AN EXPLORATION OF THE FEMALE ADOLESCENT LEARNER-EDUCATOR INTERACTION WITHIN THE YOUTH CARE CENTRE

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work, and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university for a degree.

R. van Zonder ..... **19 February 2008**

SIGNATURE **DATE**

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to explore and describe the Youth Care learner's relational interaction with her educators in order to establish what could enhance this relationship with her educators. The specific focus is on the female Youth Care learners' experiences of this relationship and how they impact on the learners' sense of well-being within a particular Youth Care Centre. The participants for this study consisted of eight female learners from the Youth Care Centre. The research methods which were used are semi-structured interviews with each participant. I also conducted focus groups with educators which resulted in confirmation of data. The analysis of the interview guides' data provided themes which are discussed according to certain categories that emerged in the data produced during the interviews.

The study shows that various factors such as lack of empathy, trust, respect and understanding impact on the educator-learner relationship within a Youth Care Centre. These factors directly impact on Youth Care learners' well-being. The study shows that the presence of these factors could be used to decrease the number of Youth Care learners who have sad or hopeless feelings. The Youth Care learners also made suggestions on how this relationship with their educators could be enhanced. Thus, it can be concluded that Youth Care educators who possess superior competency in the different realms of emotional skills have many advantages that lead to mutually satisfying and responsible interpersonal relationships. This research therefore calls for a greater focus on the development of the emotional skills of Youth Care educators, which could lead to better interactions with their learners. I conclude by suggesting that further studies be conducted to assess the emotional skills of Youth Care educators and to determine in which realm they need improvement.

SAMEVATTING

Die ondersoek is daarop gemik om die aard van die jeugsorgleerder se verhouding met haar opvoeders te eksploreer en te beskryf met die doel om vas te stel wat gedoen kan word ten einde hierdie verhouding te verbeter. Die spesifieke fokus is op hoe jeugsorgleerders hierdie verhoudinge ervaar en die uitwerking daarvan op die leerders se verhouding met en gehegtheid aan hulle opvoeders in 'n besondere Jeugsorgsentrum. Die deelnemers aan die studie was agt vroulike leerders van die Jeugsorgsentrum. Die navorsingsmetodiek het bestaan uit semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude wat op elke deelnemer toegepas is. Opvoeders was ook by fokusgroep besprekings betrokke, wat gelei het tot bevestiging van my data. Data-analise van die vraelyste het die navorser voorsien van temas wat bespreek is volgens kategorieë wat na vore gekom het tydens die proses van dataversameling gedurende die individuele onderhoude.

Die ondersoek toon dat 'n verskeidenheid faktore soos gebrek aan empatie, vertroue, respek en begrip 'n beduidende invloed op opvoeder - leerder verhoudinge binne 'n Jeugsorgsentrum uitoefen. Hierdie faktore het 'n direkte invloed op jeugsorgleerders se welsyn. Die ondersoek toon dat die aanwesigheid van hierdie faktore aangewend kan word om die aantal leerders te verminder wat gevoelens van hartseer of hopeloosheid ervaar. Die jeugsorgleerders het ook voorstelle gemaak wat gedoen kan word om hierdie verhoudinge te verbeter. Daar kan dus afgelei word dat dit voordelig is vir opvoeders van Jeugsorgsentrums om oor superieure emosionele vaardighede te beskik, omdat dit wedersyds bevredigende en verantwoordelike interpersoonlike verhoudings tot gevolg het. Hierdie navorsing vra dus vir 'n groter fokus op die ontwikkeling van die emosionele vaardighede van opvoeders, wat kan bydra tot verbeterde verhoudings met hulle leerders. Ten slotte wil ek verdere navorsing op hierdie terrein aanbeveel ten einde die emosionele vaardighede van die opvoeders te bepaal en om vas te stel op watter gebied hulle kan verbeter.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCING THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

When South Africa's Government of National Unity came into power in 1994, the Youth Care System for children needing care and protection was in need of urgent transformation. South African children were raised in the spirit of Ubuntu, "a spirit of humanity which encompasses a principle of people caring for each others' well-being within an attitude of mutual support" (Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People At-Risk, 1996:7). Factors such as colonisation, urbanisation and apartheid caused a large number of children to be homeless, abandoned and neglected. This resulted in the breakdown of family life and traditional values, lack of education, high levels of violence and an increase in crime rate and necessitated a process of crisis intervention and transformation of the Child and Youth Care System.

The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young people At-Risk (IMC) investigated residential facilities and the approach at these centres was described by the IMC as "control and punishment". As a result, an Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People At-Risk was established to manage the process of crisis intervention and transformation to a more effective developmental approach (IMC, 1996:7, 8).

This transformation process of service delivery for learners at-risk in the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) is underpinned by principles contained in the policy recommendations for the transformation of the Child and Youth Care System (WCED, 2002). The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People At-Risk looked at a whole spectrum of social services to Young People at-risk. This committee emphasises prevention, early intervention and placement in the least restrictive environment with a view to minimising residential care. Elements of risk imply a history of emotional and/or physical deprivation and/or abuse and more seriously, developmental and functional difficulties that requires skilled interventions (IMC, 1996). The Youth-At-Risk model of the Western Cape Education Department is underpinned by principles contained in the report of the NCSNET (1997). The

WCED developed additional principles, which were incorporated into the model. This will be elaborated on in Chapter Two (WCED, 2002).

Effective learning is dependent on the social and emotional well-being of the learner. It is therefore important to recognise that certain conditions in the social, economic and political environment in which the learner lives, might impact negatively on the learner's social and emotional well-being (NCSNET, 1997). The educator also plays a central role in the learning experience of every learner he/she teaches, as well as exercising an important role in almost all facets of the learner's development. Amongst others, the educator facilitates learning, teaches the learner social skills, encourages self-evaluation and broaden the learner's life experience (Louw, 1990). Rosenthal and Jacobson (in Louw, 1990) have found that educators' expectations appear to play an important role in a learner's academic achievement as well as on a learner's motivation and self-image. According to Krovetz (1999), if members of one's family, community, and/or school care deeply about the child, have high expectations and purposeful support for, and value their participation, they will maintain faith in the future and can overcome adversity.

The current view of being educated (Elias, Zins, Weissberg, Frey, Greenberg, Haynes, Kessler, Schab-Stone & Shriver, 1997:125) involves "the reality that learning requires the engagement of all aspects of what makes us human." Long and Morse (1996:254) also observed that "there is considerable confusion amongst educators and helping professions concerning the origin, the awareness, the accuracy and the expression of feelings". According to Stone-McCown, Freedman, Jensen and Rideout (1998), the cognitive domain has been used extensively in the service of subject matter but rarely the study of the self. Elias, Hunter and Kress (2001) also contend that the traditional focus on intellectual skills was not supplemented by a strong concern with emotional skills. Educators also serve as models to learners with regard to essential skills, including the acceptance of feelings and ways of coping with them.

Similarly, in the Child and Youth Care System, learners need to grow into adults who are smart in many ways. The current view of being educated, involves being knowledgeable, responsible and caring. It means that the traditional focus on intellectual skills must be supplemented by a concern with social and emotional skills (Ciarrochi, Forgas & Mayer, 2001). The goal, then, is to educate the whole being. Cognitive mastery goes hand-in-hand with mastery of emotional intelligence (Stone-McCown, Jensen, Freedman & Rideout, 1998). Goleman (1995) provides much evidence for social and emotional intelligence as the

complex and multifaceted ability to be effective in all the critical domains of life, including school.

For learners to become knowledgeable, responsible and caring, it is therefore also important that educators need to model the skills they want to teach their learners. Educators need to experience the process in themselves and must believe in the value of the new knowledge and skills (De Klerk & Le Roux, 2003).

1.2 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

Currently I am working as an education specialist at a Youth Care Centre in the Western Cape. The appropriateness of any placement programme or policy is whether it serves to create the most reclaiming environment for adolescent Youth Care girls. Being removed from their families, learners in substitute care often feel detached, alienated and isolated from others (Beck & Malley, 2003). Youth Care Centres can increase the sense of belonging for all Youth Care learners by emphasising the importance of the educator-learner relationship and by actively involving all learners in the life of the classroom and the school community. When learners feel rejected by others, they either internalise the rejection and learn to hate themselves or externalise the rejection and learn to hate others (Beck & Malley, 2003). This study is important because there are few studies exploring adolescent Youth Care girls' experiences with their educators in the literature. Therefore, a study devoted to exploring the learner-educator interaction, best lend themselves to address this limitation.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

As an educator, it has been my experience that adolescent Youth Care girls with behaviour problems experience deep emotional pain, and are in need of guidance. Historically children were raised in the spirit of 'Ubuntu' which is a principle of people caring for each others' well-being within an attitude of mutual support. One would expect that few children would be homeless or abandoned. However, the impact of colonisation, urbanisation and apartheid resulted in the breakdown of family life and traditional values. Factors such as lack of education, high levels of violence and increased crime rate have contributed to a large number of children to be homeless, abandoned and neglected.

Youth Care learners in South Africa refer to those learners who are at-risk of removal from their homes and those who have already been removed from their homes to various facilities which offer care and protection, education and treatment or secure accommodation and

detention. This risk element usually implies a history of physical and emotional deprivation or abuse which requires more skilled interventions than those attempted previously.

Female adolescent Youth Care learners fail in school because their home conditions are difficult. These learners are struggling with realities such as drug abuse, gang warfare, crime, parental neglect and poverty. Removed from their families, learners in substitute care often feel detached, alienated and isolated from others. Learners who feel lonely and isolated will exhaust their energies to meet the need for belonging and will, as a result, have no reserves left for higher cognitive functions. When learners do not feel accepted, they tend to seek their sense of belonging in a more anti-social context. As a result, female adolescent Youth Care learners find it difficult to transcend adversity and become resilient.

Since educators are often not trained to cope with behaviour problems, it is not unusual for their disciplinary methods to be negative and even abusive and drive the Youth Care learners even further away from social bonds. Connectedness has been shown to protect against violence, drug abuse and dropping out of school.

Therefore, a situation arises that necessitates an investigation into the experiences of the female adolescent Youth Care learner in her interaction with her educators from the perspectives of both the Youth Care learner and the educators themselves.

For this study, the following research questions were posed:

- What are the experiences of the female adolescent Youth Care learners in their interactions with their educators?
- What are the female adolescent Youth Care learners' views on what the nature of their interactions should be with their educators?
- What suggestions do the female adolescent Youth Care learners have in establishing mutually satisfying relationships with their educators?

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE STUDY

The aim of this research is to explore and describe female Youth Care learners' relational interactions with their educators in order to establish what could enhance this relationship with their educators. It is also to record these learners' experiences and their views on their relations with their educators and their suggestions on how such relations could be advanced.

The objectives, therefore, are to record female adolescent Youth Care learners' experiences and their views on their interactions with their educators. It is also to record their suggestions on how such relations could be advanced.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study will be conducted from the perspective of the interpretivist paradigm, which argues for the recognition of multiple socially constructed realities (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This implies that one aims at interpreting or understanding human behaviour, rather than explaining or predicting it. The researcher will therefore attempt to understand the "complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (Mertens, 1998:11). This research strategy aims to understand and interpret the meaning that experiences of a phenomenon have for individuals (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2002).

In order to answer the research questions posed above, a qualitative research approach will be employed for this purpose. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998) qualitative research means any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification.

According to Yegidis and Weinbach (1996:89) a research design refers to "a plan for conducting research". The present researcher intends to explore and describe the experiences relating to the learner-educator interaction, thus opting within the qualitative approach for an explorative research design, or strategy of inquiry. The researcher will use a phenomenological strategy of inquiry to develop understanding and to interpret the meaning of the Youth Care learner's experiences with her educators in a Youth Care Centre (De Vos *et al.*, 2002).

1.5.1 Population and sampling

Marlow (1998:134) defines population as "the sum of all possible cases that the researcher is ultimately interested in studying". The population for this study is all female Youth Care learners currently in Youth Centres in the Western Cape. From the population a research sample of the population will be selected for inclusion in the study (Yegidis & Weinbach, 1996).

The four Youth Care and Education Centres with a residential capacity of 120 learners each are the following, Ottery Youth Care and Education Centre for boys, Faure Youth Care and Education Centre for boys and girls. (A special Youth Care and Education unit for girls is

attached to the centre), Wellington Youth Care and Education Centre for boys and girls and The Bult Youth Centre, George, for boys and girls (WCED, 2002). The study was delimited to one Youth Care Centre in the Western Cape. As an education specialist at the specific Youth Care Centre, it was convenient for me to obtain participants within this context, because of the accessibility of subjects.

The researcher will to employ the purposive sampling technique to procure a sample of youth care learners that fit the criteria for inclusion as stated above. The proposed criteria for inclusion in the sample for the proposed study will be as follows: Youth care girls currently in a specific Youth Centre in the Western Cape. A sample of eight girls will be selected. The researcher, with the assistance of the specific Youth Care Centre's intern social worker, will select the participants. The criteria for selection are that they have to be female adolescent Youth Care learners with special education needs, and enrolled at the centre for care, education and training, in accordance with the Children's Act 38 of 2005 (Republic of South Africa, 2005).

According to Yegidis and Weinbach (1996), purposive sampling is based on the assumption that this sampling method will provide the researcher access to some specialised insight or a special perspective, experience, characteristic or condition he/she wishes to understand. A specific sample size cannot be determined at the outset of the study, but the number of participants included in the sample will be informed and will be determined by data saturation, that is, when the information being gathered becomes repetitive (Tutty, Rothery, & Grinnell, 1996).

1.5.2 Data collection

This researcher will begin the process for data collection by making contact with the participants. The purpose of this contact will be to gain permission from participants to take part in the study. It will be pointed out to them that their participation is voluntary and that their rights and privileges will not be jeopardised in any way. Those who agree to participate in the study will be prepared by having the contents of the preamble to the consent form explained to them. A follow-up appointment will be scheduled for the actual research interview at a date and time most convenient for them.

Data will be collected by means of an interview guide with the adolescent Youth Care girls. The interview guide simply serves as a basic checklist during the interview to make sure that all relevant topics are covered (Patton, 1987). Kvale (1983) defines qualitative interviews as

"attempts to understand the world from the participant's point of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples' experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations."

Data will also be collected by means of focus group interviews with a relatively homogeneous group of people (Patton, 1987). For the purposes of this study, the researcher guides the interview with small groups of educators, who are asked to reflect on the questions asked by the interviewer on a specific topic, with the aid of the interview guide. The researcher conducting the interviews will use the techniques as laid out by Creswell (1994). These techniques will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

I will also combine observation with interviewing. This is because I want to strengthen the validity of my data. The role that I will adopt during the process of data collection can be described as participant-as-observer. In this role I will interact closely enough with participants as to get an insider view. The interviews will be audiotaped and then transcribed. According to Holloway and Wheeler (1998) the best form of recording interview data is tape-recording because tapes contain the exact words of the interview inclusive of questions; researchers do not make the mistake of forgetting important areas.

Qualitative data analysis is defined as a search for pattern in recurrent behaviours, objects of a body of knowledge as well as the process of bringing order, structure and interpretation to the mass of data collected (Marshall & Rossman, 1990).

1.5.3 Methods of data verification

Guba's (in Lincoln & Guba, 1985) model of ensuring the trustworthiness of qualitative data will be applied. The four aspects, which are to ensure trustworthiness, are truth-value, applicability, consistency and neutrality. **Truth-value** is concerned with the fact whether the findings of this study are a true reflection of the experiences of the participants. **Applicability** refers to the degree to which the findings can be applied to other contexts and settings. Applicability is established through the strategy of transferability. Transferability is ensured through a sufficient and comprehensive description of the demographic information of the participants begins studied. A dense description of results is given, with direct quotations of participants' interviews. According to Guba (in Krefting, 1991:216), **consistency** of data refers to "whether the findings would be consistent if the enquiry were replicated with the same subjects or in a similar context". If the same study would be conducted on other adolescent girls, each in their own context, by different researchers, producing the same findings, it could be considered consistent or reliable. The fourth criterion of trustworthiness

is **neutrality** and refers to the degree to which the study findings are a participants' function and exclude the researcher's own biases, motivations and perspectives. Confirmability is the criterion of neutrality, which means that the emphasis of neutrality moves from the researcher, mainly to the data.

1.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Strydom (De Vos *et al.,* 2002 :62) clarifies the concept "ethics" as follows: "Ethics is a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students."

I found the following ethical conditions relevant to be considered when conducting this study. Firstly I will seek informed consent from the participants. According to Mark (1996) the principle of informed consent is at the heart of efforts to ensure that all participation is voluntary. This researcher will ensure that participants are competent to give informed consent, that is that they are in a sound state of mind to make independent decisions. Those participants who volunteer to take part in this research project need to be lucid in their conversations with me. To this end participants will be provided with sufficient information about the study to allow them to decide for or against their participation.

