black, White and Coloured learners. The ethnic diversity of the school's learner population, implying its diversity in terms of culture, religion and socio-economic backgrounds, would therefore provide me with rich data on the phenomenon being investigated, hence my selection of it as a research site. The final reason for my selection was that the school was not far from the University of Pretoria and, as I did not have enough funds to travel to a school that was far from where I was studying, it was a convenient choice.

3.4.1.2   Selection of participants

The participants I purposively selected were Grade 11 adolescent learners. In this study, adolescent learners are regarded as young people who are in the developing stage 10 to 19 years of age (Resh, 2012; Mwale 2010; Edberg, 2009). They are also

regarded as having developed the psychological maturity to relate to what was happening in society (Edberg, 2009; Heese, 2010; Anyon, 1980).

For the purpose of the current study, the selection of Grade 11 adolescent learners was based on a number of assumptions. First, they have psychological developed in such a way that they can give meaning to the concept of social justice (Mwale, 2010; Edberg, 2009). Second, they have matured enough to make sense of the just and unjust practices in their school. Third, they would be able to voluntarily share the just and unjust practices they had experienced in their school. Last, they had been receiving Life Orientation lessons meant to equip them with the skills, knowledge, and values they should apply in their lives in order to become responsible citizens (Fargher & Dooley, 2012). It was, therefore, for these reasons that I regarded Grade 11 adolescent learners as potentially having a rich understanding of the concept of social justice.

To involve the Grade 11 adolescent learners in my study, I requested permission to conduct the study at the school from the chairperson of the SGB (see Annexure A). In the requisition letter, I stated the topic and purpose of the study; indicated what the data collection instrument would be, the type of learners the study intended to draw data from, the assistance researchers required, the number of days we were going to spend at the school, and the duration of the interviews. The anonymity and confidentiality of the participants if they agreed to participate in this study, the potential risks to them and the ways in which we would attend to these were also highlighted in the letter. It was also made clear in this letter that there would be no benefits attached to participation in this study.

The requisition letter to the SGB was accompanied by the letter of approval from the Gauteng Department of Education (GDE), allowing me to conduct a study in one of any Gauteng public schools as well as by and ethic approval letter from the University of Pretoria. The approval letter from the GDE stated the topic and purpose of this study as well as the conditions I had to adhere to (see Annexure B). The ethics approval letter from the University of Pretoria (see Annexure C) served as proof that the University of Pretoria trusted that I would abide by all the ethics rules of qualitative research and ensure no harm to participants. The SGB accepted my

request and gave me permission to conduct this study at their school (see Annexure D).

Upon receiving the SGB approval letter to conduct this study, I requested to meet with the principal (site visit) in order to explain the purpose of the study, sampling processes, and data collection procedures. My request being granted, a site visit was important because I needed to familiarise myself with the environment of the school. Because of the sensitivity of the study and the vulnerability of the learners in terms of their age I requested my co-supervisor to accompany me to the site and to also assist with the data collection procedure.

After we agreed on a time and the days we would visit the school we then requested the assistance of Grade 11 class educators in the identification of learners between the ages of 18 and 19. Instead, the principal assigned an educator co-ordinator to organise the adolescent learners that were eligible to participate in the study and to communicate the research activities to their parents/guardians. This approach played an important role in this study. Again, due to the sensitivity of this study, I do not believe that a stranger like me could have managed to win the trust of parents and learners in the study.

Two weeks before data collection I met with the educator co-ordinator in order to give her letters requesting parents/guardians to allow their children to take part in the study. The letters were given to the identified adolescent learners to give to their parents. This was considered the only convenient delivery mode to parents/guardians (see Annexure E). In these letters, I stated the topic and purpose of the study, as well as the data collection instrument, the place where focus group interviews would take place, and the duration of the focus group interviews. In these letters, it was also stated that I would maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of the school and their children. I attached the consent forms to the letters for the parents/guardian of the adolescent learners (see Annexure F) to sign in order to indicate that they allowed their children to participate in this study.

Two days before the data collection I went to the school to find out about parents/guardian response to the letter sent to them through their children. I found out that only ten adolescent learners were permitted by their parents to participate in the study. I must admit that it was kind of a shock that so few of the adolescent

learners were allowed to take part in the study. This immediately sent a message that other parents/guardians did not allow their children to take part, because they believe that social justice is a topic that should be discussed by the politicians (Harrell – Levy, Kerpelman & Henry, 2016). Also, the study took place during the time when there was racial tension in South Africa (Goldberg, 2016).

The adolescent learners that were allowed by their parents/guardians to take part in the study were, however, representative of all races and gender in the school (see Table 3.1 below).

Table: 3.1: The sample of grade 11 adolescent learners

Ethnic group	Number of adolescent learners	Gender
White	1	Female
Indian	1	Female
Coloured	1	Female
Black	1	Male
Black	6	Female

The ten adolescent learners indicated in the table above the sample that represented the rest of the learners in the selected school. This sample may seem small. However, in the qualitative approach, the focus generally is not on sample size but rather on sample adequacy because generalisability, as stated earlier, is not what this study is aiming for. Hence, the adequacy of sampling is usually justified by the reaching of "saturation" (Fargher & Dooley, 2012; Bowen, 2008) and is used by researchers as an indication of quality (Guest, 2006). Furthermore, the small sample I obtained helped me to avoid repetitive responses that could have been generated in a larger sample (Ritchie *et.al.,* 2003).

What is noticeable in the sample is that the number of Black learners exceeds that of other races. This reinforces what previous studies have revealed, namely that the majority of learners in the former Model C schools are Black although the majority of educators are White (Mo & Lim, 2012; Randolph, 2013; Howard, 2006).

3.4.2 *Focus group interviews*

Drawing on the characteristics of my phenomenological research design, the previous subsection outlined the process in which the researcher and the participants engaged with one another in laying out the experiences of the participating adolescent learners.

The focus group interviews enabled interactions among the adolescent learners which produced rich data (Hatch, 2002). It was in these planned discussions that the Grade 11 adolescent learners discussed and commented on the manner in which they understand and experience the concept of social justice in their school (Guest *et.al.,* 2013; Grey, 2014; McMillan & Schumacher, 2014).

The focus group interviews were held and audio-taped in the allocated class within the school, which is the natural setting of the participating adolescent learners. Conducting the focus group interviews at the school of the participating adolescent learners made them feel at ease (Stake, 2010; Flick, 2009), and safe with us although we were strangers to them (Stake, 2010; Flick, 2009). This resulted in adolescent learners freely recalling the just and unjust practices they experienced at their school.

It took longer than expected for adolescent learners to take their seats for the interview. Their reluctance to settle down could have been the little voice whispering in their ears, "Where are my friends?" Why is it only the few of us? Does it mean other parents did not allow their children to participate? Why did mine allow me? Does it worth one's while to participate? Consequently, they could have been unsure whether or not they were doing the right thing to be part of this study. Based on the sensitivity of the phenomenon under study, this behaviour did not surprise us.

In realising this scenario, it quickly registered that we needed to work harder to gain their trust. We began the focus group interview process by first introducing ourselves and explaining the reason we have asked them to join us. We then read the invitation letters together with them with the emphasis that they were free to withdraw their participation at any time without giving any explanation should they wish so. We also asked them if we could use a tape recorder and explained the reason it was needed. That was followed by a five-minute question and clarity

seeking time. They were then requested to sign consent letters should they still be willing to take part in this study (see Annexure G).

The consent letters that they signed indicated that they understood that their contact classes would not be disturbed; that they granted us permission to use some of their time after school hours; that their identity and everything they shared with us during the interview would be tape-recorded; that the interviews would remain anonymous and confidential; and that they would be expected to provide written or oral comments on the draft report on the interviews.

The above activity helped us to establish a rapport between ourselves and the participating adolescent learners (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). The rapport was further strengthened when we explained the interview procedure. They were encouraged to express themselves fully and honestly and give each other a chance to speak. We also explained to them that there was no correct or wrong answer. They were asked not to share any information generated in this discussion with anyone outside their focus group. And last, we assured them that their names and that of the school would not be shared with anyone (Guest *et.al.,* 2013).

After establishing a rapport with the participating adolescent learners, we offered each of them learner with a card that had a number on it. Instead of using their names, the numbers on the cards were used to identify adolescent learners. In order to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, the same identity numbers were used during the data analysis process. We then asked them to each raise a card anytime they wanted to respond or comment on the issue that was being discussed.

The following three questions were asked during the focus group interviews: *Question 1*: What do you understand by the concept of social justice? *Question 2*: Would you kindly share and discuss the just practices you have experienced here at school? *Question 3*: Would you kindly share and discuss the unjust practices you have experienced here at school?

When asked to share their understanding of the concept of social justice, only two adolescent learners at first responded to the question. The others looked a bit puzzled. However, the responses given by these two learners seemed to draw the rest of the group into the discussion (Rubin & Babbie, 2011; Nieuwenhuis, 2007),

and they started contributing. As they kept on producing different responses we realised that they were gaining confidence about the phenomenon (Wilborn *et.al.,* 2013; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Slavin, 2007). When the second question was asked about the just practices they had experienced in their school, learners maintained the momentum gained during the first question.

However, it was in the third question, on unjust practices they have experienced in their school, that we noticed some reactions from adolescent learners. These came at the time when one of them raised an issue about racism as part of unjust practice she has experienced in the school. The other adolescent learners did not respond, instead they made a "grumbling" noise. Since this was a debatable topic in the country by then, we quickly realised that the other adolescent learners were not comfortable to discuss racism that they were experiencing in the school.

