# CHAPTER 5

# EMERGING CORE CATEGORY

## 5.1    INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I present the core category that emerged from the data and discuss how it relates to the other categories. A core category is the "central phenomenon around which all the categories are related" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990:116). The core category is distinguished from other categories by being central and related to other categories, appears frequently, is logical and consistent and is able to explain the main points mentioned in the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Coding and categorising the data as described in Chapters 2, 3 and 4, identified the core category. The categories that emerged from the data coding were sorted into sub-themes, from which I could distil and then present the key findings of this study. In working through the transcripts I decided to add some form of enumeration that would help in establishing the frequency with which specific categories appeared in the data. I was of the opinion that this exercise would provide  an indication of the categories that the educators were most concerned about and which, therefore, should feature prominently in developing the theory (Straus & Corbin, 1998). Moreover, the process of identifying the prominent categories helped me to structure this chapter. A summary of this exercise is presented in Table 5.1. (It should be noted that the number given in the frequency column reflects the number of that that specific category was mentioned by respondents and does not express a percentage of the total number of categories.)

**Table 5.1: Category frequency**

|  | Category | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Educator-orphaned learner relationship | 79 |
| 2 | Learner behaviour | 61 |
| 3 | Material needs | 47 |
| 4 | Orphan-non-orphan relationship | 43 |
| 5 | Emotional needs | 37 |
| 6 | Educator fulfilling needs | 37 |
| 7 | Community response | 33 |
| 8 | Government response | 30 |
| 9 | Constrains | 29 |
| 10 | Educator-educator relationship | 19 |
| 11 | Responsibility | 19 |
| 12 | Social needs | 10 |
| 13 | Management response | 10 |
| 14 | Orphan appearance | 10 |
| 15 | Motivation | 7 |

Table 5.1 shows that the category of *the relationship between the educators and the orphaned learners* had the highest incidence. In the context of this study, this category of the relationship between educators and orphaned learners was described by some of the educators as being a positive and fruitful interaction, which was based on empathy, confidentiality, trust and friendship. For example, educators who helped orphaned learners described their relationship with the orphans as one that involved inquiring about their needs, encouraging orphans to *open up* and providing love and care. These educators were also willing to share their own life experiences with the orphaned learners. Sharing experiences appears to be part of the process of building trust by being personally involved in the relationship. The element of a trust relationship, as noted in this study, is in agreement with Ahn's (2005) findings, which highlight that when an

educator shows empathy for children's negative emotions – such as anger, loneliness and sadness – it contributes towards positive educator-child relationships.

## 5.2 Relationship between sub-themes and the emerging core category

In the following section the categories, sub-themes and themes of this study are reviewed. In the process I wrote memos to cover the link the sub-themes formed with regard to the relationship between the educators and the orphaned learners to determine how these sub-themes related to the emerging core category. I also chose to write memos[21] on the relationship between the categories as presented in this study. I found writing memos to record my observations to be a more flexible work method than that of using a paradigm model,[22] as proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1990). The following section is a presentation of the relationships between the categories that emerged through the process of constant comparative analysis. The categories that emerged were various perceptions the educators had of orphaned learners; identifying orphans and their needs, and role perception.

### 5.2.1 Educators' perceptions of orphaned learners and their needs

It was apparent from the interviews that some educators perceived orphaned learners as *problem learners* and their disruptive behaviour was seen as being caused by a lack of material needs. This perception suggests that some educators may overlook the root cause of the disruptive behaviour of these learners. Rather, it is likely that some educators may have based their perceptions on the fact that the orphaned learners did not wear school uniform and did not have lunch. Other educators perceived the behaviour of the orphaned learners as violent, troublesome or withdrawn. This perception would most likely be due to inadequate communication and understanding by the educators of the orphaned

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[21]  Memos are notes that a researcher writes on the categories and themes in the process of constant comparative analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In this chapter the memos written were on the analysis of the connection between the emerging themes.

[22]  The paradigm model is a systematic conceptual analytical strategy for organising and exploring the relationship between categories in terms of causal condition, intervening conditions, action, interaction and consequences (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

learners' emotional and social needs. As an example, one educator assumed that an orphaned learner who was not wearing school uniform was ignoring school rules, while there was a possibility that the learner did not have a school uniform.