For the purposes of this study, the researcher must obtain permission from the Youth Care learners' guardian, which in this case would be the Principal of the Youth Care Centre. The Principal of the Youth Care Centre will also be requested to sign assent forms on their behalf.

In order to protect the rights of the human research subjects (Burns & Grove, 1997), the following measures will be followed during the study:

Permission to participate will be sought from all the Youth Care learners. The researcher will require informed, written consent from all the interviewees to audiotape all interviews. The audiotapes will be stored in a locked cupboard, where access will be restricted to the researcher only. On completion of the study the researcher will destroy the audiotapes. They will be assured of confidentiality and anonymity.

1.7 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

The **Youth Centre** refers to a "public school for learners with special education needs established in accordance with Section 12(2)(vi) of the Western Cape Provincial School Education Act, 1997 (Act 12 of 1997) (Minimum Standards, 2004:8); and is maintained for the admission, care, education and training of learners sent, transferred or referred to the school, in accordance with the Children's Act 38 of 2005 (Republic of South Africa, 2005) or Sections 39 and 40 of the Western Cape Provincial School Education Act, 1997 (Act 12 of 1997), for education, training and/or after-school programmes and/or residential care, if required" (Minimum Standards, 2004:8).

The situation of youth in South Africa led to the establishment of The Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on Young People at Risk (Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk, 1996). For the purposes of the IMC, '**The Child and Youth Care System**' is defined as "that system which provides residential and/or community care services to young people and their families, who are at-risk of placement away from home, have been placed in any form of residential care, or may be in trouble with the law" (IMC, 1996:2).

Adolescence, which has been derived from the Latin verb *'adolescere'*, refers to the developmental stage between childhood and adulthood, starting between 11 and 13 years and ending approximately between 17 and 21 years of age (Louw, 1990:393).

Youth Care Learners refer to those learners under the age of eighteen years in line with Section 1(v) of the Child Care Act, No. 74 of 1983 and section 28(3) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996.

Relational interactions refer to the connections between or amongst persons and groups, for example, the educator and learners. The term also refers to the ability to establish mutually satisfying relationships.

1.8 STRUCTURE

This research report is divided into the following chapters: **Chapter One** provides an introduction and general orientation to the research report and focuses on the motivation for the study, the problem statement, the research questions, goal and objectives as well as the research approach and design. This chapter also focuses on the ethical considerations and clarification of key concepts of the research report.

Chapter Two will be the literature review about the published research and theory dealing with Youth Care learners' relationships with their educators.

Chapter Three presents the research design and focuses on the research methodology.

Chapter Four will introduce and analyse the qualitative data.

Chapter Five presents the discussion of the findings and includes recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The inquiry sets out to explore Youth Care learners' experiences with their educators. An investigation into the interaction with their educators, in a specific Youth Care Centre will be conducted. In an attempt to build a theoretical framework for the study, various strategies will be discussed. An examination of the relevant literature dealing with Youth Care learners' relational connections with their educators will be discussed. The experiences relating to the interaction between the Youth Care learner and her educators from the perspectives of both the Youth Care learner and her educators themselves will be explored.

2.2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH CARE SYSTEM IN SOUTH AFRICA

Historically, children were raised in the spirit of 'Ubuntu' which is a spirit of humanity which encompasses a principle of people caring for each others' well-being within an attitude of mutual support. As a result, few children were found to be homeless or abandoned. However, the impact of colonisation, urbanisation, apartheid, the breakdown of traditional values and an increase in the crime rate, caused many children to be homeless, abandoned or neglected. Learners at-risk refer to those young people who have their normal development placed at-risk because their circumstances make them vulnerable to having to live away from their community and/or family, on the street or under statutory care (Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk, 1996).

According to Goleman (1995), research in the United States of America suggests that these learners increasingly experience problems regarding social adaptation, anxiety, depression, attention deficit disorders, cognitive functioning, aggression and behaviour problems. The annual statistical report of the Department of Welfare in South Africa for the period 1996/1997, indicates that during this time, 34 752 children received government interventions. The reasons for interventions include physical, emotional, sexual abuse, neglect and children being victims of violence and crime. Furthermore, these factors

contribute to behavioural and emotional problems in children as a result of unresolved emotions with regard to the experiences they have been subjected to.

The situation of youth in South Africa led to the establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk (IMC). For the purposes of the IMC, 'The Child and Youth Care System' is defined as "that system which provides residential and/or community care services to young people and their families, who are at-risk of placement away from home, have been placed in any form of residential care, or may be in trouble with the law" (IMC, 1996:2). The system encompasses all facets of prevention, early intervention and development care and/or treatment with respect to this target group. The IMC came into being in June 1995 in response to the promulgation of Section 29 of the Correctional Services Amendment Act, No. 8 of 1959 to prevent the holding of arrested persons under the age of 18 in prison or police cells for longer that 24 or 48 hours. Furthermore, this section led to the release of over 1000 children from prisons and police cells, many of whom were transferred to places of safety which were unprepared for their admission. The increasing number of children entering substitute care as well as the awareness of children's rights, have compelled policy-makers to take steps to prevent unnecessary and inappropriate removal of children from their homes and placing them deeper into the Child and Youth Care System from foster care to any form of residential care, from a shelter or children's home to school of industries or reform school and from a school of industry to a reform school (IMC, 1996). Traditionally young people at-risk were referred to various facilities, including Reform Schools, Schools of Industry and places of Safety. The general conditions which existed in the majority of the facilities fell short of the standards set by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (IMC, 1996). Appropriate developmental and therapeutic programmes in Reform Schools were found to be missing in almost every facility. It was also found that there was a lack of professional capacity to cope with the needs of children. Family preservation, a foundational aspect of working with youth at-risk, was also very limited. The approach at these centres was described by the IMC as control and punishment (IMC, 1996). In view of the aforementioned, the South African cabinet resolved that the IMC manage the process of crisis intervention and transformation of the Child and Youth Care System. Many children have been removed from their parents' care as they had been found unfit to care for them in terms of section 14(4)(b) of the former Child Care Act, No. 74 of 1983. The transformation of the Child and Youth Care System in the Western Cape was a pilot project of the IMC and the piloting of an education system for young people at-risk in the Western Cape.

Furthermore, the residential Child and Youth Care System had historically been inaccessible to the majority of young people in South Africa (IMC, 1996). Previous apartheid policies allocated facilities on a racial base. During 1995 a situational analysis was undertaken by the IMC and it was found that the general conditions and standard of care, education and treatment did not meet the requirements set by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty and Chapter 3 of the South African Constitution, Act 200/1993. In view of research by the IMC, it became apparent that there was a need for urgent transformation of the Child and Youth Care System (IMC, 1996). The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk launched *Project Go* in November 1997. Minister Ebrahim Rasool announced that the project aimed at facilitating the ongoing transformation of the Child and Youth Care System. No young person was allowed to be moved deeper into the system, for instance from a children's home to a Reformatory or School of Industry without an appropriate assessment of the provincial *Go Team.* The circumstances of all young persons in institutions had to be reviewed by May 1998 to ensure they were placed in the least restrictive environments (Ministry of Health and Social Services, 1998). Least restrictive environments refer to reclaiming environments as those environments where youth at-risk can experience a sense of belonging, where their growth needs are met and where they are able to participate in decision-making regarding their own future and are given the opportunity to care for others. In view of the aforementioned it became clear that a high percentage of youth at-risk did not experience their environment as empowering.

Traditionally, education support services in South Africa have focused primarily on problems, have perceived these problems primarily in individual and medical terms and have been primarily limited to individual interventions (NCSNET, 1997). The key to the transformation of Child and Youth Care in South Africa, therefore, was to move away from a medical model. This model focuses on weaknesses, categorising, labelling, helping and curing towards a developmental and ecological perspective which focuses on reframing problems as strengths, on competency building and residential environments which empower children, families and communities.

The Child and Youth Care System has embarked on a developmental approach, which refers mainly to a focus on strengths rather than weaknesses and to build competency rather than curing. According to Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (1997), curative intervention is directed at 'curing', or at least helping learners to cope better with their difficulties and problems. An

emphasis on most of the interventions taking place in the daily living environment of the Youth Care learner and family are recognised as full members of the multidisciplinary team (IMC, 1996). Young people must be given information about the goals, period of time and expected outcomes of all therapeutic interventions in their lives. Therapeutic interventions must help young people to identify and use their strengths and while they are assisted to deal with trauma, personal problems and/or inappropriate behaviour, they do not feel unacceptable as young people.

The IMC has identified an integrated framework for the Child and Youth Care System which emphasises prevention and early intervention and minimises residential care (IMC, 1996). According to Donald *et al.* (1997), preventative intervention is action directed at the causes of a problem (primary intervention) or at containing the problem so that it does not get worse (secondary prevention). According to these authors, it seems the only feasible way to deal with the gap between the number of learners at-risk and the limited availability of treatment resources. In their attempt to effectively support mainstream and special schools, the Directorate Education, for learners with special educational needs has developed a new model for the prevention of at-risk education for Youth At-Risk (YAR) in the Western Cape Province to support youths with emotional and behavioural problems (WCED, 2002).

The YAR model of the WCED is underpinned by principles contained in the report of the NCSNET (1997). The four levels operate in practice as a continuum of services. This model as illustrated in Figure 2.1 is called the Youth At-Risk (YAR) Model (see p. 16).

The model can be explained as follows:

2.2.1 The YAR model of the Western Cape Education Department

Support levels 1 to 3 entail emotional support and guidance to young people who struggle with emotional and behavioural problems in the classroom. This means deliberate intervention and emotional support in relation to a specific young person based on the premise that there is an identified risk of the youth being expelled from school, placed away from home or entering the criminal justice system. Youth development programmes need to be delivered by multi-disciplinary teams, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) and learner and family welfare agencies.

At levels 4 and 5 developmental and therapeutic programmes will cater for the needs of young people at-risk and their families, as well as the community. The Secure Care Education and Treatment Centre for adolescents (young people in severe emotional turmoil or in

conflict with the law who may need to be physically, emotionally and/or behaviourally contained) and Residential Youth Centres provide specialised multi- disciplinary therapeutic and educational services. Some of these learners need residential care on different levels of restrictiveness or may access programmes on a day treatment basis, after school hours or weekends. In essence the "Child and Youth Care System" involves the care of young people in out-of-home placements and refers primarily to levels 3 and 4 of the framework (IMC, 1996:18). This model has been developed within the policy framework of the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC). The IMC looked at a whole spectrum of social services to youth at-risk.

The WCED (2002) developed additional principles, which were incorporated in the model. Education takes responsibility for the provision of differentiated educational services promoting holistic development for these young people at-risk who are unable to access mainstream education effectively. The first priority of Education should be to support young people at-risk to enable them to realise their full potential in mainstream education. Education shares a responsibility for the prevention and early identification of young people at-risk. Education White Paper No. 6 on Education and Training (2001) provides the framework for establishing an inclusive education and training system for learners with special educational needs, including those within the mainstream whose educational needs were inadequately accommodated.

Inclusive education expects society to facilitate the acceptance of those who do not fit in unconditionally. Within this White Paper, key strategies for establishing an inclusive education and training system were identified. In order to develop their full potential, Youth Care learners require high-intensive educational support and therefore would continue to receive such support in Youth Care Centres. In view of the fact that special schools currently provide in a racially segregated manner, special schools will have a very important role to play in an inclusive system. Similarly, the role of the Youth Care Centre would include providing particular expertise and support, especially professional support in curriculum, assessment and instruction, as part of the district support team to neighbourhood schools. This role also includes providing appropriate and quality educational provision for those learners who are already in these settings or who may require accommodation and secure care and/or specialised programmes with high levels of support (Government Gazette, 2001). Youth Care Centres can operate as resource centres in their district by providing specialised programmes to learners from mainstream schools. In order to succeed, a 'whole school'

approach needs to be adopted which aims to meet the diverse needs of its learners by utilising all the resources of the Youth Care Centre to foster the development of all its learners and to empower its educators. Within this White Paper, key strategies for establishing an inclusive education and training system were identified. "In South Africa, inclusive education relates to the Bill of Rights which protects all children from discrimination" (Donald *et al.*, 1997:20). Inclusive education expects society to facilitate the acceptance of those who do not fit in unconditionally. According to Schoeman (1996:3), "an inclusive education policy is not an addition to the process of transformation which must go on in South African schools, but it is the means by which such transformation can be accomplished".

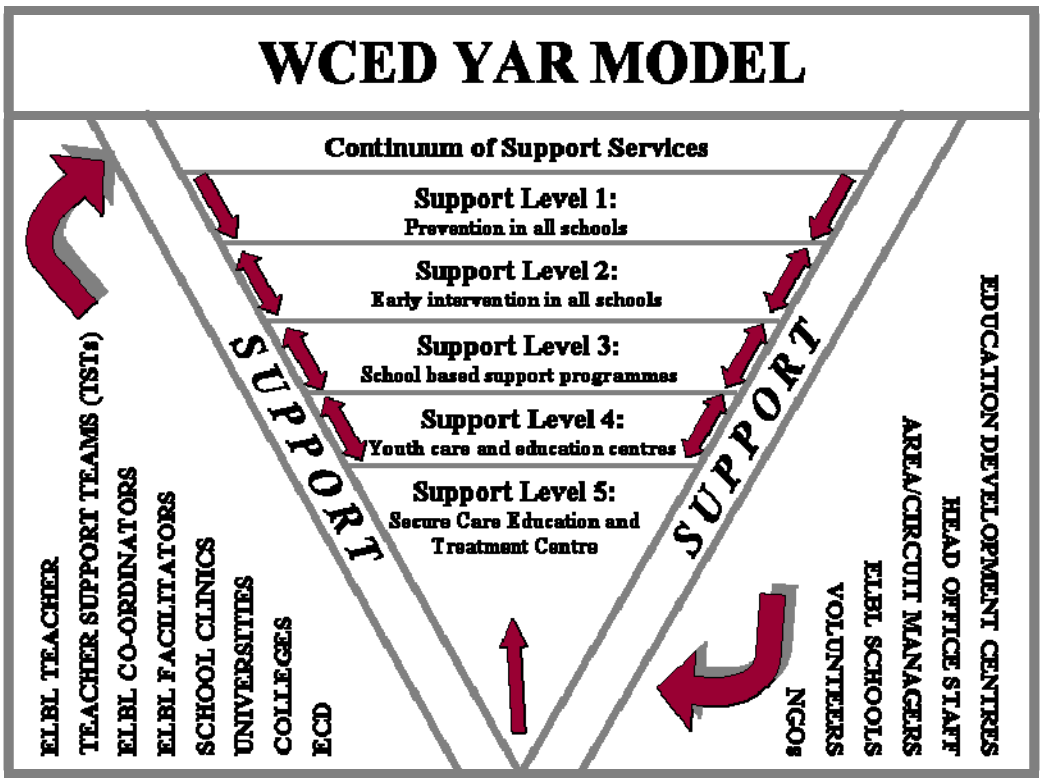

FIGURE 2.1: YOUTH AT-RISK MODEL

2.3 APPROACHES IN DEALING WITH YOUTH CARE LEARNERS

Traditional educational and treatment paradigms to learners with emotional and behaviour problems were looking for root causes in individual pathology. This type of approach seems sensible on the surface but does not get to the root of the problem. Traditional responses were to assume that emotional and behaviour problems were a result of learners' problems, deficits or disadvantages. Educators accordingly tried to find out what was wrong with the learners and referred them for medical diagnoses and treatment. This was based on a deficit model.

Interventions as a result of this paradigm relied heavily on aversive strategies in dealing with learners with behaviour problems. This approach distinguishes school-based interventions from the medical model, which traditionally focus on problems as pathology. As a result, traditionally the Child and Youth Care System have been instrumental in increasing and fostering alienation from educator and school (Aronson, 2002; Long, Fecser & Brendtro, 1998). According to Bronfenbrenner (Brendtro *et al.*, 1990:6), to be alienated is "to lack a sense of belonging, to feel cut off from family, friends, school or work – the four worlds of childhood." Many at-risk learners who join gangs suffer from alienation. Juvenile gang members show little bonding to school or occupational goals. Traditionally alienated learners have been assigned a multitude of labels. They are described as aggressive or anxious, as attention-disordered, as drug abusers or dropouts.