We then started probing the adolescent learner who expressed racism as a problem in their school by asking her to share examples of what she meant (Guest *et.al.,* 2013). First, she sketched scenarios that she regarded as racism. When she started talking about practices she regarded as racism, the other learners were reminded of unjust racial practices they had experienced in the school (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). In essence, the probing strategy that we employed was productive enough to widen the range of responses (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). It also helped activate forgotten details of their own experience of unjust practices in other learners (Guest *et.al.,* 2013).

Through the focus group interview that we had with the participating adolescent learners, I was able to understand the meaning of social justice from their perspective (Liamputtong, 2011). I was also able to understand the practices that adolescent learners perceive as just and unjust in their school (Rubin & Babbie, 2011). In addition, through the focus group interview I was able to explore the beliefs and perceptions they have about the concept of social justice (Liamputtong, 2011).

We did, however experience a challenge in that certain learners who were more outspoken, dominated discussion, that there was 'group thinking, and that it was therefore difficult to determine the viewpoints of less assertive participants (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). We overcame these challenges by first, encouraging discussion among the adolescent learners. We then asked them to give each other a chance to speak. We also constantly kept asking them not to disrupt a person who

had been given a chance to speak. Last, but not least, we reminded them throughout to focus on the question that was being discussed, doing so without exerting so much control that they might be inhibited in their responses (Hatch, 2002).

We ended the discussion after an hour and thirty minutes but before we dismiss them we asked them if they would like to say anything. Responding to this question they indicated that they thought this was an interesting topic and that they would like to debate it further in their school. They also recommended more time for topics such as this to be discussed. We concluded the session by thanking them for sharing their views with us and respecting us.

3.4.3   *Data analysis*

In this study, I refer to the term "data analysis" as the process in which I transformed raw audio data into understandable written information (Babbie, 2014; Braun & Clarke, 2006). I started the process of data analysis by listening to the audio tape with the aim of understanding word by word all that the participating adolescent learners expressed during the focus group interview (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Listening to the adolescent learners' responses gave me an opportunity to remember the emotions and actions that were attached to their responses (Babbie, 2013).

After listening to the audio-tape, I transcribed adolescent learners' responses onto the transcripts (Babbie, 2013; Seidman, 2013). I then categorised the written transcript into three categories (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014), namely: (a) adolescent learners' understanding of the concept of social justice; (b) the *just* and (c) the *unjust* practices they had experienced in their school. I also coded the data in terms of the numbers that were given to the participating adolescent learners and gender (i.e. F 1 means Female number 1) (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014).

Having transcribed the audio recording, I started to interpret the findings of the study by first identifying the themes that emerged under different categories (Babbie, 2014; Braun & Clarke, 2006). These included the manner in which community members treat one another at times of crime; humanity; respect of the authority; human entitlement; disciplinary measures; reconciliation; grievances; oppressive curriculum; racial discrimination; unequal opportunities, and popularity.

3.5   Trustworthiness

"Trustworthiness is the process I used to test the validity of the collected data, by checking with them if they agree with the manner in which their responses are presented" (Major & Savin – Baden, 2010: 183). I used trustworthiness as a criterion to assess data analysis and findings as they occurred in this study (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The aim of establishing trustworthiness was to be sure that the research findings were worth paying attention to (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). I achieved trustworthiness by adhering to the methodological norms of focus group interviews (Ajjawi & Higgs, 2007), ensuring that they satisfied the criteria of credibility, thick description, conformability, and auditing (Ajjawi & Higgs, 2007).

3.5.1   Credibility

Lincoln and Guba (2000) describe credibility as the result of an evaluation that has a purpose, and determining whether or not the research findings represent a credible conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the participants' original data.

The credibility in the current study was achieved by maintaining the consistency of the findings in terms of two criteria - rigor and credibility - as conceptualised by Ajjawi and Higgs (2007). The use of the phenomenological approach as frame of reference for my research design enabled me to maintain the rigor of the study since it required the use of systematic data collection and analysis.

 I was transparent in documenting these methods and consistent in operating within the assumptions and traditions of the research paradigm and design (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Furthermore, I identified several strategies in literature on research methodology that could enhance rigor in exploratory qualitative research. These included the congruence between the adopted research paradigm and chosen methods, and the use of audio taped records and field notes during data analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

3.5.2   Thick description

To ensure that the collected data provided "thick descriptions" on the manner in which adolescent learners understand and experience the concept of social justice in schools, I not only constructed an original field text but also drafted, redrafted and

shared research interim texts with participating adolescent learners (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This assisted me in my attempts to ensure that I did not exclude anything which conveyed adolescent learners' understanding and experiences of social justice in the school.

In doing so, I also maintained the transparency of the whole research process. The recursive, reflective and reflexive nature of this process was intended to bring to light, amongst others, that my being in the field made me the main instrument for data collection and analysis in this study (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). It showed that, with my lived experiences at the forefront during all the stages of the research, I as the researcher was not a distant, detached person; in fact, I sometimes became too passionate about understanding adolescent learners' understanding of and experiences of social justice in schools thus, as Phillion (2008) would have said, "investing" in their descriptions.

3.5.3 Conformability

Conformability refers to the measure of how well the research findings are supported by the data collected (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). I wanted to ensure that the data and interpretations I presented in this study were not allusions to my own experiences, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions, but those of adolescent learners who participated in this study. Being quite aware that I could influence the interviews to a certain extent, thereby making all interpretations subjective, my co-supervisor and I kept on searching for a deeper understanding and interpretation by asking multiple but related questions at various stages during the focus group interview (e.g. "Is this what you said? Did you say this? What did you mean by this…?").

In addition, we constantly asked for the clarification of terms used in different social groups during the transcribing stage. In order to harness our own subjectivity in favour of authentically presenting the understanding and experiences of the adolescent learners, we engaged them in discussions towards the end of the interview, where the recorder was switched off and where they felt free to accept, correct or reject our interpretation of the interview.

3.5.4 Auditing

Auditing is described as a procedure where a third party (i.e. examiner) systematically reviews the audit trail maintained by the researcher (Schwandt, 2007). In this study, the raw data (audio-tape recorded focus group interview), interview transcripts, interview guides, list of participants, as well as my field notes were audited by my supervisor and co – supervisor throughout the study period to validate their accuracy and authenticity.

In addition to the above, I presented the transcriptions to participants in order to ask them to correct errors of fact. This was aimed at making sure that I represented them and their ideas accurately (Mertler, 2005). Finally, I submitted my final report to the program called "Turn – it – in" as per the university's requirement to ensure its originality.

3.6   Ethical considerations

In this study, I maintained the research ethics required to protect the safety and the rights of the participants (Marguerite, Lodico & Spaulding, 2010). The following were the steps I took to maintain the ethical procedures of this study.

a) I applied for ethics approval at the University of Pretoria.
b) I requested permission from GDE and SGB of the school where data was collected.
c) I requested consent from the parents/guardians of minors, as well as adolescent learners themselves.

During the data collection process, we considered informed consent, voluntary participation, protection from harm and privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality.

3.7   Conclusion

In Chapter 3, I presented the details of the research design and methodology which assisted me in finding answers to the research question. My research design also serves as a road map which could guide the audience and/or reader through the processes I used to arrive at my research destination.

To achieve the above mentioned I started by expressing the purpose of the study. I then justified my selection of exploratory qualitative research, explained the phenomenological research design and described the role it played in achieving the purpose of this study. In addition, I gave an overview of the purposive sampling strategy that I used to select the research site and adolescent learners who participated in this study. I discussed the focus group interview which I used to collect data from the adolescent learners, the thematic analysis I used as a strategy to analyse the data of how adolescent learners give meaning to and experience social justice in secondary schools and the steps that were taken to ensure the trustworthiness, credibility and ethics code informing the study.

In Chapter 4, I present and interpret the manner in which the participating adolescent learners give meaning to and experience social justice in their school.

CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1   Introduction

In Chapter 3, I presented an outline of the research design and methodology, which included a description of the research instruments and the purpose for which they were selected, the procedures used for sampling, the data collection and analysis techniques, and the ethical issues that had to be considered during the study.

In this chapter, I present my findings in the following manner. Firstly, I report adolescent learners' understanding of the concept of social justice. By interlacing my own understanding with what they did not say as they debated and discussed, I then draw conclusions about the ways in which their understanding of social justice might have influenced their judgment about the just and unjust practices at their school. Secondly, I present their experiences of just practices and unjust practices experienced at their school. Finally, based on insights I gained from listening to and analysing their understanding and experiences of social justice as well as from my interpretation of their debates and discussions, I present my conclusions on how their experiences might have affected the way they behave towards other learners and educators at school.

4.2   Learners' understanding of the concept, 'social justice'

Learners who participated in this study attached several meanings to the concept of social justice. These include the manner in which community members treat one another in times of crime, consideration, respect for authority, human rights, and entitlements. These are discussed in the sub-sections which follow.

4.2.1   The manner in which community members treat one another in times of crime

Adolescent learners in this study linked the manner in which community members treat one another in times of crime to the concept of social justice. For instance, one of the learners (F1) expressed the view that, "as the community, we must learn to handle our issues before we can even involve the police. If someone commits crime in the community, the people must solve that crime socially without calling the

police". Reiterating this point of view, another learner (F2) pointed out that "when the community stand together to solve the crimes they are faced with, they limit the chances of crime hence less involvement of police in every incidence taking place in the community". "Punishing people who are practicing witchcraft in the community is a case in discussion, because witchcraft cannot be taken to the court of law", another learner (F3) argued.