The educators' misconceptions of the behaviour of the orphaned learner are not unique to this study. Previous studies have demonstrated that educators and other adults fail to understand the psychological distress orphans experience and respond to their behaviour by either punishing them or ignoring them (Foster, 2002; Giese et al., 2003; UNAIDS, 2002). Such responses endeavour to control the behaviour of the learner externally which may not be effective in cases where the learner's behaviour might have been motivated by internal psychological problems (Glasser, 1985). Ryan and Deci (2000) point out that human beings can be active or passive, constructive or indolent, depending on biological factors and social environmental influences. The two researchers addressed the effect of social contextual factors on behaviour and state that social contextual factors could either undermine or enhance an individual's intrinsic motivation, self-regulation and well being, making the individual proactive and engaged or alienated and passive. I find this argument relevant to the emerging themes of relationships in this study. For instance, one of the social factors that seem to affect the orphaned learners is the relationship with others. Some of the orphans were withdrawn while others felt alienated by their peers.

> *When you stand up when you are an orphan they have a topic about you – they arrow you. My friend is HIV. She is not happy because other people they laugh at her. When she comes they run away (Lindiwe.1.17 & 36).*

A possible explanation of the orphans withdrawing from others could be a way of coping with the traumatic experience of the death of a parent (Cohen & Mannarino, 2004).

There were also narrations of positive experiences of orphans having a close relationship with their peers. From the interviews with the orphans it seems that human relationships are an influencing factor on the well being of these children. Wubbolding (2005:44) asserts, "Human relationship alleviates pain and can even lessen posttraumatic stress." UNAIDS (2002) concurs with Wubbolding in calling attention to human relationships,

pointing out that one of the activities designed to address the psychosocial needs of the orphans is the emphasis on communicating with the orphan to help improve the child's self-esteem. Glasser (1965) identifies the need for self-worth as one the basic human needs. The importance of communication in building a positive relationship between the orphaned learners and the educators was evident in this study. The orphaned learners seemed to be more willing to talk to the educators who initiated an interactive relationship with them.

Apart from the different perceptions that some educators have of orphaned learners, there were also misconceptions of the relationship between the orphans and other learners. The educators' perception of the relationship between the orphaned learners and the non-orphans appeared to be linked to the relationship between the educators and the orphaned learners. Some educators reported that the orphans got along well with non-orphans for example:

> *So far we have not had anything reported that the orphans are segregated. They mix with them. They are not isolated. We have not received any report unless they are shy to report (**Mabena 36 & 37**).*

Another educator indicated that other learners discriminated against the orphaned learners.

> *Those who have parents, the learners when you are from a poor family they will joke about it they will laugh at you, they will do funny things. You become a joke. They are afraid to come out. They isolate them. They say, "I do not want to go with this one". I have been observing them. You will not become their friendship until you group your self with other orphans. Like the students who are eating at school, the non-orphans do not want to mix themselves with those who are eating. They take them as if they are poor (**Khumalo 27,28 & 87**).*

It appears that both perceptions depended on the type of relationship that existed between the educator and the orphaned learners. Jarvis (1995) points out that teaching–learning is not just a transaction, because it involves human interaction and relationships are formed between the educator and the learners. The relationship formed is out of care and concern

for others. Jarvis (1995) further distinguishes the relationship formed as *I-Thou* and *I-Group*; where an I-Thou relationship is between the educator and the learner and an I-Group relationship is between the educator and the class as a whole. It was evident from the study that the deductions made by some of the educators on the relationship between orphans and non-orphans were informed by the narrations of the orphans to the educators through interaction and involvement in the relationship – this fits in with the *I-Thou* relationship described by Jarvis (1995). Similarly, Pomeroy's (1999) interview with excluded students – on their relationship with educators – reveals that educators who knew the students, talked and explained things and listened to them, were able to assume the students' perspective. Richter (2004) in support for the positive involvement of the educator-learner relationship suggests that an adult who is in close contact with children can be trained to identify children's emotional needs and give support.