Traditional intervention strategies did not always bring about the desired behaviour outcomes in our youth at-risk. Learners at-risk who have been placed in out-of-home care have been assigned to the same behaviour modification programmes with different results. Some learners did benefit by these programmes, e.g. life skills programmes, behaviour modification programmes, group therapy, individual psychotherapy, while others became dropouts, failed school, joined gangs and ultimately landed in prison. Group therapy as intervention strategy is widely accepted and practised in the Child and Youth Care System, especially with regard to drug related problems. The American Psychological Association (in Dishion, McCord & Poulin, 1999), states that group interventions for troubled adolescents can backfire. Training adolescents to give up destructive behaviours like delinquency, substance abuse and violence seem to fail if several of the adolescents in the group have a tendency toward these behaviours. Larson and Lochman (2002) agree with this by stating that all interventions using peer groups with difficult learners have had negative outcomes. Literature suggests that older, more deviant learners were the most vulnerable to negative effects from peer aggregation. Mutual bonding among the low-achieving high school learners appeared to be prognostic in school alienation. Grouping troubled youth may work better in middle childhood, from 8 to 12 years old. Within institutional settings peers provided a rate of reinforcement of 9 to 1, compared with adult staff. These findings suggest that reinforcement from peers can be so high it seriously undermines adult guidance.

Bandura (in Larson & Lochman, 2002) suggests that new behaviours are learned either through experiencing the behaviour directly or by observing the behaviour of other people. Social learning theory is empirically supported and provides a cognitive-behavioural

framework upon which to conceptualise the direction of treatment options. Aggressive behaviour has been related to intense emotional arousal in general. According to this approach, individuals have the ability to self-regulate their own behaviour. Educators with this knowledge are aware of the strength of observational models and direct experience. Therefore, confining all the naughty and aggressive learners in a single "behaviour disorders" setting, with other negative models, runs counter to the principles of social learning theory. Modelling theory also highlights the importance of its influence on the educator-learner relationship. A foster care model with home group treatment, the mobilisation of adult care-giving and interventions with a family focus could be a possible developmental counterargument against the causal status of deviant peer influences (Larson & Lochman, 2002).

Work by professionals (Stone-McCown *et al.,* 1998; Larson & Lochman, 2002), has shown that social and emotional skills training need to be integrated into the entire school day and across the curriculum. Research indicated that non school programmes have little impact on school behaviour. The integration of skills training into the curriculum helps to overcome generalisation problems associated with programmes occurring only in one classroom. The Girls and Boys Town education model is an example of a family-based model and is firmly rooted in social learning theory (Connally, Dowd, Criste, Nelson & Tobias, 1995). This model has successfully been implemented both nationally and internationally whereby educators help learners manage their own behaviour by learning social skills. Brendtro *et al.* (1990) agree that an alternative perspective on alienation among children and adolescents is needed. This research, however, focuses on a preventative approach through educator-and-learner mediated strategies. New thinking assumes that these difficulties arise because of the interaction of a range of factors, also referred to as a systems approach.

2.4 THE THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING OF THE STUDY

The Child and Youth Care System is placed within an eco-systemic perspective. In order to broaden the parameters of assessment and the choices of intervention, an eco-systemic perspective is suggested to view the interconnectedness of various systems giving special attention to the interrelatedness of the Youth Care learner, Youth Care Centre, family and community. The ecological perspective is based on the assumption that each learner must be viewed as a complete entity, surrounded by a mini eco-system.

The YAR model moves beyond a purely psychological model towards a socio-ecological perspective, whereby the Youth Care Centre is viewed as a system (Youth Care Centre, Youth Care learner, educator, parents, family, home and community). This view is based on the general systems theory that all living things are viewed as systems. This theory "sees different levels and groupings of the social context as 'systems' where the functioning of the whole is dependent on the interaction between all parts … a fundamental principle of systemic thinking is that cause and effect relationships are not seen as taking place in one direction only. Rather they are seen as occurring in circles, or more accurately, cycles" (Donald *et al.,* 1997:36). Skynner (in Bentovin *et al.,* 1982) describes how the systems theory has widened our perspective from its earlier focus on the individual to an awareness of family and community systems and that it has shown us some clear reasons why therapists have not succeeded in changing individuals separately from their family systems, or in changing families separately from the influence of their neighbourhood communities, with which they remain in close psychological contact and are thus deeply affected by these larger structures in which their lives are led. Since change in one part of the system will affect changes in other parts as well as in the system as a whole, it would be impossible to consider intervention in one part without taking the other into consideration. Systems theory, therefore, is a necessity for long term behavioural changes to take place because it takes into account the impact of other levels of the system on the well-being of individuals. Similarly, the eco-system of a Youth Care Centre is made up of conditions within the classroom, which include educator-learner relationships. From an ecological perspective, preventative approaches and interventions should, therefore, also focus on the family instead of on the learner in isolation.

The Youth At-Risk model is based on the assumption that each learner must be viewed as a complete entity surrounded by a unique social system or eco-system. "The eco-systemic perspective has evolved out of a blend of ecological and systems theories. Its main concern is to show how individual people and groups at different levels of the social context are linked in dynamic, interdependent, and interacting relationships" (Donald *et al.,* 1997:34). An eco-systemic perspective is suggested to view the interconnectedness of various life systems giving special attention to the interrelatedness of the Youth Care learner, the Youth Care Centre, family, extended family and community. When problems in Youth Care Centres are acted upon in this way, we are promoting a holistic and caring environment.

2.5 INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES OF DEALING WITH YOUTH AT-RISK

The Child and Youth Care System in South Africa needs to be placed within the context of international models of dealing with Youth At-Risk. Diversion, involving removal from the criminal justice system and redirection to community support services, is commonly practised on a formal and informal basis in New Zealand, Canada, Australia and certain parts of Europe. This reflects a philosophical assumption that children who offend must be viewed in the context of their family environment. Programmes that keep young people in the mainstream and prepare them for adult roles proved to be most effective. This involves rebuilding esteem through mainstream achievement (Becroft, 2003). This is in line with "The Beijing Rules" (1985) which emphasises the importance of the family where it is the parents' responsibility to care and supervise their children. Therefore, separation of children from their parents is a measure of last resort and also for a minimum period. For various reasons, non-institutional treatment is preferred over institutional treatment. The many negative effects on a young person within an institutional setting are difficult to be corrected by treatment efforts.

In New Zealand, offending by children is seen as a care and protection issue involving the whole family. Interventions promote the development of the child and family and young people are kept in the community. The aim is to move away from punitive measures towards outcomes shaped by families themselves and agreed to by all the participants. The Family Group Conference refers to the new decision-making forum whereby the responsibility to respond to their children's misbehaviour is given to the family. The intention is to empower families to deal with their children, as reasons for misbehaviour were felt to lie not in the individual, but in a lack of balance in the young person's social and family environment. The imbalance has to be restored through positive community-based processes. A current trend also involves a shift in resources from state agencies to the voluntary and private sector and the use of least restrictive alternatives. Such strategies are now also being implemented internationally (Taylor, 2006).

2.6 THE YOUTH CARE LEARNER

Youth Care learners in South Africa refer to those learners who are at-risk of removal from their homes and those who have already been removed from their homes, to various facilities which offer care and protection, education and treatment or secure accommodation and detention (IMC, 1996). This risk element usually implies a history of physical, emotional deprivation or abuse, and a more serious degree of developmental and functional difficulty which requires more skilled interventions than those attempted previously. McWhirter and McWhirter (1998) define the concept of at-risk as a series of steps along a continuum. Individual high-risk characteristics often find expression in participation in gateway behaviours. High-risk characteristics include depression, anxiety, aggression and hopelessness as well as deficits in social skills and coping behaviours. Gateway behaviours are mildly or moderately distressing activities, frequently destructive, which often progress to increasingly deviant behaviours. Evidence linking gateway behaviours with more serious activities are so strong, that young people who participate in such activities have passed beyond risk because they already exhibit mal-adaptive behaviour.

The Youth Care learners fail in school because their home conditions are difficult. These learners often feel detached, alienated and isolated from others and from the educational process (Brendtro & Du Toit, 2005). Youth Care learners with behaviour problems experience deep emotional pain and are in need of guidance. The learners who feel lonely or isolated will exhaust their energies to meet the need for belonging, and will, as a result, have no reserves left for higher cognitive functions. Most maladjustment and emotional illnesses in our society are due to failure to gratify the basic need for belonging. When learners do not feel accepted, they tend to seek their own sense of belonging in a more antisocial context. Disciplinary methods employed by the educator, especially in the Youth Care Centre, matter little if they do not satisfy the basic need for belonging (Beck & Malley, 2003).

2.7 EDUCATORS IN YOUTH CARE CENTRES

2.7.1 Role of the Youth Care educator

Youth Care educators who work with the Youth Care learners are always dealing with complex emotional issues. Youth Care learners present with social-emotional needs which demand a quality of educator understanding and skill that once was the domain of the mental health professional or special education teacher. These learners are struggling with realities

such as drug abuse, gang warfare, crime, parental neglect and poverty (Long, Fecser & Brendtro, 1998). Since educators are often not trained to cope with behavioural problems, it is not unusual for their methods to be ineffective, negative and even physically abusive. These methods drive the Youth Care learner further away from social bonds. As a result, educators feel frustrated and become angry. Given that the anger of the learners has to do with pain, the anger of the educator will not work, because punishment, sanctions and exclusions add to the learners' pain (McNamara & Moreton, 2001).

Educators are now being challenged to develop positive behaviour interventions to fit in with new policy directions in the management of learners in Youth Care Centres. Brendtro and Du Toit (2005) contend that few who work with such learners are trained to recognise or address the pain concealed beneath the problem behaviour. Often a learner with behaviour problems stirs up such distress in educators that they react emotionally and give the pain back instead of responding to the learner's pain with empathy. According to MacGrath (2000), since educators are in charge and need to maintain order, they may switch to more aggressive roles in order to defeat the learners, put them down or perhaps humiliate them in front of the whole class. According to Henley (1997), (see also McNamara & Moreton, 2001; De Klerk & Le Roux, 2003), aggressive, harsh and bullying behaviour by educators merely adds to the negative model and reinforces that behaviour which needs to be unlearnt. Although learners need trusting relationships with adults and peers who can provide emotional support, this is often not the case because of verbal threats, belittling, shouting, swearing, invading space, menacing looks and domineering attitudes. Youth Care educators may also use sarcasm, shaming or humour to hurt the learners. Belittling wears away the victims' self-confidence, sense of self-worth, trust in their own perceptions and self-concept. The experience of belittlement also evokes sadness and feelings of worthlessness. These responses from educators disconnect the learner from important relationships and may also lead to further alienation, rejection, breaking down of self-esteem, refusal to work and co-operation. This approach breaks down both the educator's and the learner's self-esteem, while continuing to break down the relationship with the particular learner and also with the rest of the class (Hein, 2000).

Youth Care educators often feel powerless in relation to the whole education system and some may think that they have no choice and can do little with learners who disrupt lessons. It is believed that: "The experienced teacher will avoid bullying, shouting, sarcasm and other such methods, as these really only reveal one's own insecurity" (MacGrath, 2000:86).

"Demands, blunt directives, ridicule or abuse are all aggressive responses which violate the rights of the other person" (Hargie & Dickson, 2001:300).

In an environment which is low of threat and high challenge, learners feel safe to talk about their feelings, to think new thoughts and to learn from their mistakes. Factors experienced as controlling, for instance pressure to think, or behave in specific ways, diminish intrinsic motivation (Aronson, 2002). Krovetz (1999) adds to this by stating that educators should work through motivation to foster spontaneous behaviour control and participation. When experiences are intrinsically rewarding, Youth Care learners will experience positive feelings of joy, interest and freedom which will enable them to participate autonomously, spontaneously and self-directed in acceptable ways. Autonomy is a sense of one's own identity and an ability to act independently and exert some control over one's environment. Learners, therefore, need opportunities to learn and make their own choices and decisions without coercion and educators need to respect the right of learners to exert some control over their own lives (Brendtro & Du Toit, 2005).

To be successful, educators in Youth Care centres also need to be aware of the ecological factors in the lives of youth at-risk such as destructive relationships, as experienced by the rejected or unclaimed learner. These learners are hungry for love but unable to trust, expecting to be hurt again. Insecure youngsters, also crippled by feelings of inadequacy and fear of failure, also encounter climates of futility. Often young people's sense of powerlessness may be masked by indifference or defiant, rebellious behaviour. Young people often experience a loss of purpose, as portrayed by a generation of self-centred youth, desperately searching for meaning in a world of confusing values (Brendtro *et al.,* 1990). Educators must, therefore, be aware that stress symptoms manifest themselves in a variety of ways, namely, excitement, anxiety, frustration, anger, fear and irritability. These conditions will affect an individual's ability to cope and have harmful and debilitating effects on interpersonal relationships. Educators received no formal training to manage the challenges learners with emotional and behaviour problems bring to the classroom.

Whitlock (2004:1) refers to connectedness as "the extent to which youth perceive a sense of belonging and support to school and community". Connectedness has been shown to protect against violence, risky sexual behaviour, drug use and dropping out of school. Threats, disguised as tough love, disconnect the learner from important relationships as well as suspension for punishment purposes. All these measures may act as "brain inhibitors" which is also why punishments and coercive measures are counterproductive in dealing with

learners with behaviour problems (Van Bockern & Wegner, 1999). Csikszentmihalyi (in Van Bockern & Wegner, 1999) believes that when the brain is comfortably challenged in a safe, secure climate, learners can become so engaged in what they are doing that all tasks seem within their capability. Caine and Caine (in Van Bockern & Wegner, 1999) referred to this as "relaxed alertness" which is evident of an environment low of threat and high challenge. The brain is social and responds to engagement with others, therefore, educators in Youth Centres are challenged to model healthy connections.

Educators can serve as models to learners with regard to essential skills, including the acceptance of feelings and ways of coping with them. Educators in Youth Care Centres need to experience the process in themselves and must believe in the value of new knowledge and skills (De Klerk & Le Roux, 2003). The Youth Care Centre is often the last source of hope where Youth Care learners can experience positive human relationships to gain a sense of belonging. Educators need skills that ensure that their exchanges with each other and their learners have the greatest chance of positive outcomes. The teaching style the educators choose to use, rarely gives time or space for dealing with the range of emotional responses that this style has created (McNamara & Moreton, 2001).

The curriculum must be flexible enough to accommodate the different learning styles. Schools and the curriculum give very mixed messages about the regulation (management) of feelings and their place in education. Learners traditionally have been laughed at or bullied for showing their emotions and as a result, they have learnt not to cry and not to say what is bothering them (Stone-McCown *et al.,* 1998; Le Roux & De Klerk, 2001; McNamara & Moreton, 2001).

2.8 ROLE OF THE YOUTH CARE CENTRE

The role of the Youth Care Centre is stipulated in the WCED's vision for special support services as providing special support services to learners at-risk. These services include promoting holistic development in a caring environment where effective services are available for educating and reclaiming learners at-risk. These goals are achieved by recognising the worth of learners who have been devalued and by cultivating courage in environments reflecting the key elements of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity (Minimum Standards, 2004). Youth Care Centres also provide specialised multidisciplinary therapeutic and educational services to learners with emotional and/or behaviour difficulties. Some may need residential care at different levels of restrictiveness or may participate in

programmes in a flexible way. Various programmes, geared to the unique needs and potential of each individual and guided by an individual educational and developmental plan, are being provided. Learners at risk of being expelled and learners who are expelled from school may be referred to Youth Care and Education Centres and may access programmes in a flexible way in terms of the policy and procedure governing suspension and expulsion.

Experiences of learners in Youth Care Centres

For many youngsters the Youth Care Centre atmosphere is unpleasant because they are often exclusionary and clique-driven (Aronson, 2002). Exclusion by peers is a painful social and emotional experience, which is evidenced by high levels of loneliness and depression amongst rejected learners which place these learners at higher risk for dropping out, joining gangs or using drugs. Rejected learners are often targets of aggression from peers, for example, physical abuse, verbal threats or by spreading rumours (Aronson, 2002; Beck & Malley, 2003). Brain scans show that being excluded or rejected triggers feelings of distress and a burst of activity in the area of the brain which register physical pain (Brendtro & Du Toit, 2005).

According to Gibbs and Roche (in Aronson, 2002), there are often a hierarchy of in-groups and out-groups in centres. Many alienated learners feel hatred and shame when in contact with peers from the in-group who ridicule and reject them (Krovetz, 1999). As a result, such learners could feel disconnected from the Youth Care Centre, and they often switch their allegiance to other peers in order to replace the pain of shame with the pride of belonging. Shame is a highly painful emotion that attacks self-worth, whereas belonging produces feelings of pride and well-being (Brendtro & Du Toit, 2005). Given this kind of atmosphere, and given the fact that teenagers spend almost half their working hours embedded in that atmosphere, some of these learners do serious damage to themselves or others. Stroufe (in LaFreniere, 2000) points out that educators, therefore, need to be aware that emotion has a powerful influence on the way learners think and behave.

In a study of youth at-risk in ten treatment programmes, James Anglin (in Brendtro & Du Toit, 2005:4) concluded that each of these young persons without exception experiences "deep and pervasive emotional pain". Vermeulen (1999:187) and McNamara and Moreton (2001:24) confirm this view by stating that "pain is a powerful force engulfing emotions, thoughts, and behaviour", for example, painful emotions, for instance anger, sadness and shame, painful thoughts include worry, guilt, distrust, hatred and helplessness.