The responses of the participating adolescent learners cited above indicate that they are aware of the fact that, in fact, less than one in a hundred crimes are ever solved. Mentioned as reasons for this are that files are either lost or sold by the police, resulting in the culprit, going free and the extensive period of time lapses between the moment that the crimes were committed and the finalisation of court cases. Therefore, according to some of the learners, when the community solves crime on their own, it sends a message to criminals that community members are ready to protect their belongings and lives. They also believe that when the community solves crime on its own, it is helping those managing the police force to utilize their resources somewhere else, where they are needed more. It is for these reasons that adolescent learners in this study understand social justice to be standing together as a community to combat crime.

Other learners, though, were for the view that social justice is not served if the community stands together to fight crime without the involvement of the police. In defending this view, one of the learners (F4) stated that "handling crime matters as the community may lead to violence, because you may find out at the later stage that the person that has been accused of crime was not guilty." In suggesting what he deemed to be the appropriate way of attempting to solve crime in the community, another learner (M1) was adamant that "when someone realises that what the community is doing could raise emotions, he/she must try to stop the community and call the police before someone loses his/her life".

These learners argued that a person suspected of committing a crime must be fairly tried in a court of law. In other words, a person cannot be punished before he/she has been proven guilty beyond reasonable doubt in a court of law. It is for this reason that they believe that punishment of an accused by the community, without the involvement of the law, infringes on the right of the suspect to have a fair trial as

stated in the constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996). They also justified their argument by pointing out that in most of the cases that are handled by the community mercy is not shown, which leads to the death of the accused. It is for these reasons, therefore, that they understand fighting crime without the involvement of law officials as socially unjust.

Applying learners' understanding of the concept of social justice to the school context, it is evident that they regard it as the responsibility of the school community to promote social justice. More specifically, according to learners, it is the duty of every stakeholder, not only of the school principal or the educators alone, to ensure social justice at school.

4.2.2   Consideration of others

Adolescent learners in this study understand social justice to mean consideration of others. According to one of the learners (F3), "social justice is about being truthful to the people around you. Other learners, elaborating on this statement, felt that there "is a way of being truthful to another person, because people confuse being truthful with being hurtful. For instance, you cannot say to someone that he/she is fat. That person is going to get hurt emotionally" (F5). "However, being hurt is determined by the manner in which you are told that you are fat" (F6). Elaborating on the notion that one should be truthful to other people without hurting them, another learner (F7) argued that, "if you want to warn your friend that he/she has gained weight, you must call him/her on the side and say I think you should consider going to the gym, rather than saying you are fat". "It is true being told that you are fat is hurtful, even though it is the truth", stressed the other learner (F5).

The scenario above indicates that some adolescent learners in this study understand that consideration of others and their feelings is important in the forming of authentic relationships with one another. According to them, authentic relationships formed in or out of school are supposed to be based on a consideration of others' feelings. They also believe that truthfulness between individuals in a relationship is one of the fundamental values of a healthy relationship. It is therefore not surprising that learners in this study understand social justice as an act of being truthful/considerate

to the people around you provided that the truth must be conveyed in a manner that will not hurt the person concerned.

Also, relating the above situation to the school context, participating adolescent learners cited cases where some of them were refused permission to take part in certain school activities because of their physical appearance and/or mental capabilities. Others were denied the opportunity to take subjects of their choice because of what educators described to be their lower intelligence level. In this way, learners in this study feel, they are denied social justice since they are not free to perform activities or study courses of their choice.

4.2.3   Respect for authority

Adolescent learners in this study understand social justice to be respect for authority. In this instance, they cited their educators as authority figures. "Social justice is about respecting your educators", one of the learners (F4) opined. One of her peers (Learner M1) agreed, adding that "every human being regardless of power, status or race deserves to be respected and to be given the dignity they deserve".

The above responses indicate that participating adolescent learners understand the importance of respecting authority figures. As far as they are concerned their educators qualify as such and must, therefore, be respected. They believe, moreover, that respect must be shown to the person in authority regardless of his/her ethnicity or economic background. In other words, according to them, showing respect to adults (educators), irrespective of their race, gender and economic background equals social justice.

4.2.4   Human rights

Participating adolescent learners also related social justice to human rights. This was evident from a comment by one of the learners (F8) that "social justice is about respecting other people's human rights". Another learner (F9), elaborating on this statement felt that "social justice is to be given a platform to report the people who are violating your human rights on the social media".

The views of these learners indicate that they understand and value human rights. According to them, respect for human rights is one of the principles of social justice, and therefore needs be honoured and protected by the authorities. In the school context, they understand this to mean that the principal and educators are the ones who are supposed to protect their human rights by giving them a platform to report incidents that are infringing on their human rights. It is for this reason, therefore, that they equate social justice with respect for the human rights of other people.

4.2.5   Human entitlement

Adolescent learners who participated in this study associate social justice with human entitlement. For instance, one of the learners (M1) emphasized that "social justice is something that a society must receive from the government in terms of service delivery". "If the society does not have toilets, for example, the government must serve them with the toilets" (Learner F7). These views clearly indicate that, as community members, adolescent learners in this study find it socially unjust for some communities to have services while others do not. As far as they are concerned, social justice means equal sharing of services, resources and opportunities.

Accordingly, adolescent learners in this study believe that, in the school context, they are entitled to basic educational resources like textbooks, exercise books, sporting facilities and laboratory equipment. In a socially just school environment, according to them, learners must have equal access to these and must be allowed to choose which of these resources they want to use for their educational benefits.

4.2.6   Conclusion

Externality   **Internality**

Entitlement   Considerateness

Must be provided   **Social
                          justice**

                                                           Respectfulness

Must be self-enforced

= human rights
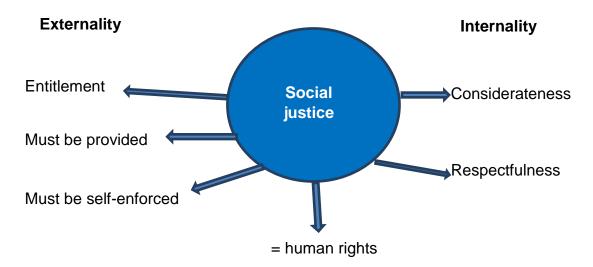
**Figure 4.1: Illustration of 5 elements of the concept of social justice brought
to the fore by learners**

Based on the 5 elements brought to the fore by learners as illustrated on the diagram above (see figure 4.1), I conceptualised their answers in terms of three major distinctions: answers which reflect a view of social justice as something that is an externality and those which reflect a view of it as internality. Informing the first – social justice as an externality – is the view that somebody else is responsible for ensuring that social justice is served (the government, local authority or the school) but that, if the system fails to provide it, it must be self – enforced. Informing the second - social justice as internality – is informed by the view that all people have an obligation towards others and carrying out this obligation would ensure social justice (e.g. through consideration and respect). The third group has an almost legalistic or learned response to social justice – equating it with human rights without trying to engage it at a deeper level.

4.3   Learners' experiences of just practices in the school

According to the adolescent learners who participated in this study, disciplinary measures, religious observance, clemency/forbearance, and the manner in which their grievances are addressed are experiences that they regard as just practices.

These experiences, as described by the participating adolescent learners, are further discussed in the sub-sections that follow.

4.3.1 Disciplinary measures

Disciplinary measures at the school attended by the learners who participated in this study are mostly experienced as socially just/fair. For instance, one of the learners (F1) said, "When I was late for school the educator gave me a demerit. I feel that a demerit was a just punishment, because I was wrong for coming late to school". Another learner (F8) said that, "When it comes to discipline, our school is just because we are not subjected to corporal punishment". She (F8) added, "I think the different punishments that we receive in this school make it easy for us to learn from our mistakes". Yet another learner (F3), also talking about corporal punishment, said, "I think harsh punishment such as corporal punishment can make the learners to hate or have negative attitudes towards educators and the school in general".

Indications from these responses are that adolescent learners in this study experience the disciplinary measures taken at their school as just because, according to them, these measures are aimed at teaching rather than punishing them. On the one hand, they perceive the kind of discipline to which they are subjected as a tool that is used to help them succeed and thrive in terms of their school work; on the other hand, they perceive it as a means of preventing them from taking part in risky behaviours, such as drugs and alcohol abuse. Also, according to them, the manner in which they are disciplined makes it easy for them to comply with the rules of the school willingly. For these reasons, they regard the ways in which they are disciplined in their school as socially just.

4.3.2 Religious observance

The adolescent learners who participated in this study also regard religious observances at their school as socially just. This was indicated in comments like: "Our school is dominated by Christians; however, you do not need to be a Christian in order to be enrolled as a learner in this school. We are also not forced to join the morning assembly which practices Christian religion only. I think the reason we are not forced to practice Christianity in this school is that there are learners and educators who belong to Islam and Hindu religions" (M1). A slightly different point of

view was taken by Learner F9, who said, "Our school does not concentrate much on religious values, but on the values of the school, such as respecting our educators and class mates".

The adolescent learners' discussions indicate that they made a clear distinction between school and religious values. According to them, their school does not concentrate on religious teachings but on the values of the school. These include respecting people and the property of the school. Even so, and although leaners from religions other than Christianity are not forced to join, school days typically commence with a prayer, hymn singing and scripture reading.

4.3.3   Clemency/forbearance

The adolescent learners in this study experience the showing of clemency/forbearance as a socially just practice. This was brought up by one of the learners, who said, "I gossiped about some of my classmates by spreading rumours about them in the social media. Later I realised that what I did hurt them. I then went to them to apologise and they forgave me. What struck me in this incidence is when they acknowledged that they provoked me". "It is just to apologise after hurting someone, but you cannot force or expect forgiveness", another learner said. "You need to give the person time to heal before you can expect him/her to forgive you", a third learner argued.