*In the same line of argument, Gillespie (2002) highlights the factors that contribute to student-educator connection namely, mutual knowing, trusting, respecting and communication. The process of knowing involves sharing personal information, recognising the student's life outside the school and getting to know one another beyond the role of educator or student. Pomeroy's (1999) study on educator-learner relationship with students who experienced difficulties in school revealed that students responded positively to the educators who make efforts to establish a relationship with them, who take on a pastoral role and demonstrate care and concern. The students from this study tended to trust and be at ease with the educators when they knew the educator better. Two types of student-educator relationship emerged from this study, namely educators in connected relationships and educators in non-connected relationships.*

*In the current study, Educators Mtalala, Khumalo and Mokoena believed in sharing their life experiences with the orphans to make them understand that they were not alone. In the Gillespie (2002) study, the educators who knew these students were able to recognise and respond to their learning needs. The knowledge of the student's learning needs enabled the educator to provide appropriate support and prevented the educators from forming and working from an assumption of the student's needs. On the other hand, educators who were not competent to identify their true needs, kept a distant between themselves and the learners and did not have a connection with or know the learners. This study has highlighted the connection between knowing the student and the student–educator relationship.*

Other qualities identified in the Gillespie (2002) study were *compassion* and *commitment*. These students regarded the educators as physically available and connected. It would

appear that compassion and competence should be interwoven in the response to the needs of the learners. In this study one would assume that the educators who refer the orphans to other educators for help act out of a lack of compassion and competence, while the helping educators' act of compassion, although they lack the competence to handle all the needs of the orphans, is seen through their efforts in building relationships with the learners and trying to fulfil some of their needs, even if only in a rudimentary way. In the current study it seems that some educators are emotionally and physically ready and able to be available to the learners – despite their instructional workload at school.

It would seem that the closely involved relationship that some educators had with the orphans in this study was dependent on the educators' observation of the physical appearance of the learners. When some educators identified orphaned learners by direct observation they seemed to engage with the learners in a close friendly relationship, where the learner felt at liberty to open up and talk about their experiences. The educators who used such strategies tended to identify needs that went beyond the appearance of the orphans, while other educators who relied solely on the learner's appearance, presumed that once the learner wore a school uniform they would be like other learners and would need no further assistance. For instance, one of the educators reported that at times she bought school uniforms for the orphaned learners so that they could be like other learners. Although wearing a uniform could superficially portray a sense of belonging, the emotional satisfaction and social acceptance that, according to Glasser (1965), is part of belonging, remains unfulfilled. Thus, the perception that the educator has of the orphaned learners as well as their relationship affected the way in which the educator identified the orphaned learners.

> *They would come and tell you "I do not have this and this". Then I tell them "you go and tell your parents to buy them". The learners would come and tell me pathetic stories like "there is no one to buy for me I am staying alone I do not have parents". The others, the parents just disappeared, others their parents passed away. Then I started identifying learners who are orphans (Khumalo 3 & 4).*

## 5.2.2    Educators' strategies for identifying orphans

Educators' identification of orphaned learners from their behaviour or appearance does not seem to be accurate. Getting learners to open up and tell their experiences is likely to be a more accurate and humane strategy for identifying not just the orphans and their needs, but also a way of developing a close relationship with the orphans. However, it is a challenging task to get the orphans to open up because some of the orphans might still be grieving the death of their parents, while others simply did not trust their educators and so were reluctant to disclose their needs. Literature identifies withdrawal and detachment as signs of grief (Willis, 2002; Cohen & Mannarino, 2004).

Educators' understanding of the behaviour of the orphans as described in this study was related to detecting signs of their being deprived of material needs. Identifying orphans by appearance tended to be most frequently mentioned by these educators. A few of the educators also commented that certain of the non-orphaned learners from financially poor families also appeared impoverished and could be mistaken for orphans, while certain orphaned learners, who did not appear impoverished, were not identified as orphans. This conception of orphanhood could be due to orphanhood often being associated with poverty. Other studies have reported similar findings. Giese et al. (2003) report that some children could not open up and tell the educators about their situation at home because they are scared and ashamed of exposing their material deprivation, while other orphans open up to a sympathetic ear. Schierhout et al. (2004) also report that although the educators felt that they played a role in providing material support for learners that were in need, some learners were reluctant to approach the educators for help. Adato et al (2005) note that while some orphans talk about their problems and needs, others isolate themselves, refuse to talk and they cry. These findings indicate a broken relationship between the educator and the orphaned learners, as a result of grief and the gap created by the death of the parents.

The interviews with both the educators and the orphaned learners revealed that the process of building relationships was based on trust. The educators assured the orphaned

learners of confidentiality when they disclosed their experiences to them . Pomeroy's (1999) study on the educator-student relationship revealed that students responded more positively to educators who took the initiative to establish friendly relationships with the students than educators who made them feel undervalued. In the current study, it would appear that getting orphaned learner to open up – by initiating an involvement in the relationship – encourages the learners to disclose their experiences to the educators.