2.9 ASPECTS IN MANAGING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUTH CARE LEARNERS AND THEIR EDUCATORS

Various aspects constitute the management of the relationship between Youth Care learners and their educators. Brendtro and Du Toit (2005) agree that **respect** could be another basis of control in the classroom, but that this respect must be earned and that it cannot be forced or demanded. Creating respectful relationships often requires a fundamental change in the values and thinking patterns that have caused at-risk learners to hurt themselves and others. Both educators and learners must learn to show respect by carefully choosing words, the tone of voice and the nonverbal behaviour.

Meese (1996:171) views **empathy** as "the ability to take the perspective of someone else, to understand that person's viewpoint or feelings, and to communicate that understanding verbally or nonverbally to the other person". In Rogers's view (1986, in Egan, 1990:124), this way of being with someone is so powerful that it is almost a sufficient condition for progress in therapy: "To my mind, empathy is in itself a healing agent. It is one of the most potent aspects of therapy, because it releases, it confirms, it brings even the most frightened client into the human race. If a person is understood, he or she belongs".

According to Bar-On (2000), Denton (2005) and Salovey and Mayer (in Taylor, 2001), empathy is a core competency in their definitions of emotional intelligence, and is part of what Gardner describes as interpersonal intelligence. An emotionally intelligent person will be able to express feelings and will be able to determine how those feelings impact on others and one will learn true empathy. An emotionally literate person will also have the ability to read the feelings and emotions of others, which are referred to as empathy. According to Stein and Book (2001) and Bar-On (2000) self-awareness is a prerequisite for empathy. It is only when one is able to perceive and understand one's own emotions when one will be able to perceive and understand the emotions of others. Empathetic people care about others and show interest in and concern for them. Failure to see others' perspective often leads to difficulty in personal relationships (Wood & Tolley, 2003).

An important component of emotional intelligence is emotional **self-awareness**, knowing what one feels. Emotional self-awareness refers to the ability to be aware of, recognise and understand emotions. According to Bar-On (2000) and Salovey and Mayer (in Taylor, 2001), self-awareness is a core competency in their definitions of emotional intelligence and is part of what Gardner describes as intrapersonal intelligence. Mayer (in Cherniss & Goleman,

2001), uses the term meta-mood, the affective analogue of meta-cognition for key aspects of emotional self-awareness. Bar-On (2000), Salovey and Mayer (in Taylor, 2001), Weisinger (1998), Cherniss and Goleman (2001) and Stone-McCown *et al.* (in Goleman, 1995), define self-awareness (knowing what one feels) as a characteristic unique to humans and a basic building block and as one of the core competencies of emotional intelligence. According to these authors, self-awareness could be considered essential criteria for predicting positive outcome in therapy. Bar-On (2000), Moller and Powell (2001) and Le Roux and De Klerk (2001) also suggest a connection between the ability to be aware of emotions and the ability to create and maintain interpersonal relationships. The ability to give and receive emotional closeness is, therefore, dependent on the ability to be aware of emotions as well as the ability to understand feelings and emotions within those relations. Le Roux and De Klerk (2001) regard every feeling as a signal. Feelings are triggered by events which trigger a reaction and a counter-reaction from others, thus reinforcing habits and cycles that can be damaging or limiting to the individual's success. Therefore, self-awareness plays an important role in learners' emotion regulation (management). To be able to handle their anger they need to know what triggers it and how this emotion manifests itself. Then only can they learn to deal with it appropriately.

Goleman (1995) also agrees that self-awareness involves being aware of one's moods and one's thoughts about that mood. Only after having developed the skills of self-awareness can one develop other emotional intelligence skills, because what one is unaware of one cannot change. Understanding the effect of one's emotional state on behaviour enables one to avoid situations that could lead to alienation of others. Emotional self-awareness, is therefore, the first step in modifying one's otherwise alienating behaviours. People need to be conscious of what they are feeling and the impact these feelings have on others, otherwise they will be unsuccessful in building key relationships (Stein & Book, 2001).

Cherniss and Goleman (2001) point out that the effectiveness of relationships hinges on the **ability to attune** oneself to or influence the emotions of another person. When educators cannot control their emotional outbursts and impulses and lack empathy, there is less chance that they will be effective in their relationships with their learners. Managing relationships well depends on a foundation of self-management and empathy, each of which requires self-awareness. Educators, therefore, need skills that ensure that their exchanges with each other and their learners have the greatest chance of positive outcomes. According to Cherniss and Goleman (2001), the benefits of an empathic school leader are reflected in the educator-

learner relationship as well. The link between Emotional Intelligence (EI) strengths in a leader and the school's climate is important for EI theory.

Given enough time, people can establish **empathic relationships** with one another in which understanding is communicated in a variety of subtle ways without being put into words. According to Gill (1982, in Egan, 1990) being empathic is not the same as being sympathetic. Sympathy has more in common with pity and condolence than with empathy. While these are fully human traits, they are not particularly useful in counselling. Sympathy denotes agreement, whereas empathy denotes understanding and acceptance of the person of the client. De Klerk and Le Roux (2003), Bar-On (2000) and Pizzaro and Salovey (in Aronson, 2002) suggest that lack of empathy may be an important factor in aggressive antisocial behaviour, which may prove to have both diagnostic and remedial applicability. Often people without empathy turn out to be criminals who have no feelings for other people (Aronson, 2002). Therefore, educators need to teach Youth Care learners the most acceptable ways in which to express their feelings and how to react to the feelings of other people. Brendtro and Du Toit (2005) point out that empathy is a critical building block of resilience. In empathy the educator's brain needs to tune in to the emotions of the at-risk learners and look beneath their problems and behaviour in order to connect with the inside kids so that they can understand their private logic and emotions underlying the behaviour. According to Le Roux and De Klerk (2001:92) listening with empathy means "that you want to understand the meaning of the words and feelings and you have an attitude of respect". The ability to perceive emotions accurately in others, therefore, is a very important skill.

Bar-On (2000) and Weisinger (1998) add to this by stating that an **interpersonal relationship** is related to being sensitive to others, a desire to establish relations and having positive expectations concerning interpersonal behaviour. Educators, therefore, need to model the value of concern, or it will not be possible to create caring environments. Learners with this competency will be empathic, caring, compassionate and productive, with a capacity to give. They need opportunities to give and receive kindness or they will remain self-centred and lack empathy. They will have insight into the feelings of others, have hope, be committed and have a sense of destiny, will be able to judge right from wrong, have morality with an informed conscience, will value decency, be honest and respond to the needs and suffering of others (Brendtro & Du Toit, 2005). Youth Care learners need to make meaning out of their lives and communication is the vehicle to do so. Emotions influences communication, therefore educators need to listen to feelings and validate those feelings.

Meese (1996), MacGrath (2000), Goleman (1998) and Le Roux and De Klerk (2001) agree that **active listening** means that the educator listens with the heart as well as the head to discover both the content and the feelings contained in the Youth Care learner's message. Reflective listening means that the educator behaves somewhat like a mirror, summarising and sharing his/her perceptions of the content and feelings voiced by the Youth Care learner. Through active-reflective listening the educator hopes to clarify the learner's point of view and to reflect it back to the learner as a starting point for problem solving. A mark of having truly heard someone else, therefore, is to respond appropriately.

According to Weisinger (1998), the basis of any relationship is **communication**, because communication establishes connections and connection forges a relationship. It is connection that is so important in relationships, because connection gives depth, meaning and value to the relationship. Connection also makes communication easier. Communication includes conversation and sign language, as well as verbal and non-verbal behaviour. Brendtro and Du Toit (2005) advise both educators and learners to show respect by carefully choosing words, the tone of voice and proper non-verbal behaviour, because learners will only connect and cooperate with whom they trust and with whom they have established connections. Le Roux and De Klerk (2001) and De Klerk and Le Roux (2003) add to this by stating that communication is the exchange of messages between people and consists of verbal and non-verbal messages. Verbal messages consist of four elements, namely, tone, pitch, rhythm and the message. Non-verbal messages consist of eye contact, posture, facial expression and gestures. Youth Care learners need to know that the tone, pitch and rhythm of one's voice are consistent with the verbal message. When communicating with other people, one pays careful attention to how one's communication has an impact on their feelings, thoughts and behaviours and adjusts one's communication accordingly. Both communication and connection are facilitated by EI techniques such as self-disclosure, criticism, dynamic listening, awareness and assertion. These five skills assure that interaction between people have the best chance of positive outcomes.

Rogers (in Meese, 1996) maintains that educators should speak with Youth Care learners in a manner that enables them to know that they have been listened to and understood. Educators need to respond with congruence, for instance genuineness as demonstrated by a match between what they say and how they are saying it; with unconditional positive regard, for instance respect for the young person and his/her ability to handle problems. Educators, skilled in helping relationships are able to communicate to the Youth Care learner that they

hear and understand what the learner is saying and feeling. When learners believe that they have been heard and understood, they feel accepted, valued and more open to learning how to solve their own difficulties. Le Roux and De Klerk (2001) and De Klerk and Le Roux (2003) agree that "I" messages prevent learner defensiveness, yet resolve conflicts when the educator owns the problem, for instance when the learner's behaviour is troubling the educator

The more learners are equipped with communication skills, the less they will act out or resort to violence or verbal abuse with peers or educators. They will talk instead of fight and frustrations and anger will be expressed verbally. Educators need to talk to individual Youth Care learners, thereby modelling the approach (MacGrath, 2000).

According to Goleman (1998), competence studies show that top performers in the teaching profession, in health care and counselling express **hope** for those they seek to help. Especially in these jobs where stress is high and frustrations common, people with this competency, fared the best. People with this competency see a setback as a result of factors they have the power to do something about. Stein and Book (2001) confirm this view by adding that adversity and disappointment happen to all of us, but an optimistic view is vital for enhancing resilience, the capacity to bounce back from frustration or failure (Krovetz, 1999). Youth Care learners need educators who can be models of hope to transcend adversity.

Youth Care educators need new ways of responding to learners experiencing difficulties. Youth Care learners need adults in their lives who will help them develop the courage to overcome difficulties without becoming discouraged. Educators also need to know that when learners' growth needs are met, they can turn risk into resilience. The Circle of Courage, developed by Brendtro *et al.* (1990), advocates such a reclaiming environment where there is trust, respect and a sense of belonging, where learners' needs are met. Where this growth needs go unmet, Youth Care learners cannot develop their full potential, cannot feel successful and fail to become knowledgeable, responsible and caring. Brendtro and Du Toit (2005) also believe that environments that lack belonging, mastery, independence and generosity cause great pain to learners and are not conducive to positive development. When the Circle of Courage is broken, the lives of children are no longer in harmony and balance; therefore, it should be mended by identifying which part of the circle is broken.

2.10 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUTH CARE LEARNERS AND THEIR EDUCATORS

Various factors could undermine the relationship between Youth Care learners and their educators. According to Long, Fecser and Wood (2001) and Norton (in Beck & Malley, 2003), the educator may respond inappropriately by being controlling and feels the need to win every battle and engages in a power struggle with the learner. The educator's counter-aggression confirms the learners' self-fulfilling prophecy of unworthiness with the result that the learners become resentful and withdraws, become resistive of additional efforts to gain their trust.

Occasionally, educators' levels of stress increase and they could become emotionally overwhelmed and exhausted. These educators usually are competent, dedicated and supportive of their learners. They are exasperated and could overreact to attention seeking behaviour and become punitive, which could develop into a crisis. These educators can usually acknowledge their role in a crisis and respond positively to a benign confrontation (Long & Fecser, 2000). De Klerk and Le Roux (2003) believe that educators should be aware of any unfulfilled need they might have, for instance to feel powerful, important, respected, appreciated, dignified and in control. These authors believe that the best educators have fewer unfulfilled needs. Youth Care learners cannot fulfil an educator's needs and therefore, educators need to have these needs fulfilled elsewhere.

During the power struggle, empathy and understanding disappear and the educator wants to win at all cost. If the cycle is not broken, it will explode into a crisis. The blaming "you messages" Youth Care learners receive from educators frequently support the learners' view of themselves and confirm their self-fulfilling prophecy (Long & Fecser, 2000). According to Larson and Lochman (2002), Henley (1997), Salovey and Sluyter (1997) and McNamara and Moreton (2001), educators will often display angry outbursts in response to volatile classroom situations, but learners will rarely observe an educator publicly showing emotions. These authors believe that the reason for this could be that if they tell the learners how they feel and as a result of the learners' behaviour, they will appear vulnerable. Having modelled one type of behaviour, educators must expect that some learners will believe that behaving like that is acceptable. Instead, the effect of saying how one feels without blame, has almost always a de-escalating effect. "Yet it is precisely through sharing feelings that we become much more connected to other persons" (Weisinger, 1998:166, 171). Hein (in De Klerk & Le

Roux, 2003) shares this view by stating that educators, who model verbalising of feelings, create a classroom environment that values communication. When educators model feelings, they are demonstrating that everybody shares the experience of all the emotions and modelling is especially helpful to those learners who are having difficulties in coming to terms with their emotional and behaviour responses at school. Educators must also understand that self-control and understanding is required to disconnect from the struggle, by putting aside personal emotions that arise in reaction to a learner's behaviour. McNamara and Moreton (2001) believe that Youth Care educators who view bad behaviour in terms of the deficit model, or problems that are within the learner will not prioritise the time needed to allow learners to express their own feelings, nor will they model it themselves.

For educators to succeed, feelings first have to be identified before they can be expressed (Le Roux & De Klerk, 2001). Emotional self-awareness, therefore, is a pre-requisite to become self-assertive. According to Le Roux and De Klerk (2001), assertiveness also requires self-confidence about what you want and to be able to communicate effectively about it. Self-assertiveness also means respect for the rights of others to be assertive. Assertiveness also means to have certain boundaries which provide us with a sense of ownership and responsibility for our life. Internal boundaries help delaying the satisfaction of certain needs. Boundaries need to be communicated because it brings openness to a relationship. Similarly, Youth Care learners who mastered the skill of assertiveness will apply themselves more confidently, which would enhance growth and development of self-esteem. Self-assertiveness leads to less free-floating anxiety. It prevents feelings of helplessness and anger from becoming overwhelming.

Pope, McHale and Craighead (in Page & Page, 1993:27) state that the powerful influence of expectations on behaviour and self-esteem is called the "Pygmalion" effect. Expectations lead learners to form self-fulfilling prophecies. "Self-fulfilling prophecies are expectations about future behaviour and performance that emanate from labels and self-image". Learners labelled as "dumb" are likely to live up to such an expectation. Rosenthal (in Aronson, 2002) also found that educators appear to teach more warmly to learners for whom they have more favourable expectations.

There are a few educators who believe that Youth Care learners should be obedient to authorities, attentive to instruction, motivated to excel, and use proper language and manners at all times. These educators are unaware of how their sharp verbal reprimands can become instruments of pain and how it can escalate a crisis. Youth Care learners react to demeaning

and critical verbal style by picking up the educator's negative feelings and by mirroring the educator's behaviour. When this happens, the learner is often labelled as defiant and is sent out of the classroom (Long & Fecser, 2000).

In every Youth Centre, a peer social structure exists in which learners assume specific group roles. Everyone in the Youth Centre knows who is the instigator or trouble maker and the educators and peers acknowledge her reputation. When involved in a crisis or her name is mentioned when trouble sounds, the probability is high that this learner will be prejudged as the instigator before all the relevant information is obtained. Judgements are made which is not true and the learner is accused of something she did not do. When the learner becomes upset, the educators are convinced the learner is lying to protect herself. This situation could escalate into an ugly crisis (Long & Fecser, 2000).

2.11 EMPOWERING LEARNERS TO MANAGE STRESS

Goleman (2002) (in Denton, 2005:36) and LaFreniere (2000:49) refer to the impact of stress on the human body. "When a person's stress increases, the body reacts by secreting more adrenaline and noradrenaline, the body's stress hormones which get the individual ready for action". The body also secretes the stress hormone cortisol, which interferes with new learning, with the result that self-regulation and control are difficult for a child whose brain has been flooded with stress hormones. A traumatised brain has a hair-trigger set point activated whenever a learner dreams of, thinks of, or is reminded of the trauma of stress. Being excluded or rejected triggers feelings of distress, but being able to think about or verbalise emotions, may calm the emotional brain" (Brendtro & Du Toit, 2005:8).

According to Goleman (1998), Weisinger (1998) and McMullen (2001) self-awareness is again a key competency in stress management. It is of no value getting involved in the chicken-or-egg debate as to which component actually sets one's emotional system in motion. According to Weisinger (1998) and Thompson (in LaFreniere, 2000), emotions are produced by an interaction of the three components of people's emotional system, namely their thoughts, their visceral responses (physiological changes) and their behaviour/actions and by taking charge of them, they are able to effectively manage their emotions.