Indications from these responses are that learners value the importance of living together in peace and harmony. According to them, peace and harmony created through reconciliation is a fundamental principle of social justice. Where there is peace and harmony, the mood and attitudes of educators and learners are positive, something which is necessary for the formation of authentic relationships as described in the values informing social pedagogy. Therefore, as far as learners are concerned, the reconciliation they experience at their school plays a vital role in its being a socially just school.

4.3.4   The manner in which learners' grievances are addressed

The participating adolescent learners perceive the manner in which their grievances are being addressed by the principal and educators as socially just. In relation to the

grievances, one of the adolescent learners (F1 Black) said, "When we reported an educator who was out-casting Black learners in class to the principal, the principal called that educator to order, and after that we noticed that we received equal treatment as our White classmates". Another learner (F6 White) said, "I had a problem with a certain educator who was ill-treating me. I then reported her to the Grade head and the matter was resolved. Since, then she treats me with respect and I also respect her".

These comments from participating adolescent learners indicate that their principal puts the interest of the learners first. For example, if learners complain about certain educators, the principal protects their right to learn under conditions that are not discriminatory in terms of race or gender. This was evident from the fact that, when they reported educators who were marginalizing or ill-treating them during teaching and learning changed their behaviour towards them after the principal had spoken to them. It is also worth mentioning that, according to the learners, their educators respect the principal's authority since they changed their behaviour after they were reprimanded by the principal. It is for these reasons, therefore, that adolescent learners in this study regard the manner in which their grievances are addressed as socially just.

4.3.5   *Conclusion*

The diagram (see figure 4.1), which is based on the information provided, indicates that there is alignment between learners' understanding of social justice and their experience thereof. Consideration is unpacked in greater detail in terms of two important concepts: reconciliation and clemency. Reconciliation gives direction and purpose to consideration in the sense that being considerate towards others opens the possibility for the reconciliation of differences, something which is only possible if one adopts an attitude of clemency/forbearance. Looking at social justice as an externality, it is evident that social justice can only be provided if a sound system of school discipline, inclusive of learners and educators, is in place.

4.4   **Learners' experience of unjust practices in the school**

The experiences that adolescent learners in this study regard as unjust practices in their school include an oppressive curriculum, racial discrimination, unequal

opportunities, unequal economic backgrounds, and poor leadership skills. These experiences are described in the sub-sections which follow.

4.4.1 Oppressive Curriculum

Participating adolescent learners regard certain aspects of the curriculum as oppressive. For instance, one of the learners (F9) stated that, "I find it unjust that at the age of 16 we are forced to choose the subjects that are going to determine our future". Another learner (M1) agreed, stating that "This practice is unjust because at this age I am not even sure of whom I am. Therefore, how can we be expected to make decisions that will have an impact on our future, if we are not even sure of whom we are?"

The articulated responses above indicate that learners feel that, as secondary school learners, they are still too immature and incompetent to decide on their future. They still need adult guidance, in this case from their parents and educators. They believe that it is socially unjust that in Grade 10 they are given the responsibility to choose the subjects that will direct them to certain careers.

In expressing their views on how they experience socially unjust practices in the school, adolescent learners in this study were adamant that their school curriculum is not addressing their needs and expectations. This, according to them, is unjust. One of them (F3) argued that, "We are not provided with enough subjects to choose from. For example, if you fail mathematics you are forced to do mathematics literacy which is not recognised by South African tertiary institutions". "I do not understand why the old curriculum was discontinued, because in the old curriculum there was standard and higher-grade mathematics". "Standard grade mathematics was made for learners who were struggling with mathematics", another learner (F8) argued. Yet another learner (F1) also felt that "It is unjust that learners who are doing mathematics literacy are regarded as stupid".

Indications from the above are that the participating adolescent learners have a sense of being oppressed by the curriculum of their school. According to them, they do not have a pool of subjects to choose from. Instead, they are confined to study those courses that are found to be convenient by the school. This, in a way, violates their right to freedom of choice and, hence, their access to quality education. To

demonstrate that adolescent learners in this study understand what they want in terms of subjects, they even made comparisons between the old and new curricula to justify their opinions. The curriculum practices to which they are exposed make them feel intellectually inadequate to their peers and, by implication, according to them, they are denied their right to human dignity.

In arguing this point further, one of them (F8) stated that, "It is unfair to be taken to mathematical literacy class without being given a chance to prove yourself in the mathematics class". Another learner (F3), said that, "In Grade 8 and 9, I did not have a good mathematics educator. My background of mathematics was, therefore poor. Because of the poor mathematics background, I chose to go to the mathematics literacy when I got to Grade 10".

The arguments of participating adolescent learners indicate that they believe that not all their educators have necessary mathematics teaching skills. This is evident from their frustration at having to take mathematical literacy in Grade 10, because they did not have a good background of mathematics in Grades 8 and 9. The arguments of the participating adolescent learners above also indicate that they perceive the teaching of mathematics as of low quality and, by implication, socially unjust.

Furthermore, as far as the participating adolescent learners are concerned, mathematical literacy has a negative impact on their future in that it limits their chances to be admitted to South African universities. Also, according to them, mathematical literacy limits them from having a wide range of careers to choose from. This was made clear when they pointed out that South African universities do not recognise mathematics literacy. Meaning, universities score mathematical literacy low when they are selecting their prospective students. It is for this reason that adolescent learners in this study regard it to be socially unjust for them to be requested to do mathematics literacy.

4.4.2 Racial discrimination

Racial discrimination also came across strongly as one of the unjust practices adolescent learners experience in their school. One of the learners (F1 Black) stated that, "Racism is a big problem in our school, because if you are Black you get treated differently. For example, White learners who are in the Afrikaans class are allowed to

play chess in their classes and smoke on school premises. They are also rude to the educators and nothing is done to them". "If you are a Black and you are found committing one of the offences, you are immediately reported to the principal and you face disciplinary actions", another of the learners (F5) added. Yet another learner (F6 White) confirmed these claims, stating that, "Some of the White educators in this school are still living in the past and they bring their past experiences of apartheid to the school. I actually think that it is unjust to treat Black learners in an unacceptable manner based on history".

The responses of adolescent learners who participated in this study indicate that there is racial tension between learners (Black) and educators (White). According to them (Black learners), the school should treat learners equally. That is, White and Black learners alike should be given the same privileges and opportunities. Therefore, the different treatment that they are experiencing makes them perceive their school as a school that discriminates against learners on them on the basis of race.

4.4.3   Unequal opportunities

Extra-curricular activities were also raised as an area where participating adolescent learners experience unequal opportunities. Presenting their arguments, one of them (F6) said, "I find it unfair that when it comes to sports, learners who are assumed to have put on more weight are not given an opportunity to participate. For instance, if you are overweight and you want to do long jump, the educator responsible for the team will not allow you". "The educators are protecting you from being embarrassed or making a mockery of yourselves", one of the learners (F4) countered, but they "must give overweight learners a chance to participate in any sport without judging them". These responses indicate that participating adolescent learners are of the view that they are expected to have certain physical characteristics in order to be involved in certain extra-mural activities. However, according to them, learners who are overweight should be given a chance to take part in extra – mural activities such as sport, irrespective of their body weight. They also believe that educators who are facilitating extra-mural activities should encourage all the learners to take part in sports.

Moreover, as far as the participating adolescent learners are concerned, being given an opportunity to participate in sports puts them in the position to form authentic friendships with other learners in their teams as recommended by the philosophy of social pedagogy. They also believe that friendships that are formed over a common passion such as sport build tight bonds that often last long after schooling years. Therefore, when learners are not given an equal opportunity to participate in sport the purpose of social justice (i.e. equal sharing of opportunities) is defeated.

4.4.4 *Unequal economical background*

Participating adolescent learners argued that it was socially unjust to channel educational opportunities only to learners whose parents are economically advantaged. For instance, one of the learners was of the opinion that "In South Africa, one need to pay more money in order to have quality education" and, according to this learner, this is unjust. Another learner added that, "It means that quality education is only for children from wealthy families because a child from the poor background would never have quality education". This argument was reiterated by yet another learner, who felt that "some schools have best educational, sports and recreation facilities whereas others do not have such" and this is unjust, according to this learner.

In further arguing the opportunities that are experienced by the so-called privileged learners the stance of one of the learners was that "having more money should not qualify one to have better resources than others" while another felt that "it is not nice to know that there are learners who are not exposed to what we have in our school. I mean our school is almost like a private school, because we have overhead projectors, cameras and almost all the facilities that enable teaching and learning for quality education". The learners did not only point out the shortfalls of the education system but also suggested ways in which the gap could be closed. "The schools that have better resources should help schools from poorer backgrounds", one of the learners vented.

The above experiences, as articulated by participating adolescent learners, indicate that they are aware of social inequality in our society. According to them, South African society is divided into high, middle and lower class. That is, high class

parents can afford to pay expensive school feels in semi-private and private schools; most of the middle –class parents can afford to enrol their children in former Model C schools, which have reasonable school fees, while the lower class can only enrol their children at the no-fee schools.

They also mentioned that the no-fee schools are faced with various challenges, which include overcrowding of classes and a lack of educational resources. The quality of education in the no-fee schools is therefore compromised, because of the physical factors mentioned above. As far as the participating adolescent learners are concerned, it is socially unjust for parents' economic status to determine the quality of education their children are receiving. For instance, if the parents are financially deprived, their children have low quality education. It is therefore their wish that quality education must be for all learners regardless of the socio – economic status of the family.