Likewise, Loots and Mnguni (2007) report that children in their study were able to communicate openly with educators who made the children feel loved and respected. Strategies such as memory-box[23] making have been used to assist children in displaying their emotions and at the same time developing the educators' counselling skills (Loots & Mnguni, 2007). It seems that the lack of a close relationship or other strategies that encourage the learner to disclose their experiences may result in learner withdrawal. For example, one of the educators who identified orphaned learners through routine administrative tasks gave the impression that her role perception is pedagogical. The educator appeared to have limited involvement with the learners and seemed not to know much about the orphans. Although it is likely, as indicated by this study, that appearance and behaviour could be pointers to cases that need attention, it seems that there was need to further investigate the kind of support needed by interacting directly with the orphaned learners.

### 5.2.3    Educators identifying needs of orphans in order to provide support

Findings from this study indicate that most of the educators tend to identity and prioritise orphans' material needs more than their emotional and social needs. One possible reason could be that educators were unaware of emotional and social needs, as these were not as easily observable through appearance or behaviour. This finding suggests that educators lack the knowledge and skills to identify these needs and rely on learner appearance to

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[23]    A memory box is any container with a collection of special and valuable belongings of oneself or one's loved ones kept for remembrance of how one celebrated life (Hallam & Vine 1996; Catlin, 2005)

determine the learner's needs. Additionally, these educators could be identifying needs that they think they are able to fulfil without being emotionally involved, such as material needs. Foster et al (1997), found that psychological problems are less obvious than material ones and may even remain unnoticed by the children themselves. There is a possibility that orphans could also be in a state of grief and denial thus avoiding revealing their emotional needs.

Although there is a possibility of deducing needs by observing a person, the skills needed to analyse the behaviour need special expertise, which many educators may not have. One educator (who helps orphaned learners) narrated that orphans needed to be given love. This educator further explained that when the orphaned learners are given love they feel comfortable telling the educator their problems. In this study, as mentioned earlier, a lack of communication with the orphaned learner resulted in misleading assumptions of how the educators deduce the needs of the orphans. One educator was of the opinion that learners do not have emotional needs because they are being taken care of by a granny. Such assumptions also surfaced in the study done by Urassa et al (1997). The study disclosed that there were no major disadvantages between orphans and non-orphans because the extended family system appeared to be able to provide care to the orphans (Urassa et al, 1997). What was missing from the study was a detailed report on the kind of care extended to orphans and the views of orphaned learners regarding the support that they received from their extended family. The care given would most probably be on the physical level, while the orphans also need social and psychological support (Wolff & Fesseha, 1999; Veale; Trocaire, Ndibeshye & Nyirimihigo, 2001; Walker, 2002).

The current study gives that impression that educator perceptions and provision of material needs seem to overshadow identifying and fulfilling emotional and social needs. Educators with limited involvement with the orphans in this study were more likely to have identified orphans when they lacked school uniforms, were unable to pay school funds, or did not eat during lunchtime or if their behaviour (while in class) was disruptive. This observation supports previous studies which indicate that educators identify orphaned learners by a lack of school fees, poor clothes, a lack of food or

misbehaviour (Foster, 1995; Giese et al., 2003; SCOPE-OVC/Zambia, 2003; De Witt & Lessing, 2005**).**

It is evident in the current study that the interpretation of the orphaned learner's behaviour by the educators seems to have partly depended on the physical appearance of the learner and the relationship between the educator and the orphaned learners**.** The educators who were more involved with the orphaned learners tended to inquire about reasons for the orphaned learner's misbehaviour and to explain the orphans' behaviour as a projection of lack of material needs, as well as emotional and social care. For example, two educators believed that orphaned learners got involved in criminal activities to survive because there was nobody accountable for their needs, while other educators who were less involved assumed that the orphans were troublesome, delinquent children.

It is evident from the study that there are different ways in which educators identify orphaned learners. While some educators identify the orphans by their appearance, by their behaviour and through interaction, other educators identify the orphans during the process of administrative duty. That is, when registering the learners' details in the class register at the beginning of the year.  It seems that the processes of identifying orphaned learners and identifying their needs are interwoven. The interviews revealed that sometimes the educators would identify learners who are in need of material support and then confirm that the learners are orphans. At other times, the educator would identify the orphans and then determine needs that were not being fulfilled. Thus, the identification of orphans and the identification of their needs would appear to be connected.