According to Goleman (1995) and Brendtro and Du Toit (2005), the amygdala, the emotional brain's command centre, seems to imprint in memory most moments of emotional arousal. Even brief stressful events can be remembered for a lifetime. In the first few milliseconds of perceiving something, individuals unconsciously comprehend what it is and decide whether it

is liked or not. Those unconscious opinions are emotional memories and their storehouse is the amygdala.

Stein and Book (2001:171, 178) define stress tolerance as "the ability to withstand adverse events and stressful situations without falling apart by actively and positively coping with stress." Those who tolerate stress well are also described as hardy and resilient. On the other hand, people who find it difficult to handle to minimal environmental demands, will not have the resilience to behave independently and assertively. Setbacks and disappointments may lead to negative behaviour like withdrawal, the use of alcohol or drugs or becoming aggressive. However, some people have the ability to restore themselves and return to the same level of functioning as before. Factors like personal capabilities, the ability to plan, cognitive skills, optimism and an internal locus of control ("I am in control of my feelings.") are factors which determine resilience of some people. By contrast, resilience is hampered by past unresolved emotional trauma (Le Roux & De Klerk, 2001).

Benard (in Krovetz, 1999) confirms this view by stating that resiliency is the ability to bounce back successfully despite exposure to severe risks. Resilience theory is the belief in the ability of every person to overcome adversity if important protective factors are present in that person's life. Brain imaging studies by Davidson (in Goleman, 1998) also confirm that resilient people recover rapidly from stress.

Stein and Book (2001) also view effective stress tolerance as the capacity to remain calm, to face difficulties without getting carried away or being hijacked by strong emotions. Without the capacity for stress tolerance, reality testing, problem solving, flexibility and impulse control are all diminished. Self-awareness, as is the case with so many Emotional Intelligence (EI) factors, is again an essential competency in the management of stress. According to McMullen (2003) emotions first have to be recognised before they can be controlled. Emotions, without physical expression thereof, are only a collection of thoughts and therefore, emotions must be accompanied with an awareness of physical sensations. The first step in stress management, therefore, is to look for physical and mental sensations. Anxiety, panic or hopelessness will diminish one's ability to behave with confidence and disturbing bodily symptoms will interfere with one's ability to be successful and one will not have the resilience to behave independently and assertively (Stein & Book, 2001).

According to Brenner and Salovey (in Salovey & Sluyter, 1997:170) any event that evokes stress in a learner is considered a stressor and any effort to manage distress, is considered a

strategy. 'Coping", therefore, is synonymous with emotion regulation. Educators need to communicate with learners about the things they can do to manage particular kinds of stressful or unpleasant experiences. Le Roux and De Klerk (2001) point out that resiliency to stress can be strengthened by becoming aware of feelings and not to suppress them, to keep one's self-talk motivating, to maintain a good sense of humour, by getting involved in physical activities and identifying and using one's support systems. External management strategies, for example punishment and exclusion, provide rarely more than temporary solutions.

On the other hand, eustress, or "good stress", refers to "the pressure that mobilises people to action." "Good stress" exists when people are positively engaged by a challenge and when they are motivated to achieve their goals. In eustress, chemicals called catecholamines are secreted by the body which activate the brain to remain motivated, alert, calm and productive (Goleman, 1998:110). Csikzentmihalyi (in Goleman, 1998) and Stein and Book (2001) refers to this heightened state of consciousness, when an individual becomes so focused and absorbed in certain activities that demand intense concentration and commitment, as "flow." Similarly, educators can enhance intrinsic motivation in their learners by altering learners' moods. Positive feelings of joy, interest and freedom will enable learners to participate autonomously, spontaneously and self-directed in acceptable ways (Aronson, 2002).

The second skill relating to stress management is the ability to control impulses. Denton (2005:37) defines impulse control as "the ability to resist or delay an impulse, drive or temptation to act, and to control one's emotions". Self-management and self-control is especially important for at-risk learners because it helps them to avoid problem situations, limit negative emotional reactions, delay gratification and resist problematic behaviours. La Freniere (2000) points out that often a lack of frustration toleration, anger regulation and control of aggressive behaviour is referred to as conduct disorder and externalising behaviour problems. When learners express their feelings directly in the classroom, they almost always create more problems for themselves since they lack the skills of self-control (Long & Fecser, 2000). Learners need to be taught that if they are able to connect certain physical symptoms with specific emotions, it would be possible to predict the feelings they are about to experience and proactively make decisions to react appropriately (Le Roux & De Klerk, 2001).

"If a person can learn to pause before he/she reacts, it can change behaviour significantly" (Denton, 2005:37). The earliest research into the field of emotional intelligence shows that

children who are able to delay gratification are far more likely to be successful later in life. A few four-and-five-year-olds were given a couple of marshmallows with the instruction to wait five minutes before they could eat. If they could wait, they were given double the number as a reward. These children were regularly observed as they grew up. "Boys who couldn't delay gratification were more likely to get involved in crime, gangs and drugs, and girls in this category often fell pregnant at an early age" (Vermeulen, 1999:131).

Weisinger (1998) also observed that it is one's own thoughts, bodily changes and behaviours that drive one's emotional responses, not someone else's actions or an external event. To manage emotions, one needs to be able to take control of one's behaviours. Similarly, while educators do not have control over the learners' thinking, feelings and behaviours, they do have complete control over how they react to the learners' behaviour (Long & Fecser, 2000).

People with effective impulse control are patient, have high self-control, have the self-restraint to evaluate the consequences of their potential actions and assume responsibility for those consequences (Stein & Book, 2001; Goleman, 1995). On the other hand, people with low impulse control have a low frustration tolerance, are impatient and impulsive and tend to overreact and lose control. They also tend to make poor decisions under pressure and often do not act in their own best interest. Problems with impulse control are also manifested by abusiveness, anger control problems and explosive and unpredictable behaviour (Denton, 2005; Stein & Book, 2001).

2.12 HOLISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF LEARNERS

2.12.1 Understanding the needs of learners

Protective factors are specific competencies that are necessary for the process of resilience to occur. According to Krovetz (1999), individuals who bounce back from adversity are dependent on having certain key protective factors present in their lives. Resiliency theory is founded on the proposition that if members of an individual's family, community and/or school care deeply about him/her, have positive expectations for each child and value their participation, they will maintain faith in the future and overcome almost any adversity. In a resilient learning community, the culture of the school is built on respect. The ability to maintain hope in the future is a prominent feature of resilient individuals. Educators, therefore, need to find ways to develop hopefulness in their learners by providing the necessary elements e.g., connectedness to adults, continuous belonging, dignity and opportunity.

The Circle of Courage has also been described as The Resilience Code. The key elements on the road to resilient outcomes are Belonging, Mastery, Independence and Generosity. The "Circle of Courage" is a model for explaining how one should treat others and educate learners, especially those with emotional and behavioural problems. Brendtro *et al.* (1990) advocated such a reclaiming (positive) environment, where there is trust, respect and a sense of belonging where learners' needs are met. As children grow, they begin to exert their own views, own preferences, an increasing need for freedom, autonomy and independence. The Circle of Courage is tied to universal human needs and is grounded in what Maslow called growth needs (Brendtro & Du Toit, 2005). Where these growth needs go unmet, learners cannot become knowledgeable, responsible and caring. When these growth needs are met, they can turn risk into resilience. This is when the adults in their lives can treat them with increasing respect and thereby earning their respect. The Circle of Courage draws upon the traditional practices and philosophies of the Red Indians of America to explain how educators can establish such reclaiming environments where learners feel safe (Brendtro & Du Toit, 2005). The Circle of Courage has been applied internationally in schools, treatment settings and family and youth development programmes. The Circle of Courage principles have been adopted by the democratic South Africa and have been put into practice in the Child and Youth Care System.

2.12.1.1 The Need to Belong

The need to belong is fulfilled by positive interactions with a few persons with whom one shares special concerns. The need for attachments is evident in the influence that gangs have on children. According to Brendtro *et al.* (1990), the traditional Native Society made sure that every child got the opportunity to belong or to establish relationships for a child to be included in the great ring of relatives. When part of a group, they become motivated to treat others with respect and concern. The ultimate test of kinship was your behaviour – you belonged if you acted like you belonged. Children, therefore, need to live in an extended family and, over time, they become part of a shared community with a clear identity and sense of trust regarding their cultural roots and feelings of belongingness. Belonging creates pride, whereas rejection produces shame, amongst the most painful social emotions humans can experience. Brendtro and Du Toit (2005) contend that smiling and laughter are powerful social bonding mechanisms.

2.12.1.2 The Need to Master

According to Brendtro *et al.* (1990), the goal of native education was to develop cognitive, physical, social and spiritual competencies. Children are taught the importance of competency by listening to the wisdom of their elders, and in participating in tribal games, stories, and work. Each of these activities reflects the importance of mastering a skill, based on the value of cooperative achievement, personal persistence, creativity and problem solving. The process of learning by doing becomes the basic educational experience of fostering the spirit of mastery (Long & Morse, 1996). Native education further relied on powerful intrinsic re-enforcers to motivate children. The brain, according to Brendtro and Du Toit (2005), operates best with challenging tasks, but which are not boring or overwhelming. Children are better equipped to face future challenges when they master new skills.

Native societies emphasise the ability to creatively solve problems and to capitalise on strengths and overcoming weaknesses. Brendtro and Du Toit (2005:48) assert that intelligence has progressed "… beyond narrow verbal and computational skills to include practical, social and emotional intelligence." "Letting children know how dumb they are won't make them smart." Instead, when children engage in challenging tasks and experience success, they will feel competent. They also need opportunities to develop problem-solving ability, talent, and creativity.

2.12.1.3 The Need to be Independent

One of the attributes of resilient learners is an ability to act independently and to exert some control over their environment. Resilient youth stand up to negative influence, develop personal autonomy and are setting their own pathway. Learners often break rules, and in the ensuing power struggles, youth seek autonomy while adults seek control. According to Long and Morse (1996), to survive, to become brave, children are taught the importance of being autonomous, responsible, assertive, and self-disciplined. They are encouraged to become accountable for their actions, and to take some risks by adventuring into the unknown. These expectations result in a sense of empowerment and are similar to Glasser's need for power and control over one's immediate environment. In shifting the balance between vulnerability and resilience, adversity seems to have a strengthening effect rather than a scarring effect. In the case of an internal locus of control, the person believes that he/she is the determinant of his/her behaviour. In the case of an external locus of control, the person believes that external

factors are responsible for his/her behaviour and that they are the pawns of others (Louw, 1990).

Stein and Book (2001:82) adds to this by stating that independency is "the ability to be self-directed and self-controlled in your thinking and actions and to be free of emotional dependency". Independent people are self-reliant in planning and making important decisions. Independent people are able to function autonomously – they avoid clinging to others in order to satisfy their emotional needs.

2.12.1.4 The Need to be Generous

Altruism is regarded by native cultures as the highest virtue. Selye (in Brendtro *et al.*, 1990:45, 49) also believe that if children learn to adopt the virtue of altruism, they become less self-centred and it helps them to cope with stress. In fact, caring for others is central to human nature and "… we learn morality not so much by what we are told than by how we are treated". It is believed that caring for and giving to others, leads to increased levels of moral development and self-worth. Indian youth are taught the importance of giving and sharing their resources instead of accumulating and increasing their material wealth. The emphasis on seeking intrinsic rather than extrinsic rewards is another way to enhance the spirit of generosity. It is believed that those who themselves come from difficult backgrounds are often most empathetic to others' needs and that authentic relationships is grounded in a deep respect. Educators and schools need to restructure their daily programme and activities to reclaim learners with behaviour problems by "… promoting their need to belong, to be competent, to be independent, and to be generous."

2.12.1.5 Mending the Broken Circle

According to Brendtro *et al.* (1990), in order to effectively deal with aggressive, angry and frustrated learners, educators need to look beyond surface behaviours and need to identify which growth needs are not met. Without Belonging, Mastery, Independence and Generosity, there can be no courage, but only discouragement and the lives of children are then no longer in harmony and balance. Learners, whose needs are unmet, have been neglected, rejected and depreciated and consequently their need for adult attention, approval, and acceptance would be greater and more difficult to meet in the classroom than the needs of other learners. Since these learners have learned a variety of protective factors that are offensive to educators, they are less likely to result in a response of respect and approval. Consequently, learners having the greatest need for teacher acceptance and approval, usually end up getting the least (Long

& Morse, 1996). Educators need new ways of responding to learners experiencing difficulties. Learners need adults in their lives who will help them develop the courage to overcome difficulties without becoming discouraged.

2.12.2 Glasser's control theory

In 1986, in his *"Control Theory in the Classroom,"* Glasser (in Long & Morse, 1996:310), presents the fundamental needs critical to a learner's psychological welfare such as:

- Learning can only take place if a learner's physiological needs are met.
- Meaningful relationships encourage learners to give more than is expected.
- The need for power means a learner is motivated to assert control over life and the immediate environment.
- Freedom refers to the need for independence and to be free from autocratic control, and to be self-directed without violating the rights of others.
- Fun refers to the joy one experiences when one's needs are satisfied.

Glasser (in Long & Morse, 1996) believes that educators who are teaching alienated learners must be aware of these needs and develop specific learning opportunities to meet these needs when designing school activities and programmes for these learners. Learning will improve if learners understand what educators teach them and how they do it will add quality to their lives. Quality is achieved when our basic needs are met.

2.12.3 Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Maslow (in Long & Morse, 1996) proposes the existence of a hierarchy of five human needs that motivate behaviour. He believes the lowest level of need must be satisfied before the individual is motivated to seek out the next higher level of need.

Maslow's hierarchy are:

- **Level 1**: Physiological needs, for example, food, water, protection from heat/cold.
- **Level 2**: Safety needs refer to activities that protect the individual, such as physical and psychological security and personal safety.
- **Level 3**: Belonging and love needs are those activities that promote psychological attachment, trust, acceptance and emotional security from others.

- **Level 4**: Esteem needs include those activities that enhance worth, recognition, achievements, and competitiveness of the individual.
- **Level 5**: Self-actualising needs are the highest level of development and include all activities that involve self-directed intellectual and aesthetic appreciation of life.

He believes that the first four needs can only be satisfied by others, for example, the school, family and community, hence the individual is dependent on the skills of adult caregivers. In contrast, the self-directed individual functioning on level 5 has had the other four levels of needs met, thus are less dependent on others for approval, and can be more directed by inner capacities. However, studies by Bar-On (2001) also indicated that it is emotional intelligence more than cognitive intelligence, which plays an important role in self-actualisation. According to Maree and Ebersöhn (2002), when people feel afraid, anxious, uncertain, unsafe, hungry, experience too much stress and tension, when they are consistently offended and humiliated, the chances are very slight that their talents will come to proper fruition. If people do not learn what it is and how it feels to give and receive love, if they cannot establish healthy relationships, their potential for mental development and actualisation is seriously impaired.

Bar-On (2001), also found that in order to predict self-actualisation we need to look at self-motivation, which is based on a combination of happiness and optimism, factors that energize and motivate us. Self-actualization is also supported by our ability to rely on ourselves (independence) to make the right decisions. We also need to contribute something of value, which comes from social responsibility. Self-actualization is the ultimate act of self-expression (assertiveness) which strongly depends on a deep awareness of ourselves, our feelings and needs (emotional self-awareness).

2.13 THE IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN ESTABLISHING POSITIVE EDUCATOR-LEARNER RELATIONSHIPS IN A YOUTH CARE CENTRE

In order to develop an understanding of the importance of emotional competence in establishing empowering educator-learner relationships in Youth Care Centres, the researcher will now give the reader an overview of the historical roots of emotional intelligence. This will include an in-depth understanding of the concept Emotional Intelligence (EI), the value of being emotionally intelligent and will introduce theories of Emotional Intelligence (EI).

Emotional Intelligence (EI) theory provides a theoretical framework for the inclusion of affective processes in managing the relationship between Youth Care learners and their educators. This implies that both cognitive and emotional aspects are involved in establishing meaningful educator-learner relationships within this context. When the educator-learner relationships are addressed this way, a contribution is made to the holistic development of both Youth Care educators and their learners. Thus far, an explanatory theory on the influence of emotions in the management of the educator-learner relationship in Youth Care Centres has been absent. Emotional Intelligence (EI) addresses this limitation.