4.4.5   *Poor leadership skills*

Adolescent learners who participated in this study alluded to the fact that they are experiencing poor leadership skills from their RCL. Their experience is that "popularity" is the commonly used principle in determining who has to serve on this school governance structure. According to one of the learners (F6), "In this school you cannot be voted for the RCL position if you are not popular". "It does not matter whether you have leadership qualities or not, how high or low your grades are; as long as you are well known among the learners you are almost guaranteed a position in the RCL", another learner (F8) confirmed.

According to learners, when they are given an opportunity to select the RCL, they vote for the learners who are popular at school. As far as they are concerned, these learners are popular because they behave in acceptable ways - bunking classes, coming late and bullying. They therefore fail to promote the culture of teaching and learning when they become part of the RCL. Therefore, according to participating learners, voting for candidates who are popular rather than for those with leadership skills is unjust because the latter would perform their RCL roles much better than their popular counterparts.

4.5   Conclusion
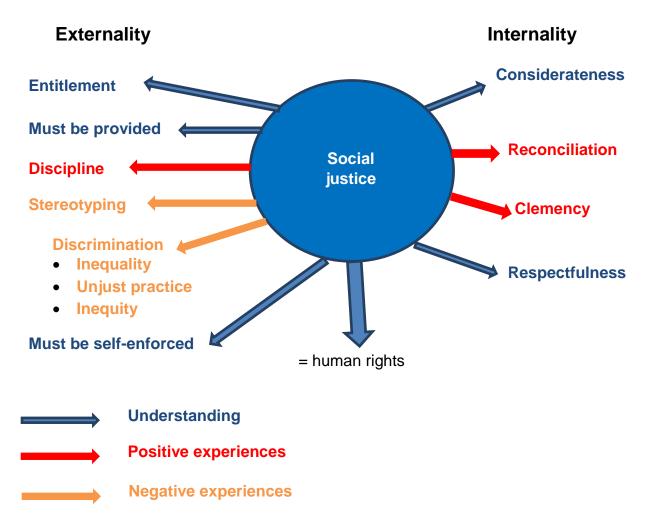
Figure 4.2: Illustration of the positive and negative aspects of social justice

It is interesting to note that when it comes to unjust practices in schools, the adolescents appear to be blind to their own possible role and contribution in this regard, tending to blame others for their own unjust experiences. They therefore experience on a very personal level the consequences of what they perceive as stereotyping and discrimination. Indications from the analysis of discriminatory practices mentioned in the interviews are that these relate to inequality and inequity between learners and schools, both of which result in unjust practices.

Viewing their channelling into mathematical literacy and non-participation in sport based on being obese as discriminatory and unjust could also be interpreted in terms of their own low self-image and/or poor understanding of their own abilities. What is therefore done by the educators is seen as intentional discrimination and injustice.

Whether this is true or not, was not, however, the focus of the study: its focus was to determine learners' understanding of social justice.

In the next chapter (Chapter 5), I describe empirical research findings by other researchers and the conclusions they reached on the phenomenon that is also the focus of my study. I conclude Chapter 5 with recommendations for further research as far as researched phenomenon is concerned.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Introduction

In Chapter 4, I presented the findings of this study as reflected in responses to the research question, *"How do adolescent learners understand and experience social justice in their schools?"* This question was critical since it elicited responses related to the purpose of the study, namely, to explore how adolescent learners give meaning to and experience the concept of social justice in schools.

In this chapter, I present the conclusions I drew from the research findings I presented in the previous chapter. The conclusions relate to my findings on the nature of social justice from participating adolescent learners' perspective as well as on their (positive and negative) experiences of this phenomenon at their schools. I conclude this chapter with recommendations for further research on this phenomenon.

5.2   Social justice from learners' perspective

The analysis of data (see Chapter 4) led me to conclude that adolescent learners who participated in this study understand social justice in terms of retribution, restoration, consideration, human rights, respect for authority, and human entitlement. The meanings that they attach to the concept of social justice are discussed in the sub-sections that follow.

5.2.1   Retributive justice

Indications from my research findings are that adolescent learners in this study understand retributive social justice as 'standing together' – against crime, without involving the police. They justify this stance with reference to (a) statistics, which indicate that less than one in a hundred crimes are solved (Eliseev, 2017; Williams, 2016); (b) the loss or selling of files by the police, resulting in the culprit going free (Bruce, 2017; Shaw, Campbell, Cain & Feeney, 2016), and (c) the long time it takes, from the moment that the crime was committed to the finalisation of the court case (Reyneke-Cloete & Meyer, 2016; Songca & Karels, 2016). Therefore, according to these adolescent learners, while the police should protect and advance the human

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rights of people, they actually take the law into own hands, implicitly forcing the community to exercise retributive justice.

Understood from the participating adolescent learners' point of view, retributive justice is therefore a practice by means of which a community solves crimes without involving law enforcement officials (Huq, 2017). Such 'practice' could include the administering of a proportionate punishment by the community on the person(s) suspected of committing a crime in their area (Druckman & Wagner, 2017). As far as these adolescent learners are concerned, retributive justice is a socially just method used by communities to send a message to criminals that communities are ready to protect themselves against crime.

However, it is worth to mention that retributive justice as a concept that the participating adolescent learners linked to social justice is found in the criminal justice (Druckman & Wagner, 2017; Huq, 2017). It is, therefore for this reason that learners' perception in this regard could not be concluded based on the literature reviewed in chapter 2.

5.2.2 *Restorative justice*

The adolescent learners who participated in this study understood restorative justice as handing the suspect(s) to the police, thus preventing 'unfair' or harsh retributive justice (Breen, Lynch, Nel & Matthews 2016). As far as they are concerned, communities often show no mercy to suspects during what they regard as retributive justice events, hence the perpetrator sometimes dies as a result of the punishment meted out to him/her (Misago, 2016; Super, 2016). For this reason, learners argued, the community should, if they know who the suspect is, hand him/her over to the police (Flynn, Hodgson, McCulloch & Naylor, 2016), leaving the confirmation of his/her guilt and the punishment that should be meted out if s/he is found guilty, to the courts of law. In doing so, the right of the accused to be given the opportunity prove his/her innocence is thus respected rather than undermined (Flynn *et.al.*, 2016).

If the suspect is found guilty in the court of law, social justice must be restored. In other words, the guilty party must undergo a correctional process meant to rehabilitate him/her (Eliseev, 2017; Reyneke – Cloete & Meyer, 2016). Moreover,

according to participating adolescent learners, once the detainee has served his/her sentence he/she must be reconciled with the community that he/she offended (Breen *et.al.,* 2016). The combination of these three actions – sentencing, rehabilitation, and reconciliation – according to learners, equals restorative justice. Put differently, according to participating adolescent learners, restorative justice as a practice allows the offender who shows remorse for his/her crime(s) to reconcile with the victim(s) and community after he/she has served the sentence (Braithwaite, 2016) in order for him/her to make peace with his/her victims (Pointer, 2016).

Participating learners' definition of social justice above is therefore in line with Section 12 (d) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. This Act states that no person(s) may experience torture and degrading punishment from another person(s). Section 12 (d) is further clarified by Section 205 (3) of the Constitution, which mandates the police to uphold and enforce the law in communities. This implies that if the community knows who the suspect is s/he must, according to the Constitutions, be handed over to the police (Flynn *et.al.,* 2016; Michael, 2016).

Similar to retributive justice discussed in 5.2.1, restorative justice is also a concept that is found in the field of criminal justice (Pointer, 2016). For this, the conclusion of this concept was not based on the literature reviewed in chapter 2.

5.2.3   Consideration

Adolescent learners also defined social justice as a behaviour that does not impact negatively on another person's feelings. In other words, they regard social justice as the practice of being honest with other people in a way that is not hurtful. Their definitions in this regard can be interpreted as consideration for others and their feelings.

From the adolescent learners' perspective, consideration is an act of showing regard for other people's needs and feelings (Wolf & Bailey, 2016). They also understand it to include and awareness of others' feelings in relation to their circumstances (Riddiford, 2014). In essence, the adolescent learners who participated in study equate consideration with being kind and sincere towards other people (Wolf & Bailey, 2016).

Learners' notion of consideration, as reflected in their responses, links social justice to humanitarianism. Humanitarianism places the demand to conform to the "moral of kindness, goodwill, and sympathy" on all "human beings" (Barnett, 2011). Humanitarianism and, by implication, consideration, is therefore "concerned with peoples' wellbeing and happiness" (Chouliaraki, 2013) and the "alleviation of human suffering" (Harkness, 2017). The implication is, therefore, that participating adolescent learners understand social justice to mean being compassionate, sympathetic and generous towards other people (Chouliaraki, 2013). Also, learners' concept of consideration, as articulated in their responses is associated with one of the concept in Nussbaum's list of capabilities, which is emotion. Emotion is linked consideration according to Nussbaum (2003), because learners should be able to attach to other peoples' feelings, by showing love and compassion towards them.

5.2.4   Human rights

According to the adolescent learners, social justice occurs when human rights - such as being given equal opportunities - are promoted and protected by their educators. For instance, in the school context, they believe that by being given equal opportunities to participate in extra-mural activities their human rights are promoted. This is to say, according to them, that educators must not choose learners who look physically fit to participate in sports like athletics and soccer but should make provision for everyone to participate. They therefore understand social justice to mean being given an equal platform to participate in extra-mural activities.