### 5.2.4   How educators' perceive their role in responding to the needs of orphaned learners

The findings of this study suggest that the way in which educators perceived their roles[24] in helping to manage the needs of orphaned learners may be determined by how the educators responded to these needs. Some of the educators in the study played the role of

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[24]   Educator role is the things that an educator does with regard to the expected responsibilities of an educator (Walkington, 2005).

**providing care** for the orphaned learners as part of their responsibility, while others preferred to **refer** orphaned learners to the educators who provided such care. These educator responses created **two identities** for the educators in School A and School B. Walkington (2005) describes educator identity as the personal things that indicate how one identifies with being an educator; one's beliefs about teaching and being an educator and how one feels as an educator. Jansen (2001) breaks down the definition of educator identity into professional, emotional and political perspectives. The professional identity is linked to the perception of educators' ability to teach, the emotional part of the educator identity is how educators feel about their ability to cope with the emotional needs of learners, while the political aspect of the educator identity is about how the educator understands and responds to change.

The emotional aspect of the educator identity speaks to this study in that the two identities that emerged are based on the emotional aspect of the educators' response to orphaned learners. There were *educators who helped orphaned learners* and *educators who referred the orphans to other educators for help.* The different identities further imply the varying abilities of educators to cope with the emotional needs of these learners. There is a possibility that the educators who refer the orphans to other educators for help feel more comfortable in the educator professional identity and less comfortable in the emotional identity. The possibility of the different areas of comfort is beyond the scope of this study to measure, thus it remains a hypothesis emerging from the analysis of this study

The two identities that emerged from this study also seemed to influence how orphans relate to educators. Some orphaned learners tended to open up to educators who were considered *educators who help orphans* and were reluctant to discuss their problems with other educators. In addition, the educators' responses impacted on their relationships with the orphaned learners and the way roles are perceived and vice versa. When orphans confided in an educator, the educator became aware of their needs and then became emotionally involved and committed to helping the orphan. In these cases the educator

included aspects of fulfilling the learners' needs as part of the educators' responsibility. For example, one educator narrated that:

> *When you give them homework the learners would remain with you in the afternoon and ask you questions like: "I need your help here and there what should I do when I arrive at home" That is when you start helping the learner. We do not give him or her the answers. We try to simplify the work so that he or she may not find it difficult to do the work* **(Dube 8 & 9).**

It seems that the educator's response to the needs of the orphans is based on the knowledge of the needs and self-conceptualisation of the role of the educator. When the educator becomes aware of the needs of the orphaned learner, the educator looks for ways of helping the learner, unlike the situation where the needs are not disclosed by the learner or identified by the educator.

It is evident from this study that some educators perceive caring for orphans as a voluntary responsibility in addition to teaching. The implication of this perception could be that the educators may not be aware of some aspects of the seven roles of educators as listed in Chapter 1 of this study, especially the role of pastoral care (Department of Education, 2000). With regard to the role of pastoral care, the indicators of the Department of Education (2000) with regard to *Norms and Standards* stipulate that educators are expected to "demonstrate the ability to develop a supportive and empowering environment for the learner and respond to the educational and other needs of learners and fellow educators". The suggestion of the educator's pastoral role with regard to this study would imply that educators provide care and support for the orphaned learners and create an environment that is conducive to addressing the needs of the orphaned learners. Educators who emerged from the study as having a professionally driven identity may be supporting the learners by referring them to other educators owing to lack of competency or personality factors. The educators did act when they chose to refer the learners to other educators who have been proven able to help.

In this study, despite the presence of the policy that stated the roles of the educator, the educators interviewed did not seem to be prepared for the responsibility of caring for

children in special circumstances. Grove (1999) suggests that educators normally receive little or no formal training in pastoral roles and, consequently, lack of knowledge could be a reason for reluctance in taking up the responsibility of pastoral care.

Since one of the competencies of the educators stated in the pastoral role is the ability of the educator to seek professional services to address some of the problems in the school (Department of Education, 2000), one would expect such assistance to be accessible to the educators. From the current study there would seem to be a lack of resources and support through which the educators' pastoral role could be fulfilled. The educators stated that they were concerned about the lack of support from other government sectors. It is evident from this study that support systems for supplementing educators' support are not in place. For instance, some educators tried to access professional services, such as a social worker and the police (in cases of abuse), and it would seem – from the educators' responses – that there was little or no support from these professional services.