2.13.1 Historical roots of Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Early researchers recognized the importance of non-cognitive aspects of intelligence. As early as 1943, Wechsler (1958) saw non-cognitive aspects of intelligence to be important for adaptation and success. The roots of EI in the field of psychology go back to the beginning of the intelligence testing movement. Thorndike (in Goleman, 2001:231) was writing about "social intelligence" in the late thirties. Howard Gardner, in his book "Frames of Mind" (1983) began to write about "multiple intelligences." Gardner's model of multiple intelligences includes the "intrapersonal" and "interpersonal" intelligences. Gardner (1983) (in Denton, 2005:3), proposed that "intrapersonal" and "interpersonal" intelligences are as important as the type of intelligence typically measured by IQ and related tests. Bar-On (1996), Salovey and Mayer (1990) and Cherniss and Goleman (2001) (in Maree & Ebersöhn, 2002), state that emotional intelligence entails both inter- and intrapersonal intelligences. With reference to Gardner's influential framework of multiple intelligences, of which EI is a part, research by Mayer, Caruso and Salovey (1999) indicated that EI conforms to the traditional criteria for intelligence. In 1985, Bar-On first mentioned the term "emotional quotient" (EQ), which he used to assess EI in terms of a measure of emotional well-being (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001:17).

Since 1990-1993 the first definitions of the term emotional intelligence were published and the period 1994-1997 marked the sudden popularisation and interest in emotional intelligence. Some definitions of emotional intelligence which were developed are conflicting which has led to confusion for anyone new to this field of study. The period 1998 to the present was characterized by research to refine the existing body of knowledge in the field (Mayer, 2001). Contrasting and conflicting statements by various researchers are typical of the development in a new field of study.

2.13.2 Understanding the concept of Emotional Intelligence

According to Cherniss and Goleman, (2001), the distinction between EI-based competencies and purely cognitive abilities like IQ are more clearly than before, owing to recent findings in neuroscience. According to Bar-On and Parker (2000), general intelligence is composed of both cognitive intelligence, measured by IQ, and emotional intelligence by EQ. EQ refers to the measure of a person's emotional intelligence (EI), whereas IQ refers to the measure of a person's intellectual capacity. EI is made up of a set of skills which can be improved through education. EQ is a set of non-cognitive abilities that influence your ability to get on in life, works synergistically with IQ to enhance performance, can be measured and learnt and differentiates exceptional from mediocre performance. This is echoed in the work of Zins, Elias, Weissberg, Greenberg, Haynes, Frey, Kessler, Schab-Stone and Shriver (1998). This implies that when meaningful and sustained learning takes place, cognitive and emotional aspects are both involved. Often learners' feelings are ignored, but feelings directly influence their attention span, capacity to learn and memory. The well-functioning, successful and emotionally healthy individual is one who possesses a sufficient degree of EQ. Emotional intelligence develops over time, changes throughout life and can be improved through training and remedial programmes and through therapeutic interventions. EI combines with other important determinants of one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands such as basic personality traits and cognitive intellectual capacities. The role of EI in the Youth Care Centre would not be of value if the EQ or measurement of learners' EI could not be altered. Elias *et al.* (2001), therefore, is also of opinion that the traditional focus on intellectual skills must be supplemented by a strong concern with social and emotional skills. Social and emotional learning (SEL) is defined as the process through which learners are taught skills that enhance their emotional intelligence.

2.13.3 Understanding Emotions

Eich, Kihlstrom, Bower, Forgas and Niedenthal (2000), Sternberg (2000), Ciarrochi *et al.* (2001) and Stone-McCown *et al*. (1998) concluded that there is a fundamental interdependence between feeling, thinking and human behaviour. Therefore, our affective experiences are integrally linked with the way information about the world is stored and represented. All aspects of development are interconnected. Likewise, all parts of the brain are deeply interconnected. The result is that thoughts, feelings and actions are linked and must be balanced. The process to show insight is called cognition. Learners need to think cognitively about their affective processes. Cognitive mastery comes hand-in-hand with

mastery of emotional intelligence, which, at its core, is to gain self-knowledge, an integral part of learning. Therefore, feelings and actions are "as important in determining our self-esteem, our efficacy, our very selves as is our intellectual development." These authors believe that this interconnected system of reason and feeling has great influence on both day-to-day behaviours and long-term growth.

Mayer and Salovey (in Salovey & Sluyter, 1997:19), Parke (in Salovey & Sluyter, 1997:177) and Elias *et al.* (2001:135) came to realize that "individuals operate from different emotional starting places". Educators often know a lot about learners' academic prior knowledge, but little is known about the learners' emotional starting places. These can be considered their emotional base. Opportunities for learning emotional skills are not always equal for all Youth Care learners as parents may suffer from psychological limitation or some parents may avoid feelings. Youth Care learners sometimes develop disorders in which they become far removed from their feelings and misunderstand them. Long and Morse (1996:254) also believe a limited understanding of the power of feelings and a propensity toward aggressive behaviour is a formula for disaster in the classroom. Banard (in Cherniss & Goleman, 2001:41) concluded that educators who are more aware of how learners feel, are better able to design a learning environment that suits learners and better able to guide them towards success. Who have a good leader, who has created a positive school climate, will be better equipped to do the same in their own classroom.

2.13.4 Emotional Self-awareness (Knowing what one feels)

According to Steiner and Perry (1997), there are several levels of categorising an individual's self-awareness. A high percentage of youth at-risk experience **numbness** as a result of past traumatic experiences. Apfel and Sifneos (in Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler & Mayer, 2000:506; in Taylor 2001:75), found that some individuals, called "alexithymic", are unable to express their emotions verbally as a result of trauma. Because they have difficulty in identifying and describing their feelings, they are emotionally unaware and are prone to some mental disorders **and do not relate well to other people**. According to these authors there is clinical evidence which suggest that when a person is unaware of emotions, he/she has difficulty with regulating those emotions which corresponds with low emotional intelligence. Steiner (as cited in Roux, 2006:22) confirms this view by stating that "her emotions are in a sort of deep freeze, unavailable to awareness". Stroufe (in LaFreniere, 2000:12) found that learners who are harshly punished for expressions of anger, will learn to camouflage such emotions from themselves. Because they are damaged, they put up defences not to hear anything in order to

reduce the chances of being hurt any more. These learners often exhibit problem behaviour, lack of emotional management and motivation (Roux, 2006).

Taylor (2001) found that substance abuse addicts have difficulty managing their emotions and often could not describe them. Goleman (1995) and Larson and Lochman (2002) found that schoolyard bullies often strike out in anger because they misinterpret neutral messages as hostile. On the other hand, individuals who can communicate their emotions skilfully are more empathic and less depressed than those who are unable to do so (Salovey *et al.*, 2000). People high in "alexithymia" tend to have insecure attachment styles. Attachment styles also impact the adolescents' processes of affective expression, information processing and communication.

Often learners are totally unaware that they are experiencing emotions even though they experience the physical sensations that accompany these emotions. The **physiological changes** which take place include change in breathing tempo, pupil size, change in blood pressure and heartbeat and changes in the secretion of perspiration and saliva. Changes in blood sugar levels, peristalsis and the blood clotting factor also occur. These physiological changes are regulated by the brain, the autonomous nervous system and the endocrine glands (LaFreniere, 2000). Steiner called this condition "somatisation" (Steiner & Perry, 1999:38). The "somatic marker hypothesis" by Damasio (1994) (in Emmerling & Cherniss, 2003:159), supports the view that previous experiences of punishment and reward, pain or pleasure, sadness or happiness produce physiological changes in the body, which are experienced as different emotions. These emotions are being encoded as emotional memories, which lead to an individual's "emotional memory bank". Current events are thus evaluated on the sum of all previous emotional experiences". Youth Care learners and their educators need to be aware of the emotional-physiological correlation in order to enable them to make emotional contact. The researcher is of the opinion that the emotional and physiological component cannot be viewed as separate components, but as an inseparable part of the total emotional awareness. Increased awareness of the physiological component leads to the primary experience.

According to Roux (2006), an individual in **the primary phase** often exhibit emotional outbursts and impulsivity. Steiner and Perry (1997:39) suggest that "… the person in the primal stage will usually be the one to fall apart first when stress bears down on a whole group". According to Schoeman (in Roux, 2006:24), these outbursts are attempts to satisfy his/her basic psychological needs. "This is a natural way of getting the message through of making a point". Extreme emotional outbursts are the primary characteristic of this phase,

during which an individual experiences a feeling of being out of control with regard to his/her emotions.

The **verbalisation of emotions** enables the individual to own his/her emotions. The outcome would be emotional maturity, whereby they are enabled to express emotions, without reacting in unacceptable ways. Youth Care learners, therefore, need to be facilitated to build an emotional vocabulary (Roux, 2006). Le Roux and De Klerk (2001) add to this by stating that individuals will only cross the linguistic barrier in an environment which is conducive to emotional information. According to these authors, mutual expression of feelings increase emotional self-awareness. Youth Care educators, therefore, need to listen to their learners' feelings, otherwise they (learners) will never learn to express them. In order to be successful, they (educators) also need to be facilitated to express their own feelings in order to enhance their own self-awareness.

Differentiation as a level of self-awareness, includes the recognition of different emotions, the intensity of the emotions as well as the ability to verbalise the emotional experiences towards significant others. Individuals, therefore, need to become aware of the basic emotions, as well as the intensity of the different emotions. Various authors refer to **basic emotions** which could be experienced. Knowledge regarding basic emotions empower an individual to distinguish between different emotions which would enhance his/her emotional self-awareness.

According to Steiner and Perry (1997), as individuals are becoming **aware of emotions**, they also begin to understand the events which trigger those emotions and subsequent emotional responses. They also become aware of the intensity of the emotions. (Le Roux & De Klerk, 2001). As individuals are becoming emotionally aware, they also understand the effect of their behaviour on other people. As an individual becomes more aware of different emotional experiences, the different intensities of emotions as well as the causes of emotions, he/she intuitively **become aware** of the different feelings which other people experience (Steiner & Perry, 1997; Le Roux & De Klerk, 2006).

In order to reach this high level of self-awareness, an individual needs to be aware of his/her own feelings. They also need to know what others are feeling. According to Steiner and Perry (1997:47), "An empathic person needs to know what to do with his awareness". This means that an individual would be able to anticipate how other people are going to respond within a certain situation. In order to maintain satisfactory relationships, learners first have to learn to

manage their own emotions and to function on a level of empathic responding. Similarly, educators need to experience the process in themselves before they can teach their learners these skills.

2.13.5 The value of Emotional Intelligence

According to Elias *et al.* (2001), lifelong learning takes place in the context of **relationships**. A primary principle of emotional intelligence is that **caring relationships** form the foundation of all genuine and enduring learning. Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern (in Elias *et al.*, 1997:3) confirm this view by stating that "many elements of learning are **relational**, or based on **relationships** and social and emotional skills are essential for the successful development of thinking and learning activities that are traditionally considered cognitive." Elias *et al.* (in Ciarrochi *et al.*, 2001) also point out that the ability to manage moods and to develop good relationships will lead to higher academic achievement and enduring learning. We all have learned under adverse conditions, but it is not the best way to produce regular and lasting learning and we need to bring our educational systems into alignment with this reality.

Emotional Intelligence skills are critical for a number of positive developmental outcomes in learners. According to Elias *et al.* (1997), Weissberg (2003) and De Klerk and Le Roux (2003), there is evidence that effective social emotional learning programs have benefited learners' academic performance, improved their **relationship skills** and helped them make responsible choices. Learners have also shown less aggressive and disruptive behaviour, show better resistance to substance abuse, suicide and other negative experiences and temptations, have fewer behavioural problems, have lower rates of truancy and school drop-out and are less prone to acts of violence. Plato wrote: "All learning has an emotional base" and emotions are not in the way of learning, they are the route to learning (in Wenger & Pennebaker, 1993:261).

Salovey and Mayer (1990) initiated a research program intended to develop valid measures of emotional intelligence and to explore its significance. These researchers found that when a group of people saw an upsetting film, those with the ability to identify and give a name to a mood that is being experienced, recovered more quickly. Salovey *et al.* (2000) also found that individuals who scored higher in the ability to perceive accurately, understand and appraise others' emotions, were better able to respond flexibly to changes in their social environments and **build supportive social networks**.

When Youth Care learners leave school, they are expected to integrate with a diverse society, live among and with other people, deal with crises, to adapt daily and to cope effectively with demands. According to Bar-On (2001), a high IQ does not guarantee that Youth Care learners will actualise their potential. Emotionally intelligent Youth Care learners with an average or even below average cognitive capacity are able to actualise their potential. EI, therefore, highly correlates with our ability to actualise our basic talents and skills, influences our ability to actualise our potential, predicts our overall ability to self-actualise and to do our best and to accomplish our goals.

According to Elias *et al.* (2001) the current view of being educated is to be knowledgeable, responsible and caring and some would add non-violent. In addition to cognitive competencies, e.g., reading and writing, Youth Care Centres are expected to enhance the learners' social-emotional competencies. Knowledge can, therefore, no longer be equal to content only, but must be recognized as having skills, attitudes and competencies. The importance of teaching Youth Care learners those skills which will increase their personal well-being and to prepare them for lifelong learning, are being valued by more and more people involved in educating Youth Care learners. Besides being knowledgeable, responsible and caring, children also need to be able to effectively deal with their emotions (Elias *et al.*, 2001). LaFreniere (2000) refers to emotion regulation as the processes by which children monitor and control their emotional states and the expression of these states to adapt to different social situations and demands. Signs of this competency manifests largely as the absence of distress and disruptive feelings which include being unfazed in stressful situations (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001).

According to Stone-McCown, *et al.* (1998) there is no denying the value of skills training for educators to help learners compensate for deficits in emotion regulation. Educators need to guide learners to:

Know themselves: by naming and communicating emotions, understanding the way emotion and cognition interrelate, that is, emotional thinking and cognitive thinking affect one another, recognising their own patterns and identifying their needs.

Choose themselves: this is defined by reshaping those patterns, by setting priorities, and making choices based on conscious processes.

Give themselves: this concerns a commitment to the larger world - like recognising interdependence and committing to noble goals.

The goals of the Life Orientation Learning Area in C2005 have close links with Emotional Intelligence (RNCS Policy Life Orientation, 2002). The Life Orientation Learning Area is central to the holistic development of learners and is concerned with the social, personal, intellectual, emotional and physical growth of learners and also focuses on the way in which these facets are interrelated. These goals include health promotion, social development, personal development, physical development and orientation to the world of work. The focus of the Life Orientation Learning area is also "the development of self-in-society."

2.13.6 Definitions of Emotional Intelligence

Bar-On, Salovey and Mayer, and Cherniss and Goleman (in Maree & Ebersöhn, 2002), state that emotional intelligence entails both inter- and intrapersonal intelligences. Johnson and Indvik (in Denton, 2005), Taylor (2001) and Stone-McCown *et al.* (1998) confirm this view. Managing relationships depend on a foundation of self-management and empathy, each of which requires self-awareness.

Mayer and Salovey (1990) (in Bar-On & Parker, 2000:33), defined emotional intelligence as the "ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions. Recently Mayer and Salovey (1997) (in Ciarrochi *et al.*, 2001) proposed a revised definition, emphasizing four primary components of emotional intelligence, namely perception, appraisal and expression of emotion, emotional facilitation of thinking, understanding and analysing emotions and employing emotional knowledge and reflective regulation of emotion to promote emotional and intellectual growth.

According to Steiner and Perry (1997), an emotionally literate person will be able to express feelings and will be able to determine how those feelings impact on others and one will learn true empathy (Steiner & Perry, 1997).

Mayer, Caruso and Salovey (in Ciarrochi, 2001), believe that the following emotional intelligence skills are generally things one does to maintain and **improve relationships** with others, namely:

- The ability to perceive and express emotions accurately
- The ability to use emotions to facilitate thought
- The ability to understand emotions and their meanings
- The ability to regulate/manage emotions in the self and others

Bar-On (in Van Rooyen, 2002:19) defines emotional intelligence as:

"The concept of emotional intelligence adds depth to the understanding of what intelligence or intelligent behaviour is. Broadly speaking, emotional intelligence addresses the emotional, personal, social and survival dimensions of intelligence, vitally important in daily functioning. This less cognitive part of intelligence is concerned with understanding oneself and others, **relating to people**, and adapting to and coping with our immediate surroundings. These factors increase our ability to be more successful in dealing with environmental demands. Emotional intelligence is tactical and immediate, and as such reflects a person's 'common sense' and ability to get along in the world."

2.13.7 The Bar-On model of emotional and social intelligence

Bar-On divided the building blocks of EI into five realms and fifteen subsections or scales:

Bar-On views EI as "a multifactorial array of interrelated emotional, personal, and social abilities that help us cope with daily demands" (Bar-On, 2001:87). The Bar-On model of emotional and social intelligence is a comprehensive model, which views emotionally intelligent people as "people who are able to recognise and express their emotions, who possess positive self-regard and are able to actualise their potential capacities and lead fairly happy lives. They are able to understand the way others feel and are capable of making and **maintaining mutually satisfying and responsible interpersonal relationships**, without becoming dependent on others. These people are generally optimistic, flexible, realistic and successful in solving problems and coping with stress without losing control" (Bar-On, 1997:155, 156). Bar-On (in Sternberg, 2000) also suggests a connection between the ability to be aware of emotions and the ability to create and **maintain interpersonal relationships**.