In this regard, the manner in which these learners understand social justice is reflected in Chapter 2 by Tikly and Barret. According to Tikly and Barret (2011) educators are encouraged to give learners equal opportunities. However, this requires educators to promote equality by accommodating diversity that arises from gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, ethnicity as well as the physical body structure (Gale & Molla, 2014; Fennell, 2013).

5.2.5 *Respect for authority*

Adolescent learners who participated in this study equate respect for authority with social justice. In other words, they themselves adhere to social justice principles by respecting their educators. The manner in which they define social justice in this regard reflects a key tenet of the Christian Bible, namely that "everyone must submit to governing authorities, for all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God" (Romans 13:1).

Learners' understanding of social justice as stated above is derived from the fact that educators teach learners to respect authority through hidden curriculum. Educators teach learners to respect authority in the following manner: (a) establishing themselves as the authority of the classroom, for example by solving any problem that arises in the classroom without involving the principal (Tam, 2016; Leiter, 2014; Karten, 2009); (b) planning the lesson according to the learners' needs (Borg, 2015; Willis, 2007); (c) dressing professionally; (d) being consistent and fair, for instance not coming down on the same learner every time the entire class is making a noise (Rose & Shevlin, 2015), and (e) setting up the rules of the class and revisiting them often to check if they are still addressing what they are supposed to (e.g. maintaining order in the classroom) (Tam, 2016; Borg, 2015; Staub, 2013).

In as much as the adolescent learners stressed the importance of respect for authority, they drew a line between what adults should or should not decide for them. According to them, their parents may decide what schools are good for them depending on their wealth. They are, however, not comfortable with the fact that their educators decide on the subject(s) that they must study in Grade 10 without consulting them because this reflects educators' lack of adherence to the demand that they should advocate the values of social justice (Capper & Young, 2014). In principle, educators are only mandated to teach and advise the learners on the subjects and extra-curricular activities they ought to take, based on the strengths of the learner concerned (Steiner, Kickmeier – Rust & Albert, 2014).

Therefore, the aforementioned contradicts one of the Nussbaum's lists of capabilities, which encourage educators to give learners an opportunity to freely use their imagination and thoughts. In this regard according to Nussbaum (2003)

learners should be giving a chance to choose the subjects that they believe are going to brighten their future.

5.2.6 *Human entitlement*

Adolescent learners offered their understanding of social justice as provision of the basic needs to underprivileged people. For instance, according to them, under-privileged people must be built free houses and given free basic education. According to adolescent learners in this study, government resources should also benefit the poor (Bayer & Pabst, 2017). It is therefore, for this reason that they linked the concept of social justice human entitlement.

Viewing the concept of human entitlement from the education context as defined in chapter 2, adolescent learners in this study also understand human entitlement as the provision of educational resources such as textbooks, laboratories and sport facilities by the government to underprivileged communities (Christie, 2012; Opotow, 2012; Brighouse, 2000). According to them, if such resources are provided, there will be no need for learners from poor communities to experience poor quality education (Ilie & Rose, 2016; Moodley, 2016). This implies that parents will not need to pay extensive school fees in order to ensure that their children are exposed to quality education if education in South Africa is equal for all learners (Ilie & Rose, 2016; Moodley, 2016). Confirming this view are recent studies which revealed that if South Africans are to have equal opportunities in life after basic education, education should be equal too (Engelbrecht, Nel, Smit & van Deventer, 2016; Ilie & Rose,2016; Moodley, 2016).

In conclusion, indications from the analysis of learner data are that the adolescent learners in this study do not regard social justice as having a single meaning only. Instead, they attach several definitions to the concept, depending on how they view and experience it in both their communities and at school. It is for this reason that the current study had as purpose the determination of the manner in which participating adolescent learners experience social justice. Conclusions in this regard are presented in the next section.

5.3 Adolescent learners' experiences of social justice

The adolescent learners who participated in this study experience social justice both positively and negatively. They regard positive experiences of social justice as just and negative ones as unjust.

5.3.1 Positive experiences

Adolescent learners' positive experiences revolve around issues such as disciplinary measures, religious observances, clemency/forbearance, and the manner in which their grievances are addressed.

5.3.1.1 Disciplinary measures

The adolescent learners in this study experience the disciplinary measures taken by their educators to be socially just. According to them, the discipline meted out to them is proportional to the offence they are committing or have committed and it applies equally to all learners regardless of race, ethnic group, gender or age. For instance, if they are late for school they are given demerits as a reminder that coming to school late is not an acceptable behaviour.

The positive school discipline as experienced by these adolescent learners is a method that is used by educators to encourage them to do what is expected of them (Wissinger & De La Paz, 2016). Learners therefore experience discipline as positive, aimed at teaching rather than to punishing them. That is to say, their educators discipline them with an aim of maintaining good working relationship between educators and learners as well as amongst learners themselves (Tymms *et.al.,* 2016).

Participating adolescent learners understand positive school discipline to be the discipline that is administered to them equally or fairly (Fleurbaey, 2012). Unlike in the former Model C schools where Black learners are disciplined more often and more severely than their White counterparts (Peguero *et.al.,* 2015), disciplinary measures apply equally to all learners in the school which was my research site. Learners' experience of the discipline at their school is positive and just because, according to them, it (a) helps them succeed and thrive in their school work (Wissinger & De La Paz, 2016); (b) promotes their positive behaviour while

preventing negative and risky behaviours (Tymms *et.al.,* 2016); (c) helps them view the rules of the school as just (Wissinger & De La Paz, 2016), and (d) makes it easy for them to willingly comply with the rules of the school (Wissinger & De La Paz, 2016).

Furthermore, disciplinary measures that the participating learners regard as socially just is in line what adolescent learners from European and Asian schools. These international learners also regard disciplinary measures that is administered equally as socially just (Germán *et.al.,* 2013; Gregory *et.al.,* 2013). Also, confirming the manner in which learners in this study experience socially just disciplinary measures are South African adolescent learners who stated that the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools was socially just (Meinck *et.al.,* 2016; Gershoff *et.al.,* 2015).

5.3.1.2   Religious observances

Religious observance was another aspect that adolescent learners in this study experienced as a positive aspect of social justice. According to them, although their school is described as a Christian school, it does not restrict enrolment to those that affiliate with Christianity. Hence, religious observance at their school is perceived as socially just. Also, the fact that non – Christian learners are not coerced into joining morning assembly, where Christianity is practised, makes their school to be exceptionally just.

These positive experiences, shared by the adolescent learners who participated in the study, are in line with the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) regarding religious policies. In terms of Section 15(2) of the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) the attendance of religious observation must be free and voluntary. In the school context, this Act is maintained by Section 7 of the SASA (Act 84 of 1996), which gives the SGB the right to adopt a religious policy with the proviso that neither learners nor staff members are forced to observe their schools' religious policy.

It is clear, therefore, that adolescent learners in this study understand social justice as not discriminating on the grounds of religion. Section 9 of the Constitution applies to all government institutions, including schools, warning them not to unfairly discriminate against learners on the grounds of religion (see chapter 2). At this school, learners understood that it was their right to observe religious observances

on a voluntarily basis as enshrined in Section 7 of SASA (Act No. 84 of 1996). What did not come out clearly from their discussions was whether non – Christian learners are afforded the opportunity to observe their religions, and how Religion Education, as a learning area in the Life Orientation curriculum, is dealt with. These limitations of this study need further research.

5.3.1.3   Clemency/forbearance

The participating adolescent learners believe that if a person has realised that he/she has treated another person(s) in a socially unjust manner he/she must apologise for such conduct. According to them, social justice goes along with forgiveness they receive from the people they have offended after apologising to them. This is best described as clemency/forbearance.

According to the learners, clemency/forbearance is an act of showing mercy to people who have offended 'the other' (Schoenberg, 2016). They also describe clemency/forbearance as an act of granting amnesty to a person who has been unjust towards defenceless people (Schoenberg, 2016). However, as far as they are concerned, clemency/forbearance is not a right but a privilege, accorded to the person who is showing remorse for his/her socially unjust conduct (Ghassan, 2016).

The manner in which the adolescent learners in this study describe clemency as an act of social justice can best be understood in the context of one of the underpinning principles of social pedagogy. According this principle educators are expected to encourage learners to form authentic friendship that is based on love and respect (Stone, 2010). This implies that if the friendship is authentic it will be easy for the one who is offended to forgive his/her friend if he/she is asking for forgiveness (Stone, 2010; Petrie *et.al.,* 2006).

5.3.1.4   The manner in which their grievances are addressed

In terms of the adolescent learners in this study it is socially just that they are given the platform to report the educators who act in socially unjust ways toward them and that their grievances are addressed. It transpired from learners' discussions that they had reported educators who racially discriminated against them and their grievances

had been taken seriously by the school principal and had resulted in educators changing the way they behaved towards them.

In line with participating adolescent learners' positive experience of social justice in this regard is Act 31 of 2001 of the Professional Code of Conduct for Educators, this encourages educators to take decisions that are in the best interest of the learners (McMillan, 2000). The principal, informed by this code, therefore ruled in learners' favour. This does not, however, suggest that they cannot be reprimanded whenever necessary. As indicated in earlier sub-sections, participating adolescent learners admit that they sometimes misbehave and are positive about disciplinary measures administered to them.

Also, the manner in which the principal of the learners participating in this study indicates, that his learners have a freedom of speech. That is to say of according to Nussbaum (2003) learners must be given an opportunity to voice their opinion(s) about the experiences that are infringing on their right to learn without being intermediated. It, also indicate that the principal of these learners encourages freedom of expression in school, which is one of the values of social justice (Nussbaum, 2003).