In their study, Bennell, Hyde and Swainson (2002) reported that some of the reasons why schools are providing little support could be due to the absence of a pastoral care policy from the Ministry of Education, a dominant perception about the role of the school, lack of necessary resources and an unsupportive school environment. The findings of this study suggest that policy without the necessary support structure may be ineffective where there is a need to provide such care to orphaned learners. In addition, the findings of this study also propose that educators who referred orphaned learners to other educators for help might not have known how to respond to the needs of a grieving learner. This finding relates to the Reid and Dixon (1999) study on educators' attitude to coping with grief in the public school classroom, which revealed that educators showed discomfort and lack of preparation for coping with the death of family members of children in their classroom and required assistance in knowing how to deal with grieving children.

The behaviour of the educators who respond to the needs of the orphaned learners by referring learners to other educators for help could be explained within the framework of

Ryan and Deci's (2000) self-determination theory; which states that social contextual conditions either undermine or enhance self-motivation, social function and personal well being. This theory explains that an individual's behaviour and motivation is controlled by external factors. In the context of the current study the educators who refer orphans to other educators, apart from not knowing how to help the orphans, probably feel alienated and passive because the school environment does not recognise them as being supportive. One educator expressed the following:

> *I used to help but presently it is not part of what I am doing. I do not feel that I am doing enough because I am not able to help that much since they have a relevant person doing that* **(Malope 28 & 42).**

A possible explanation could be that the other educators are projecting their frustration of not being recognised as educators who help orphaned learners or assuming that the educator who helps orphaned learners are in a higher status position than the other educators. Another educator who helped orphaned learners did not want to condemn others who were not helping because her understanding was that providing care for the orphans was an individual choice. In this case it was not the social factors that influenced the educators' response but the choices the educator made. The general assumption was that it is not the responsibility of the educators to provide care for the orphaned learners. However, at the same time there was evidence that there was tension between the educators' two identities. One of the educators' reports:

> *The other time I was angry when they said I am Mother Teresa. I ask myself: "Why am I Mother Teresa?" They said we are not being sarcastic. I asked them "How can you send a learner to me and tell the learner* Go to Mother Teresa*?" Do you think that it is fair? Can't you help the learner? When the learners come to you and tell you their problems you refer the learner to me. It is not fair* **(Khumalo 55-57).**

Despite what may seem to be a strained relationship between the educators, regarding their responses to the orphans, some of the educators who helped orphaned learners did seek assistance from the other educators at times and the educators who referred learners to other educators responded positively. It became apparent from this positive response

that, in general, the lack of response by these educators could be due to lack of motivation or lack of recognition of their ability to help orphans. Ryan and Deci (2000) explain such a tendency as *amotivation* – a state where there is lack of intention to act at all or act without intent. The possible reasons for amotivation in this study could be a lack of competence to take up the role of providing appropriate care and the personality type. Another possible consideration could be high educator workload.

In recent years the *educator-learner ratio* for primary schools was set at 40:1 and for secondary schools at 35:1 resulting in large class sizes. In this study two educators in School A mentioned that they had classes of 75 to 80 learners. Overpopulation of the classroom may make it difficult for the educators to identify and fulfil the needs of the orphaned learners. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002) point out that it is impossible to meet the needs of all learners in overcrowded and under resourced classrooms.

Ayers (2006) concur and suggest that reduced class size is beneficial for learners experiencing learning and other socioeconomic problems. Apart from class size, education has become learner centred and educational policy has also changed to being *learner centred*, which implies that educators have to give more individual support. Inclusive education has also been introduced into schools, resulting in learners with special education needs entering their classes. The diversity of needs to which educators are required to respond becomes overwhelming.

Other researchers have also indicated concern over educators' workload and the responsibility of providing care. For instance, Giese et al. (2003) point out that the lack of response from educators could be due to over-extension of the role of the educator, without providing assistance from other service providers; like social workers, police, nurses and others. Bennell (2005) concurs with Giese et al. (2003) in reporting that some educators identified time constraints and an overcrowded curriculum as factors that hinder educator response to the needs of the learners. The general feeling is that if educators cannot give all learners the same amount of care and dedication, then they would rather give less support to everyone.

There is also the question of training as mentioned earlier. Many educators may not have been trained to deal with learners with special education needs (including the orphaned learner). The educators do not help because they do not know how to help. Or they wanted to become an educator (read as *instructor of content*) not a pastoral worker – what Jansen (2001) refers to as professional identity.