This model is multi-factorial and related to the potential for performance rather than performance itself. This is a process-oriented model rather than an outcome-oriented model and comprises five major dimensions, namely Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, Adaptability, Stress Management and General Mood. In turn, each of these broad dimensions comprises a number of subcomponents, which are related abilities and skills.

Emotional and social intelligence is a cross-section of inter-related emotional and social competencies that determine how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand and relate with others, and cope with daily demands and pressures. This construct represents the potential for emotionally and socially intelligent behaviour, which is based on the following five clusters of emotional and social competencies:

2.13.7.1 Intrapersonal competencies

According to Bar-On (2001), interpersonal competence is directly dependent on intrapersonal intelligence. Intrapersonal intelligence is related to the self, enables the individual to make sense of the relationship between thought, actions and feelings and helps the individual to operate effectively in life. The better these components are developed, the greater our chance will be to succeed in life. Success in this area means that individuals will be able to express themselves, live and work independently and have confidence in expressing their ideas and beliefs (Stein & Book, 2001). These competencies include the following sub-components that govern our ability to be aware of ourselves, to understand our strengths and weaknesses, and to express our thoughts and feelings non-destructively:

Emotional self-awareness: The ability to be aware of and understand our emotions.

Self-regard: The ability to be aware of, understand and accept ourselves.

Assertiveness: The ability to express our feelings and ourselves non-destructively.

Independence: The ability to be self-reliant and free of emotional dependency on others.

Self-actualisation: The ability to set goals and the drive to achieve them.

2.13.7.2 Interpersonal competencies

As mentioned in (2.13.6), an individual's emotional intelligence dictates interpersonal relationships. These competencies include the following sub-components that govern our ability to be aware of others' emotions, feelings and needs, and to be able to establish and maintain cooperative, constructive and mutually satisfying relationships:

Empathy: The ability to be aware of and understand how others feel.

Social responsibility: The ability to identify with and feel part of our social group.

Interpersonal relationships: The ability to establish and maintain mutually satisfying relationships with others.

2.13.7.3 Stress management competencies

The stress management realm concerns the ability to tolerate stress and control impulses. These competencies include the following sub-components that govern our ability to manage emotions so that they work for us and not against us:

Stress tolerance: The ability to effectively and constructively manage our emotions.

Impulse control: The ability to effectively and constructively control our emotions.

2.13.7.4 Adaptability competencies

The adaptability realm involves your ability to be flexible and realistic and to solve a range of problems as they arise (Stein & Book, 2001). These competencies include the following sub-components that govern our ability to manage change, by realistically and flexibly coping with the immediate situation and effectively solving problems as they arise:

Reality-testing: The ability to validate our feelings and thinking with external reality.

Flexibility: The ability to cope with and adapt to change in our daily life.

Problem-solving: The ability to generate effective solutions to problems of a personal and social nature.

2.13.7.5 General mood

This realm of EI concerns your outlook on life and your overall feelings of contentment of dissatisfaction. Bar-On (2001) believes that a combination of happiness and optimism are factors that energize and motivate us. General mood is a facilitator of emotionally and socially intelligent behaviour and includes the following sub-components that govern our ability to be optimistic, positive and sufficiently self-motivated to set and pursue our goals:

Optimism: The ability to have a positive outlook and look at the brighter side of life.

Happiness: The ability to feel content with ourselves, others and life in general (Bar-On, 2001).

Emotional Intelligence (EI) as an approach towards education services for learners at-risk in the Western Cape Education Department links up with the developmental, restorative and reclaiming philosophies developed by Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern which is based upon Native American ideals, that if achieved, lead to sound mental health and functioning. It is important to note, however, that Emotional Intelligence (EI) encompasses a wide variety of competencies which have been studied for several years. "Bits and pieces of EQ skill-building have been around in the form of assertiveness training, stress management, anger control and 'people skills'. EQ encompasses all these but goes much further, to include emotional self-awareness, flexibility, impulse control, optimism, empathy and relationship building" (Kaye, 1998:64). Hein (in Le Roux & De Klerk, 2003:19) contend that "the educator's level of Emotional Intelligence (EI) is by far the single most important variable in creating an emotionally intelligent classroom". Educators serve as models to learners

regarding EI skills. Instead of focusing only on the Youth Care learners' cognitive development, Youth Care educators also fulfil an important role with regard to Youth Care learners' affective development.

2.14 SCHOOL-BASED APPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

A growing body of research believe that EI skills can be improved. Elias *et al.* (2001) point out that schools need explicit plans to help learners become knowledgeable, responsible and caring. Enhancing the Emotional Intelligence (EI) skills of learners, would also promote the current view of being educated, namely creating a person who functions independently, **having positive relationships,** who is knowledgeable, responsible and caring, self-directed, non-violent and who makes responsible choices. The main focus of education in Youth Centres, therefore, is to facilitate learners who display emotionally and socially intelligent behaviour throughout the lifespan. Cherniss and Goleman (2001) believe that we face a serious gap when it comes to preparing learners in the essential emotional intelligence skills which matter most for their success in life. According to Graczyk, Weissberg, Payton, Elias, Greenberg and Zins (2000:399), "quality SEL programs have a strong theoretical framework that provides a clear rationale for programme objectives and methods for achieving them". To truly improve the social and emotional lives of learners and maximise learning, schools must become learning communities where social-emotional learning is integrated with academic learning. Research in the United States of America suggests that emotional intelligence programmes contributed to increased emotional self-awareness, emotional management and self-regulation (Roux, 2006). Educators serve as models to the Youth Care learners with regard to essential emotional intelligence competencies, including the identification and verbalising of feelings and ways of coping with them.

Elias *et al.* (2001) suggest that EI skills need to be built and reinforced across four domains, namely:

Domain 1: Life skills/positive social competencies includes generic life, health, citizenship and workplace skills such as problem-solving, assertiveness, self-confidence, decision-making as well as social skills, family life/sex education, stress management, communication skills and spiritual development.

Domain 2: Health promotion, problem prevention/risk reduction skills include strategies and behaviours related to specific problems such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs, violence, AIDS,

sexually transmitted diseases, delinquency, suicide as well as positive health behaviours and lifestyles.

Domain 3: Conflict resolution and social support for transitions and crises involve systematic structures for conflict resolution, corrective discipline, positive adult modelling and caring, career and future, planning and event-triggered coping and support.

Domain 4: Positive, contributory service refers to creating in learners a need to assist others, e.g., tutoring, mentoring, buddying.

SEL does not occur in a vacuum. Cherniss and Goleman (2001) believe that the motivation of learners is strongly influenced by the social environment. Therefore, everything programme facilitators might do, will be unconvincing if the environment does not support social-emotional learning. Similarly, educators must be concerned not only with the social and emotional skills of their learners, but must also be aware of their own EI level and application of these skills. SEL involves unlearning old patterns of thought, feelings and actions along with developing or strengthening new patterns. Old neural connections must be weakened and new connections strengthened. Only after lengthy practice do the new connections and associated behaviours become part of the brain's automatic response in stressful situations.

Individuals need to be helped to recognize the relevance of emotional competence. As educators are also in contact with parents who have different levels of EI and different ways of using these skills with their children, it is also significant to assess educators' EI strengths, needs and resources in a particular setting (Elias *et al.*, 2001). When people are not yet ready for change, they also view the costs of change as greater than the benefits (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001).

2.15 CONCLUSION

Chapter Two is the literature review about the published research and theory dealing with Youth Care learners' interactions with their educators. An overview of the historical development of the Child and Youth Care System in South Africa was given, including the education model for dealing with emotional and/or behaviour barriers and the education of learners at-risk in the Western Cape. Being removed from their families, Youth Care learners in South Africa fail in school because they feel detached, alienated and isolated from others. The educators in Youth Care Centres are, therefore, presented with complex social-emotional needs which demand a quality of educator skill that once was the domain of the mental health

professional. The role of the Youth Care Centre as stipulated in the WCED'S vision for special support services were discussed and how to empower Youth Care learners to manage their own stress. Various aspects in managing the relationship between the educator and the Youth Care learner were also put under scrutiny. In this chapter, Chapter Two, negative influences such as learner-educator power struggles, low emotional self-awareness and the powerful influence of expectations and modelling on behaviour which undermine this relationship between the educator and the Youth Care learner were elaborated on and theories which could form the theoretical underpinning for this study were presented. The importance of emotional intelligence in establishing positive learner-educator interactions was also explored.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature relevant to this study was reviewed in Chapter Two. This chapter provides the research design and methodology that was decided upon for the study, which focuses on the value of the relationship between educators and the learners with whom they come into contact. The aim of this research was to record Youth Care learners' experiences and their views on their relations with their educators. It is also to record their suggestions on how such relations could be advanced.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A paradigm refers to a basic orientation to theory and research (Neuman, 2000), and within the social sciences it is shaped by theories, models and methodologies of a specific tradition (Mouton, 1996). A paradigm provides a perspective which serves as a rationale for research, defines the problem area for the researcher and also indicates how the research should be conducted, that is, specific methods for data collection, observation and interpretation (Mouton & Marais, 1990). The interpretive paradigm includes the three dimensions of the ontological, the epistemological and the methodological according to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) and Mouton and Marais (1990).

This study was conducted from the perspective of the interpretivist constructivist paradigm. This implies that one aimed at interpreting or understanding human behaviour, rather than explaining or predicting it. Qualitative researchers are interested in the "complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (Mertens, 1998:11). Qualitative research therefore represents a paradigm away from the positivist approach to research (Leedy, 1997:28; Swart, 1994:160). According to Smit (2001:69) *"… an interpretive paradigm implies that the selected goals are to construct understanding epistemologically and ontologically in a trustworthy and authentic manner"*. According to Neuman (2000), interpretive social science is related to hermeneutics, a theory of meaning which emphasises a

detailed reading or examination of a text which includes a conversation, written words or pictures. The final result is a general description of the phenomenon as seen through the eyes of people who have experienced it at first hand.

The interpretive paradigm takes account of three dimensions, namely:

- the nature of the internal reality of subjective experiences;
- stance, which is the origin and nature of knowledge and the construction thereof;
- the way the researcher arrives at knowledge.

The above-mentioned is summarised by Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999:123), who state: *"Researchers working in this interpretative tradition assume that people's subjective experiences are real and should be taken seriously (ontology), that we can understand other's experiences by interacting with them and listening to what they tell us (epistemology) and that qualitative research techniques are best suited to this task (methodology)"*. Within the interpretive/constructivist paradigm, data, interpretation and outcomes in different contexts are therefore rooted within individuals (Merriam, 1998; Mertens, 1998).

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of a research design is to plan and structure a given research project in such a manner that the eventual validity of the research findings is maximised (Mouton & Marais, 1990). For this study I intended to explore and describe the experiences relating to the interaction between adolescent learners from a Youth Centre, and their educators, from both perspectives. A qualitative approach was adopted that was both explorative and descriptive.

According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), qualitative research means any type of research that produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification. It can refer to research about people's lives, lived experiences, emotions and feelings as well as about organisational functioning, social phenomena and interactions between nations. Rubin and Babbie (1997) define qualitative methods of research as methods that emphasise depth of understanding and the deeper meanings of human experience that are used with the aim of generating theoretically richer observations. Similarly, Tutty *et al.* (1996) state that, qualitative research attempts/tries to understand how people live, how they talk and behave, and what captivates and distresses them. More importantly, it strives to understand the meaning people's words and behaviours have for them. The qualitative researcher focuses on

both the process and product of the research and study events as they occur (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

As stated, the aim of this study was to record the experiences and views of female adolescent learners with their educators between the ages of fifteen and eighteen. From this qualitative stance, the researcher wanted to come to an understanding of the meaning the female adolescent attaches to her interaction with her educators.

Some of the characteristics of the qualitative approach are as follows:

Qualitative researchers are interested in meaning – how people make sense of their lives, experiences, and their structures of the world. With this research endeavour, the researcher is mainly interested in the meaning adolescent girls attach to their experiences relating to their interaction with their educators, and the meaning educators attach to their experience of teaching adolescent girls in their classes in a Youth Centre. The qualitative researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Data are mediated through this human instrument, for example, the researcher conducting the interviews and doing participant observation, rather than through inventories or questionnaires. Qualitative research involves fieldwork which implies that the researcher explores, observes and records her study object, namely the adolescent girl, in her natural environment. Qualitative research is descriptive in that the researcher is interested in the process, meaning and understanding gained through words or pictures.

This type of design explores a social phenomena in order to develop understanding thereof, in the specific context where it occurs (Mouton & Marais, 1990). The social phenomena in this particular study was the experience of the adolescent girls with their educators in the specific context where it occurred, namely in a specific Youth Centre in the Western Cape. From this qualitative stance the researcher wanted to come to an understanding of the meaning adolescent girls attached to their educational interaction with their educators and what could be done to improve the situation. Qualitative research stresses the importance of people's interpretations of events and circumstances, rather than the researcher's interpretations (Brink, 2001).

For this study I was engaging in exploratory research. Exploratory research is appropriate when problems have been identified, but our understanding of them is quite limited (Yegidis & Weinbach, 1996; Mouton & Marais, 1992). Exploratory research designs are used to begin the process of knowledge building about a problem and/or question. The researcher included

the explorative strategy of inquiry as part of her research design as she wanted to learn about a process that has not been widely researched namely the experiences surrounding the female adolescent Youth Care learners' relational interactions with their educators. The adolescent girls are the experts in this situation and each experiences the relational interaction in her own specific context.

According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), exploratory studies attempt to satisfy the researcher's curiosity and desire for better understanding of the phenomena, to test the feasibility of undertaking a more extensive study, to develop the methods to be employed in any subsequent study, to explicate the central concepts and constructs of a study, to determine priorities for future research and to develop new hypotheses about an existing phenomenon.

The study is also descriptive in nature. The purpose of descriptive research is to observe, describe and document aspects of a situation (Polit, Beck & Hungler, 2001). A descriptive strategy of inquiry had also been used as part of the research design for this study as it allowed the researcher the opportunity to look with intense accuracy at the phenomenon, namely experiences of the adolescent girl from the viewpoints of both the adolescent girl and her educators, and then to describe what the researcher finds (Leedy, 1997). The product of a qualitative study is very descriptive. Qualitative data in the form of words, pictures and quotes are more information-rich than numbers and qualitative researchers tend to give subtle descriptions and multiple perspectives to help the readers get a feel for the subjective world of the participants and knowledge the researcher gained about a specific phenomena. The researcher also writes persuasively, so that the reader can have the experience of having "been there" (Cresswell, 1994:21). The researcher also explores the reasons for patterns as well as their implications. The researcher usually explores the reasons for observed patterns as well as the implications thereof and the narrative writing style is normally used to accomplish this (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; De Vos, *et al.*, 2002).

My position as an educator at the specific Youth Care Centre, facilitated my entry into their natural setting, on a daily basis. This made it easy for me to adopt a qualitative approach because I believe that reality is based on participants' subjective understanding of their lived world. I, therefore, adopted an inter-subjective (hermeneutic) understanding to that reality which views people as conscious, self-directing human beings. As education specialist in the specific Youth Care Centre I am also committed to spending extensive time in the field. I endeavour to understand the Youth Care learners' reality from their perspectives and use methodologies such as interviewing and participant observation which is based on a

subjective relationship between researcher and participant (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport, 1998; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). The topic needed to be explored because theories are not available to explain the phenomena under study and needed to be developed. Qualitative research also generates hypotheses which lead to further quantitative research. I selected a qualitative approach because of an interest in writing in a narrative style. This requires a detailed view of the topic in order to substantiate claims and to give multiple perspectives and incorporate quotes to provide participants' perspectives and must be done in such a way to give the reader a sense of 'being there'. As qualitative researcher, I view my role as an 'active learner'. Finally, I chose qualitative research because audiences are also receptive to qualitative research (Cresswell, 1994).

Within the interpretive paradigm the ways in which individuals give meaning to their personal experiences is central to understanding these experiences. This concept recognises the interactive link between the researcher and the researched. Therefore, one should recognise that the personal experiences of the learner-educator interaction at the Youth Care Centre have shaped the meaning that is given to these experiences by the participants.

3.3.1 Role of the researcher

The role that I adopted during the process of data collection could be described as participant-as-observer. As one of their educators, I could interact closely with participants. Participant observation depends on the relationship between the participant observer and the participants. Data are normally gathered by means of observation and interviewing. My role as education specialist at the Youth Care Centre facilitated my entry into the worlds of the participants.