In conclusion, participating adolescent learners regard practices that do not harm them emotionally and physically as positive experiences of social justice. It is important to mention, though, that not all practices experienced by the adolescent learners were positive. Their negative experiences are, therefore discussed below.

5.3.2   *Negative experiences*

In addition to learners' positive experiences of social justice at their school were negative experiences. These include poor quality teaching, racial discrimination, unequal opportunities, unequal socio-economic backgrounds, and poor leadership practices.

5.3.2.1   **Low quality mathematics teaching**

As far as adolescent learners are concerned it is because of the poor quality of mathematics teaching in the lower grades that they are studying mathematics literacy. According to them, it is socially unjust that learners end up doing this

subject, the reason being that it is not recognised by South African universities. As a result, the opportunities they can choose from after they have completed their basic education are very limited and that negatively affects their future career prospects.

Their experience of social injustice in this regard is supported by previous studies which indicate that South African educators are not properly trained to teach mathematics (Venkat & Spaull, 2015; Roman *et.al.,* 2015; Bansilal, Brijlall & Mkhwanazi, 2014; Msila, 2014). The World Economic Forum, for example, ranked South Africa last out of 148 countries in terms of mathematics teaching. Concerns about the quality of mathematics teaching are also confirmed by Venkat and Spaull (2015), who urge for its improvement.

5.3.2.2   Racial discrimination

Although the adolescent learners in this study previously indicated that the disciplinary measures they experience in their schools sometimes reflect signs of racial, gender, age, and ethnic discrimination. References to these kept showing up in their discussions particularly with regard to racial discrimination against Black learners by some White educators as well as by what they regard as the preferential treatment of White learners who transgress school rules.

According to participating learners, White learners are treated differently from Black learners. For example, if both Black and White learners commit the same offence, the Black learners would be punished more severely than their White counterparts. A number of researchers (Alexander, 2016; Makoelle, 2014; Botha *et.al.,* 2012) found that Black learners who are enrolled in multiracial schools are still experiencing racial discrimination from White educators.

In so doing, some educators disregard the constitution of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) that promotes non-racial society. Their behaviour also disregards Section 5(4) of the SASA (Act 84 of 1996), which states that no learner should experience unjust discrimination on any grounds, including race, in South African schools.

5.3.2.3   Unequal opportunities

It also emerged from adolescent learners' discussions that they were not being given equal opportunities to participate in the extra-mural activities at their school.

According to them, when it comes to sport, their educators consider the person's physical appearance as criterion for participation. For instance, the adolescent learners disclosed that when they are selected for participation in sports such as athletics, learners with a certain physical appearance receives more preference than others and according to them, this is socially unjust.

Denying learners equal opportunities to participate in whatever school activity contradicts Section 3 of SACE (Act 31 of 2000). In terms of this section, educators are encouraged to acknowledge the uniqueness, individuality, and specific needs of the learners in order to give them equal opportunities. These educators also ignore Section 5(4) of SASA (Act 84 of 1996), which requires all educators to promote equality and inclusion by accommodating diversity arising from gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, ethnicity and physical body structure. This implies, therefore, that some educators still do not understand their responsibility to respect, promote, protect and instil human rights in education.

5.3.2.4   Unequal economical background

Adolescent learners in this study perceive the education challenges posed by unequal economic backgrounds as socially unjust. According to them, South African schools are grouped into three categories namely: between rich, middle class and poor learners and schools (Naicker, 2017). They categorize poor schools as those that were previously disadvantaged, usually located in the deep rural areas of the country, referred to as township schools. These schools are poorly resourced, and they are characterised by dilapidated facilities (Song, 2017). In reality, children from the so-called poor, or financially struggling, families – the "don't haves" - are found mostly in these types of schools (Charman, Petersen, Piper, Liedeman & Legg, 2017; Dalvie *et.al.,* 2014; Msila, 2013).

In contrast, there are those schools which adolescent learners in this study consider to be wealthy. These schools according to them, are private, well resourced, and due to their status (high fee schools) they usually cater for children from wealthy families – "the haves" (McKeever, 2017; Cross & Whitelock, 2016). These conditions create unequal educational environments since children from the so – called poor families are experiencing overcrowded classes that negatively affect their learning, while

those from the "wealthy families" have all the advantages of learning (McKeever, 2017).

Classifying learners in terms of their parents' economic status widens the gap between the poor and rich (Darling-Hammond, 2015; Spaull & Kotze, 2015). This gap, as far as these researchers are concerned, is further widened when these learners reach tertiary institutions (Kreger – van, 2013), where parents' socio-economic status does not count and all learners are expected to pay equal tuition fees.

The results of this gap were observed in late 2016 and early 2017 during the #feesmustfall and #freeeducation protests at South African universities (Joseph, 2017), suggesting that incidents such as student protests could be avoided if the gap between rich and poor is closed as early as Basic Education (Bosch, 2017).

5.3.2.5 Poor leadership practices

Adolescent learners who participated in this study believe that it is socially unjust that learners who are voted onto the RCL are voted in on the basis of their popularity. According to them, these learners do not possess leadership skills that will help them to (a) identify the needs of the learners and present these to the principal of the school (Duma, 2014); (b) keep learners informed about events that will and have taken place in the school and its community (Bessong, Mashau & Mulaudzi, 2016); (c) encourage good relationships between learners, educators, non – teaching staff and parents; (d) promote the culture of learning within the school (Mncube, Davies & Naidoo, 2015); (e) support the principal and staff in the performance of their duties (Bessong *et.al.*, 2016); (f) assist with the development and implementation of the code of conduct (Hunt, 2014), and (g) support the school in fund-raising events (Duma, 2014).

The adolescent learners in this study regard it as the duty of the educators to teach learners about the duty of the RCL. In terms of Section 11 of SASA (Act 84 of 2001), educators are supposed to explain to learners that a position in the RCL implies that the person has good leadership skills and leads by example (i.e. attending the classes every day and doing his/her school work). According to these adolescent

learners, educators do not embark on the exercise of educating learners about the importance of RCL and the type of a learner that is required in this position.

The study on participation revealed that two members of RCL are given an opportunity to be part of the governance of the school (Mncube *et.al.,* 2014). However, these learners are excluded during the decision making of the school (Mncube, 2014). Therefore, listing to what learners in this study have shared above - it could be concluded that the exclusion of the RCL members in the decision making is motivated by the fact that educators are aware that learners do not elect RCL members based on leadership qualities of the individual, but they elect their representative based their popularity.

In conclusion, the practices which adolescent learners experience as negative at their school impact negatively on their social lives at school and could continue to do so in future, in other contexts. However, it is worth mentioning that negative practices are not the only findings of this study. The findings of this study also reflect their understanding and experiences of social justice that are discussed in the next section.

5.4 Findings

As indicated in Chapter 1, the purpose of the study was to find answers to the following questions:

- How do learners understand and give meaning to the concept of social justice?
- What are the just experiences they have experienced in their school?
- What are the unjust experiences they have experienced in their school?

Indications from the data presented are that adolescent learners in this study attach different meanings to the concept of social justice. These include retributive justice, restorative justice, consideration, human rights, respect for authority, and human entitlement. These different meanings could be ascribed to adolescent learners' different life world orientations (see Chapter 2), cultures, and social backgrounds. The different meanings shared by these learners confirm the findings of previous

authors who could not summarise the concept of social justice into a single definition (Hytten & Bettez, 2011; Tapper, 2013).

The data also indicate that adolescent learners in this study experience social justice positively and negatively. The positive practices that are experienced by these learners are the result of the fact that their educators (a) administer positive discipline that does not harm them physically and emotionally; (b) respect and understand Section 7 of SASA (Act 84 of 1996) by not forcing them to observe the adopted religious policy of the school; and (c) take cognizance of the grievances of learners in order to ensure that their wellbeing is protected by the school as required the Act 31 of 2001 of SACE.

The negative experiences of participating adolescent learners could be ascribed to educators' disregard of the Preamble of SASA (Act 84 of 1996), which stipulates that schools should be non-racial, giving learners' equal opportunities. If educators of these learners understood and respected this preamble these adolescent learners would not be experiencing racial discrimination and unequal opportunities at their school.

Furthermore, the poor teaching of mathematics experienced by the participating adolescent learners could be ascribed to the segregation of the poor and the wealthy in education. Learners whose parents are wealthy attend schools that have all necessary facilities to ensure that they receive education of a high quality as defined in the Preamble of SASA (Act 84 of 1996).

In contrast, educators at poor schools do not have the necessary facilities to provide learners with such education. The lack of educational facilities is manifested in the poor results of mathematics, which leads to learners to studying mathematical literacy as a substitute for mathematics. However, mathematics literacy has a negative impact on learners as it limits the number of degrees/diplomas/certificates careers from which they can choose from when they get to tertiary institutions. Based on these findings, further research is recommended.

5.5   Recommendations for further research possibilities

The purpose of this current study was to explore how learners understand and experience social justice in an urban secondary school. During the focus group interviews learners shared their different understandings and experiences of social justice. However, from the findings that were obtained, indications are that the following needs further research:

5.7.1   The role of educators in promoting, protecting and instilling human rights in education needs to be investigated further.

5.7.2   Further research is needed to determine the cause of poor mathematics teaching that is experienced by the learners.

5.7.3   Future research is also needed to explore whether educators understand their role in educating learners towards their duty as RCL members.

5.6   Final note

In this study, I found that participating adolescent learners define social justice differently, and that this could be due to differences in their individual life world orientations. I also found that learners' experience of social justice at their school is both positive and negative.