The educators' dilemma with regard to their role priority appears to be a common problem. A study in the United Kingdom aimed at reviewing the relationship between the pastoral care and the academic function of secondary school educators indicated that at times educators tend to prioritise one role over the other (Watkins, 1999). Chittenden (1999) describes his study of pastoral care in Australian schools, relating how pastoral care in the study was structured around the house system and it was the house tutor's responsibility to provide pastoral care for the learners in a particular house. Although the provision of pastoral care is specified within the role of tutorship, it is the same educators who are tutors, academic instructors and managers of extracurricular activities. The educators who participated in this study seemed less interested in formal pastoral programmes and more concerned with academic work and informal caring during the teaching process. The findings of this study and experiences from other countries suggest that expecting educators to teach and provide pastoral care may be overstretching the role of the educator, if not creating conflict in their roles.

Apart from a possibility of the educators' lack of response due to uncertainty of how to approach the orphans, other reasons for lack of response could be a lack of resources, coupled with an inability of educators to fulfil their own needs. A study by UNAIDS (2002) indicates that educators reported lack of resources as a reason for their inability to assist orphans. Bennell and others (2002) further report that the caregivers were of the opinion that educators lacked sensitivity to the needs of orphans and other children; educators on the other hand pointed out that their personal lives outside the school had impacted on their morale and their response to the needs of the orphans. These studies point to the fact that educators are also human beings with different personalities, strengths and weaknesses; implying that the way in which the educators responded to the

orphaned learners could be determined by other factors and is more unsatisfactory where there is lack of training in providing the necessary care.

## 5.2.5 "Personality or policy"

In the current study there was no indication that the response to the holistic needs of the orphaned learners was initiated or directed by policy guidelines. It is likely that educators responded to the needs of the orphaned learners through intrinsic motivation and the way in which they identified themselves with the orphaned learners, and not necessarily in compliance with externally imposed regulations, such as the pastoral role stated by the Department of Education (2000). What appeared to be the accepted definition of *pastoral work* for the purpose of this study was educators providing for these children's material and as interpersonal needs, including counselling, supervision and care. Some of the educators' responses engendered the impression that the common factor among the educators who provided emotional and social care was that they were intrinsically motivated[25] by their own background experiences, religious beliefs and counselling values. Some of these educators could relate to the circumstances of the orphaned learners and respond in an empathetic and altruistic manner. The emerging finding that suggests the possibility of motivation as a factor that explains the different responses of the educators towards the orphaned learners is relevant to Ryan and Deci self-regulation theory, which emphasises that "people will be intrinsically motivated only for the activities that hold intrinsic value for them, activities that have appeal of novelty, challenge and aesthetic value" (Ryan & Deci, 2000: 71). In the present study, responding positively to the needs of the orphans seems to hold intrinsic value for the "educators who help orphaned learners", for example the educators who help orphaned learners said that:

> *Once you help these kids and you see their faces it makes you feel happy. Just to see them happy fulfils you. Even during lunch when you look at them, when they eat it makes you feel happy (Chabalala10 & 33-34).*

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[25] Intrinsic motivation refers to doing an activity for the inherent satisfaction of the activity itself (Ryan & Deci, 2000: 71).

Figure 5.1 represents the relationship between the categories identified from the findings of this study.
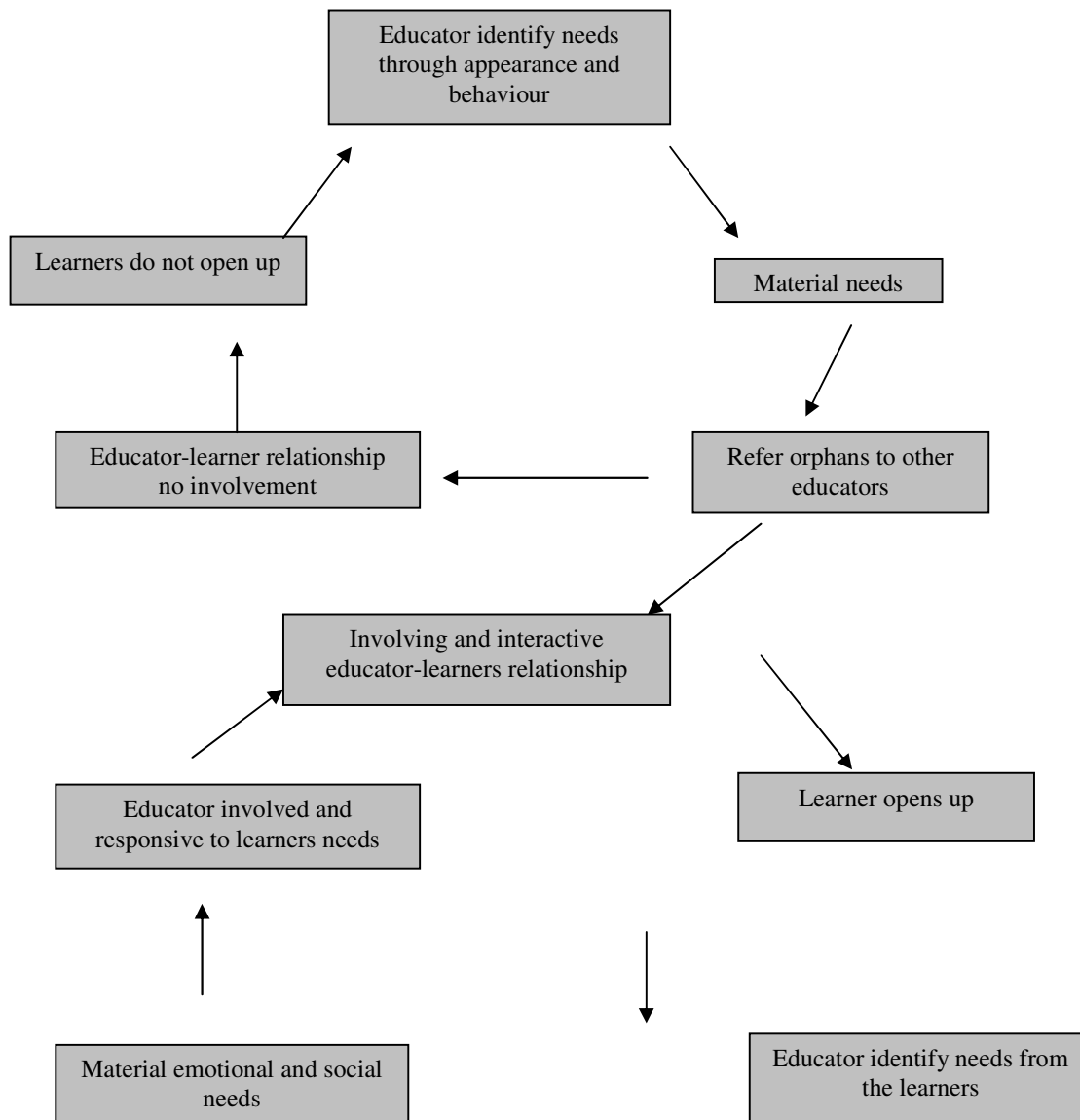
**Figure 5.1: Relationship between categories**



Figure 5.1 presents two cycles, one leading to the other. One of the educators in this study identified the needs of the orphaned learners by the appearance and behaviour of the learners. The needs identified by the educators were mostly material requirements. Some

of the educators, after identifying the orphaned learners, refer the learners to other educators for support. There seems to be little involvement in the relationship between the learners and the educators who refer the learners to other educators for support, thus the learners appear reluctant to confide in them. Owing to the lack of an involved relationship, it seems that educators' identify orphans by their appearance and infer their needs from their behaviour and appearance. However, the learners tend to confide in educators who establish a committed, interactive relationship with them. The educators identify the learners' needs by interacting with them. Through an interactive relationship the teachers are able to identify the emotional, social and material needs of the learners and respond to these needs.

## 5.3    SUMMARY

In Chapter 5, I recorded that it became evident the educators tended to identify the orphans by their appearance and behaviour but also when they disclosed their experiences to the educators. Where there were indications of limited interaction, the educators tended to identify material needs and referred the orphans to other educators for help. However, in other cases of educator-orphaned learner involvement, the orphans shared their experiences with the educators and the educators also shared their lived experiences with the orphans. Owing to the mutual relationship established, a level of trust was developed and the educators were able to identify the material as well as emotional and social needs of the learners. The depth of educator involvement seems to allude to their commitment to helping the orphaned learners.

In Chapter 6 the themes that emerged from this study are examined in relation to literature on this subject.