The manner in which adolescent learners in this define justice is informed by their life world orientation, which needs to be understood by educators. This is to say that if educators understand social justice in terms of the learners, conflicts between them and learners may be reduced. The negative practices of social justice that are experienced by these learners were described in order to encourage policy makers to consult with learners when they design educational policies that concern the learners.

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Annexure A: Latter requesting permission to conduct research from SGB

U N I V E R S I T E I T   V A N   P R E T O R I A
U N I V E R S I T Y   O F   P R E T O R I A
Y U N I B E S I T H I   Y A   P R E T O R I A
Faculty of Education

5221/2 Arundo Estate
Centurion
0157

2016-02-08

The Chairperson of the School Governing Body

Uitsig Secondary school
The Reeds
0157

Dear Sir/Madam

Request for permission to conduct research at your school

I am a Master's student at the University of Pretoria in the Faculty of Education. I wish to apply for permission to conduct the study titled: **Learners' understanding and experiences of social justice in urban secondary schools** at your school. The purpose of the study is to explore how learners give meaning to and experience the concept of social justice in schools. In this letter I want to tell you about what may happen if such permission is granted. Once you understand what the study is about, you can decide if you want to grant such permission or not. If you agree, you will be requested to release a signed letter permitting the study to take place.

The process of field work is detailed below:

- The process will be in a form of focus group interviews, where grade 11 adolescent learners from 17 to 18 years of age will be requested to spend some time sharing their understanding and experiences of social justice in schools.

- I as the researcher will be accompanied by both my supervisor and co-supervisor as assistant researchers in the whole data collection process.
- If we are granted permission, we intend to be at the school for three sessions after school to avoid disruption of teaching and learning (the first two days will be for research activities, which will take 45 to 60 minutes and one day for member checking 30 minutes).
- To ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, we will keep learners' names, the name of the school and contribution to the study private except if it is the learner's wish to be named.
- We do not think anything bad or risky will happen to learners participating in this study. If problems do arise, they can speak to us and we will consult on the issue, and/or refer them to someone who is best able to help. If there is a serious problem about learners' safety, we are required to inform the appropriate institution.
- There will be no benefits that will be received by participants in this study. However, we hope that participation in this study will make learners feel good about themselves, appreciate and tolerate their Grade mates' understanding and experiences of social justice and learn more about socially just and/or unjust practices in their school, although, we cannot guarantee this.

Should you have any questions or concerns pertaining to this study, you can contact Prof Jan Nieuwenhuis on: 012 420 5571

Yours sincerely

Researcher: Vukile Msizi Ngema (Mr), Student number: 11354853

Signature……………………………….Date……………………..

Supervisor: Prof Jan. Nieuwenhuis

Contact details: 012 420 5571

Email: jan.nieuwenhuis@up.ac.za

Signature…………………………….Date 08/02/2016

Co-supervisor: Dr AM Ntho-Ntho

Signature…………………………….Date 08/02/2016

Annexure B: GDE approval letter

GAUTENG PROVINCE
EDUCATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GDE AMENDED RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	5 October 2015
Validity of Research Approval:	8 February 2016 to 30 September 2016
Previous GDE Research Approval letter reference number	D2016 / 218 dated 24 August 2015
Name of Researcher:	Ngema V.M.
Address of Researcher:	522112 Arundo Estate; Centurion; 0157
Telephone / Fax Number/s:	012 652 3892; 084 395 1487
Email address:	msizi1@yahoo.com
Research Topic:	Learners' understanding and experiences of social justice in urban schools
Number and type of schools:	ONE Secondary School
District/s/HO	Tshwane South

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to the Principal, SGB and the relevant District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted. However participation is VOLUNTARY.

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher has agreed to and may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

CONDITIONS FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN GDE

1. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned, the Principal/s and the chairperson/s of the School Governing Body (SGB.) must be presented with a copy of this letter.*
2. *The Researcher will make every effort to obtain the goodwill and co-operation of the GDE District officials, principals, SGBs, teachers, parents and learners involved. Participation is voluntary and additional remuneration will not be paid;*

1

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research
9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001

Annexure C: Ethical clearance letter

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA
Faculty of Education

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	CLEARANCE NUMBER: HU 15/07/01
DEGREE AND PROJECT	MEd The experiences of social justice by learners in schools
INVESTIGATOR	Mr Vukile Ngema
DEPARTMENT	Humanities
APPROVAL TO COMMENCE STUDY	02 August 2015
DATE OF CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	23 August 2017

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE: Prof Liesel Ebersöhn

CC

Ms Bronwynne Swarts
Prof Jan Nieuwenhuis
Dr Maitumeleng Nthontho

This Ethics Clearance Certificate should be read in conjunction with the Integrated Declaration Form (D08) which specifies details regarding:
- Compliance with approved research protocol,
- No significant changes,
- Informed consent/assent,
- Adverse experience or undue risk,
- Registered title, and
- Data storage requirements.

Annexure D: Approval letter from the SGB

Hoërskool Uitsig

Posbus/PO Box 3200
Marquardstraat 47 Marquard Street
The Reeds, 0158, Centurion
Tel: (012) 661-5525
Faks/Fax: 086 647 6471
hsuitsig@mweb.co.za
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14 March 2016

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

It is hereby confirmed that Mr Vukile Ngema, student number 11354853, has been granted permission by the School Governing Body to conduct the study titled *Learners' understanding and experiences of social justice in urban secondary schools*, at Hoërskool Uitsig.

Yours faithfully

DR J.A.G. VISAGIE
PRINCIPAL

jou lewe, jou keuse . . .   *your life, your choice . . .*

Dr. JAG Visagie (Hoof / Principal)
Me. JM Laas (Adjunkhoof / Deputy Principal)
Mnr. JD Labuschagne (Adjunkhoof / Deputy Principal) 347/1000

Annexure E: Letter to request permission from the parents

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA
Faculty of Education

<div align="right">

5221/2 Arundo Estate
Centurion
0157

2015/06/01

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Uitsig Secondary school
The Reeds
0157

Dear parent/ Guardian

A letter requesting that your child be part of the study

We (my supervisor, co supervisor and I) would like to invite your child to be part of the study titled:
Learners' understanding and experiences of social justice in urban secondary schools. The
purpose of the study is to explore how learners give meaning to and experience the concept of social
justice in schools. In this letter we want to tell you about what may happen if you allow your child to
participate in this project. You can then decide if you want to allow him/her to participate or not. If you
agree, you will be asked to sign this consent form accepting our invitation to have your child participate
in this study.

The process of field work is detailed below:

- The process will take place at Uitseg Secondary school in a form of focus group interviews
  where your child will be requested to spend some time with us sharing his/her understanding
  and experience of social justice in the school.

- I as the researcher will be accompanied by both my supervisor and co-supervisor as assistant
  researchers in the whole data collection process.

- If you agree that your child participates, we intend to meet with your child for at least three
  sessions after school to avoid disrupting teaching and learning (the first two days will be for

research activities, which will take 45 to 60 minutes and one day for member checking 30 minutes).

- To ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, we will keep your child's name, the name of the school and contribution to the study private, except if it is your child's wish to be named. If you agree, we would like to audio tape the interviews for research purposes only.

- We do not think anything bad or risky will happen to your child while participating in this study. If problems do arise, he/she can speak to us and we will consult on the issue, and/or refer him/her to someone who is best able to help. If there is a serious problem about his/her safety, we are required to inform the appropriate institution.

- There will be no benefits that will be received by your child for participation in this study. However, we hope that participation in this study will make your child feel good about himself/herself, appreciate and tolerate his/her Grade mates' understanding and experiences of social justice and learn more about socially just and/or unjust practices in his/her school, although, we cannot guarantee this.

Should you have any questions or concerns pertaining to this study, you can contact Prof Nieuwenhuis on 012 420 5571 or you can ask us next time we come to visit the school.

Yours sincerely

Researcher: Vukile Msizi Ngema (Mr)

Student number: 11354853

Supervisor: Prof J. Nieuwenhuis

Contact details: 012 420 5571

 Email: jan.nieuwenhuis@up.ac.za

Annexure F: Informed consent

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Informed consent

(a) Upon reading this study information, I permit my child to participate in the study.

Name: _____ (Please print)

Signature_____ Date_____

(b) I give permission that you take audio recordings of my child for research purposes only.

Name: _____ (Please print)

Signature_____   Date_____

(c) I grant permission that my child can be named / I refuse permission for my child to be named.

Name: _____ (Please print)

Signature_____   Date_____

Annexure G: Informed consent letter

U N I V E R S I T E I T   V A N   P R E T O R I A
U N I V E R S I T Y   O F   P R E T O R I A
Y U N I B E S I T H I   Y A   P R E T O R I A

Faculty of Education

Informed Consent Letter

I... agree to participate in a study conducted by Vukile Msizi Ngema on **Learners' understanding and experiences of social justice in urban secondary schools**. I am aware that the research has got nothing to do with my school and my participation is voluntary. I am also aware that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time should I wish to do so and my decision will not be held against me.

I understand that my contact classes will not be disturbed and I grant the researcher permission to use some of my after school hours.

I understand that my identity and all that I will say in these research activities and tape-recorded interviews will remain anonymous and confidential.

I also understand that I will be expected to provide written or oral comments on the draft report on the interviews.

I grant permission that the research activities may be tape-recorded for research purposes and understand that these will be stored safely.

I have received contact details for the researcher and the supervisor should I need to contact them about matters related to this research.

Signed: _____ Date: _____