The researcher endeavoured to gain an in-depth insight into the manifestation of the adolescent girls' reality by having contact with them as their educator, and by interpreting and sharing their activities. Bryman (2000 in De Vos *et al.,* 2002 :281) adds that "… for qualitative researchers, it is only by getting close to their subjects and becoming an insider that they can view the world as a participant in that setting". The researcher should study and know the customs, lifestyle and cultural contexts of the participants in a culture-sensitive manner. The procedure allowed the researcher to play the dual role of data collector and interpreter of the data. As both an educator and researcher at the Youth Care Centre, I attempted to mentally operate on two different levels: becoming an insider while remaining an outsider. In such a situation, I became part of the situation and even contributed to it. All senses are used in participant observation and the researcher becomes an instrument that

absorbs all sources of information. It is important to have the minimum structure in studies of this nature in order to keep the situation as natural as possible.

In keeping with Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999), it is vital to note that class, race and gender have an impact on how research is conducted. The researcher was aware that every interviewee was unique with regard to nationality, race, religion, personality and background. I therefore, endeavoured to show tolerance for ambiguity and to recognise the differences between interviewees and their life worlds. This was achieved by listening carefully, by understanding and being sensitive to participants' feelings and experiences. Because of the subjective nature of qualitative research, I endeavoured not to test predetermined ideas. 'Phenomenological reduction' may be pictured as 'bracketing', where I attempted to place my preconceived ideas about the phenomena aside, in order to understand it through the voices of those who live it (Kvale, 1983; Cresswell, 1994). Because of the multiple interpretations of reality and the researcher being the primary instrument in qualitative research, total reduction was not possible. I interacted with participants' viewpoints of the phenomena being studied and therefore, contributed towards shaping the findings of the investigation (Merriam, 1998).

3.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.4.1 Population and sampling

Marlow (1998:134) defines population as the "… sum of all possible cases that the researcher is ultimately interested in studying". The population for the study was all female Youth Care learners currently enrolled at Youth Care Centres in the Western Cape. I chose one Youth Centre, from which a sample population was drawn.

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a sample or subset of the population in order to obtain information regarding a phenomenon in a way that represents the population of interest (Brink, 2001; Yegidis & Weinbach, 1996). According to Maykut and Morehouse (1994:56), "… this approach to purposefully selecting people for a study acknowledges the complexity that characterizes human and social phenomena". Babbie and Mouton (2001) describe purposive sampling as a type of non-probability sampling method in which the researcher uses his/her own judgement in the selection of sample members. In qualitative studies, non-probability sampling techniques are more suitable (De Vos *et al.,* 2002:334) as the sample is not "selected according to the principles of statistical randomness. They are selected for convenience and accessibility". The proposed criteria for inclusion in the sample

for the proposed study were that the participants are female Youth Care learners currently in a specific Youth Centre in the Western Cape.

The researcher has employed the purposive sampling technique to procure a sample of adolescent girls between the ages of fifteen and eighteen years of age. According to Yegidis and Weinbach (1996), purposive sampling is based on the assumption that this sampling method will provide the researcher access to some specialised insight or a special perspective, experience, characteristic or condition he/she wishes to understand (Tutty *et al.,* 1996).

3.4.2 Method of data collection

The research methods which were used, are individual interviews with female adolescent as well as focus group interviews with educators and observations.

Interviewing is the predominant mode of data collection in qualitative research. Kvale (in De Vos, *et al.,* 2002:292) defines qualitative interviews as "… attempts to understand the world from the participant's point of views, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations". Seidman (1998 in De Vos *et al.,* 2002) states that one interviews because of an interest in another's story. Telling stories is essentially a meaning-making process. Maykut and Morehouse (1994:79) and Kvale (1983:174) define an interview as "a conversation with a purpose", in this case, with the purpose of data collection. The purpose is to collect descriptions of the life-world of the participants, with respect for their interpretations of the meaning of the described phenomena. For the purposes of this study, data collection interviews are semi-structured. During a semi-structured interview, interviewers are generally required to ask a certain number of specific questions, but additional probes are encouraged. Both closed-ended and open-ended questions are included in a semi-structured interview (Brink, 2001).

Holloway and Wheeler (1996) explain that a semi-structured interview makes use of questions that are contained in an interview guide with a focus on the issues to be covered. According to Kvale (1983), an interview guide focuses on certain themes rather than containing exact questions. I began the process for data collection by approaching the participants. The purpose was to request the participants to take part in the study. Furthermore, the criteria for participation were explained and it was to be pointed out to them that their participation was voluntary and that their rights/privileges would not be jeopardised in any way. Those who agreed to participate in the study were prepared by having the contents of the preamble to the consent form explained to them. A follow-up appointment

was scheduled for the actual research interviews at a date and time most convenient to the interviewees. Interviews were conducted with 8 participants until saturation point was reached.

During all the interviews I made a conscious effort initially to establish trust and build rapport and tried at all times to ask questions that were only related to the study. According to Holloway and Wheeler (1998) the best form of recording interview data is tape-recording because tapes contain the exact words of the interview inclusive of questions and researchers do not make the mistake of forgetting important areas.

Observation

Observation is a technique for collecting descriptive data on behaviour, events and situations. It is very useful in qualitative research because one can observe behaviour as it occurs in its' natural setting. I also combined observation with interviewing. Unstructured observations was the method of observation and I attempted to describe events or behaviours as they occurred, with no preconceived ideas of what was seen (Brink, 2001). The role that I adopted during the process of data collection could be described as participant-as-observer. In this role I interacted closely enough with participants as to get an insider view, but tried to remain objective (De Vos *et al.,* 1998).

Focus groups

According to (Patton, 1987:135), a focus group interview is "… an interview with a small group of people on a specific topic". Participants are selected because they have certain characteristics in common that relate to the topic. I conducted two focus groups with three educators each after interviewing the female Youth Care learners to validate the data collected from the girls and to gain clarity on some of the findings that came out of the data. The researcher created a tolerant environment which encouraged participants to share perceptions, points of view, experiences, wishes and concerns, without pressurising participants to reach consensus (De Vos *et al.*, 2002:305, 306). I facilitated the interview, while a small group discussed the topics that the facilitator raised (Brink, 2001). According to Morgan and Krueger (1998), the essential data are what the participants say in a focus group. Focus groups create a process of sharing and comparing among the participants. The researcher creates the focus groups for a well-defined purpose and they produce large amounts of concentrated data in a short period of time. (Morgan & Krueger, 1998).

Focus groups are useful when multiple viewpoints or responses are needed on a specific topic, which can be obtained in a shorter period of time than semi-structured individual interviews (Strydom in De Vos *et al.,* 2002). People feel relatively empowered and supported in a group situation and may be more likely to share experiences and feelings in the presence of people whom they perceive to be like themselves. A disadvantage, though, is that some people are uncomfortable talking in groups.

Focus groups draw on exploration and discovery, context and depth, as well as interpretation of information, which are shared by all qualitative methods. Like most qualitative methods, focus groups rely on purposive sampling for recruiting participants for the focus group (Krueger & Casey, 2000). In order not to compromise the confidentiality of the Youth Care girls, I requested all participants to keep the focus group discussions confidential.

Field notes

The researcher should always, immediately after an interview, jot down his/her impressions of what transpired in the interview. The researcher has a major task in making accurate and systematic notes as soon as the observation session has ended. Loose notes and jottings should be converted to field notes as soon as possible. Ideally, field notes should be taken down while observing, but might inhibit the participants. (De Vos *et al.,* 2002). According to Field and Morse (1985 in De Vos *et al.,* 2002), field notes are a written account of the things the researcher hears, sees, experiences and thinks about in the course of the interview. The researcher should also write down his/her emotions, preconceptions, expectations and prejudices for development of the final product. According to Polit *et al.,* (2001), field notes can be categorised according to their purpose.

Literature review

When embarking on a research project, the researcher must build on that which already has been done in the specific field of study (Mouton, 2001). The researcher uses the term "existing scholarship" to indicate the available body of knowledge to see how other scholars have investigated the problem the researcher is interested in. The researcher is, therefore, interested in the most recent and relevant scholarship in the area of interest. According to Mouton, the researcher is, therefore, interested in a body of scholarship (Mouton, 2001). According to Fouché and Delport (in De Vos *et al.,* 2002), a review of the literature is aimed at contributing towards a clearer understanding of the nature and meaning of the problem that has been identified. A good literature review places a research project in context (Neuman,

2000; Creswell, 1994). It shares the results of prior research with the reader and how the current project is linked to the former. It identifies some gaps in previous research and shows that the proposed study will meet a need. The researcher conceptualises the research problem and locates it in a body of theory. A literature review also identifies conceptual and operational definitions, as well as methodologies.

The literature review also consisted of an overview pertaining to the Youth Care System and the Western Cape Education Department's Youth At-Risk model for dealing with learners with emotional and/or behaviour barriers. The role of the Youth Care Centre as stipulated in the WCED'S vision for special support services was discussed as well as the importance of the empowering the Youth Care learner in Youth Care Centres. Various aspects in managing the relationship between the educator and the Youth care learner was put under scrutiny. I also elaborated on negative influences which undermined the relationship between the educator and learners and presented theories which could form the theoretical underpinning for this study.

Data analysis

Neuman (1997) defines data analysis as a search for pattern in recurrent behaviours, objects of a body of knowledge. Marshall and Rossman (1990:150) define data analysis as "the process of bringing order, structure and interpretation to the mass of data collected". Once the data collected becomes repetitive, and a point of data saturation (Schurink in De Vos *et al.*, 1998) is reached the process of data collection can be concluded.

Data analysis will be done according to Teschs' method of open coding (in de Vos *et al.*, 1998; Creswell, 1994). Coding refers to the process of breaking down, categorising and putting back the data, in new ways. It is the central process by which theories are built from data. The coding of data involves analytic thinking, whereby categories and themes are generated (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2005). Patton (2002) states that qualitative analysis transforms data into findings. This involves reducing the volume of raw information, sifting significance from trivia, identifying significant patterns and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal. According to Creswell (in De Vos *et al.,* 2005), the process of data analysis and interpretation can best be represented by a data analysis spiral, where the researcher moves in analytical circles rather than using a fixed, linear approach. According to De Vos *et al.* (2005) and Patton (in De Vos *et al.,* 2005), a qualitative study involves an inseparable relationship between data collection and data

analysis. Data analysis frequently necessitates revisions in data collection procedures and strategies. The result of this process is the collection of rich data that generate alternative hypotheses and provide the basis for shared construction of reality. According to these authors, "this principle of interaction between data collection and analysis is one of the mayor features that distinguish qualitative research from traditional research".

Tesch (in De Vos *et al.*, 1998; Creswell, 1994), provides eight steps, which engage a researcher in a systematic process of analysing textual data. The researcher read all the transcripts carefully, jotting down along the margin some ideas as they came to mind in connection with each topic. Choosing the shortest transcription, the researcher read through it, asking herself what she was reading. This step involved thinking about the underlying meaning, rather that the "substance" of information. This process has been repeated until a list of topics was acquired. The topics were then grouped together into baskets that could be labelled as "major topics", unique topics" and "left-overs". With this list at hand, the data were revisited. An abbreviation for each of the topics was made in the form of codes and the codes were written next to the appropriate segments of the texts. The researcher found the most descriptive wording for the topics and turned them into categories. Efforts have been made to reduce the total list of categories by grouping together topics that are related to each other. Lines have been drawn between categories to show interrelationships. The researcher has made a final decision on the abbreviation for each category and alphabetised the codes. The data material belonging to each category was assembled in one place and a preliminary analysis has been performed.

After the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualising and categorising the data the researcher started the process of axial coding, which is defined as a set of procedures whereby data are put back together in new ways, by making connections between categories, utilising a coding paradigm involving conditions, context or action/interactional strategies and consequences (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Content and findings were referred back to the participants; in this case the female adolescent learners as well as their educators to control data (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Findings of this phenomenological study add credence to the limited research on female Youth Care learners' experiences with their educators within this context (Cresswell, 1998).

3.5 SUMMARY

A qualitative research design was selected for this study. A purposive, convenience sampling technique was employed. Data collection methods included interviews, observations and focus groups. The data analysis process was discussed and a description of the data analysis, data interpretation and data verification has been given. The role of the researcher was also discussed. In Chapter Four I will analyse the data. In Chapter Five I will discuss the findings and point out the shortcomings. I will conclude with recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, Chapter Four, the results of the study that was undertaken, will be discussed. The aim of this research was to record the female Youth Care learners' relational interactions with their educators and to record their suggestions on how such relations could be advanced. This study investigated the experiences of the female learner-educator interaction within a Youth Care Centre.

According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999), this allowed for an in-depth investigation of their experiences within a single context, namely a public school for learners with special education needs established in accordance with Section 12(2)(vi) of the Western Cape Provincial School Education Act, 1997 (Act 12 of 1997) (Minimum Standards, 2004:8). The researcher, with the assistance of the specific Youth Centre's intern social worker, selected the participants. The criteria for selection was that they had to be female Youth Care learners with special education needs, and enrolled at the centre for care, education and training, in accordance with the Children's Act 38 of 2005 (Republic of South Africa, 2005).

An analysis of the semi-structured interviews and field notes has been conducted by means of Tesch's (in De Vos *et al.,* 1998; Cresswell, 1994) method of open coding.

TABLE 4.1: THE FOLLOWING IS A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE DATA ANALYSIS

DISCIPLINARY METHODS	Rejection
	Exclusion
	Ignoring
	Verbal abuse
	Physical abuse
EMOTIONS	Lack of emotional self-awareness
	Lack of emotional management
	Helplessness
	Anger
SUPPORT NEEDS	Empathy
	Respect
	Trust
	Hope

After providing biographical information during the one-in-one interviews, the participants set about answering questions as they were posed by me. The themes that were included in the interview guide were influenced by both the literature review and my personal and professional experiences as an educator. Each of the participants was assigned a letter of the alphabet according to the sequence in which I conducted the interviews. The participants are referred to by their code identity. These letters of the alphabet are used throughout this chapter and used consistently in all data presented. Key words and/or phrases that emerged have been highlighted in bold.

The biographical data that is presented below, represents the personal data on the eight participants. As stated before, in order to protect their identities, each of the eight participants were assigned a letter of the alphabet in place of their names.

TABLE 4.2: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Participant	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Age	15yrs 2mths	15yrs 4mths	16yrs 7mths	16yrs 2mths	16yrs 4mths	16yrs 4mths	16yrs 5mths	18yrs 1mth
Years at school	1yr 5mths	1yr 2mths	1yr	7mths	1yr 1mth	7mths	9mths	2yrs 2mths
Town	Grabouw	Caledon	Mount Pleasant	Eerste-rivier	Delft	Hout Bay	Atlantis	Plum-stead
Parental structure	Mother and step-father	Mother and father	Aunt	Foster parents	Maternal grand-mother	Mother	Mother and father	Aunt
Reason for referral	Abscond from home	Problems at home	Problems at home	In need of care	In need of care	Problems at home	Abscon-ding from previous school	Problems at home

In table 4.2 I organised the biographic data on the eight participants. As the table indicates, the average of the participants ranged from fifteen to eighteen years. Of the eight, three grew up with both parents, while two grew up with an aunt, one with a single parent, one with a grandmother and one with foster parents. The main reason they gave for being in the centre was problems at home.

Table 4.3 is a compilation of the data on who the learners said their sources of support are. As the table shows, of the eight, four receive support from their educators, three from peers and one receives no support in the class. Of the eight, two were supported by their social workers; three were supported by education specialists, one by an educator, one by a security guard and one by the school sister outside the class. Participants also mentioned being supported by informal sources, for instance family members as well as formal sources for instances churches, social services and the school. Of the eight, two reported getting no formal support. Participants also received emotional support. Of the eight, one reported receiving support from her grandmother, two from their educators, two from education specialists, one from the school sister, one from a security guard and one reported not being listened to. Of the eight, four reported receiving no material support, three received cigarettes and one clothing. All

eight participants received concrete help in the form of English tutoring, writing, mathematics, cooking lessons, help with dressing up, hairdressing and colouring of hair.

TABLE 4.3: SOURCES OF SUPPORT

Participant	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**
In class	Educator	Peer	Peer	Teacher	Nobody	Teacher	Peer	Educator
Outside class	Social Worker	Education Specialist	Educator	Education Specialist	School Sister	Security guard	Education Specialist	Social worker
Informal sources	Grandmother	Aunt	Aunt	Brother	Grandfather	Friends	Sister	Friend
Formal	Church	Social services	No one	Nobody	Church	School	Social Services	Social services
Emotional support	Grandmother	Educator	Educator	First Education Specialist	School Sister	Security Guard	First Education Specialist	Do not listen to me
Material support	Nothing	Cigarettes	Nothing	Nothing	Clothes	Cigarettes	Cigarettes	Nothing
Concrete help	Teach me to read English	To teach me to write	Teach me to do maths	Teaches me to write English	Teaches me to cook	Show me how to dress	Teach me to do hair	Show me to colour hair

I asked the participants whether they perceive the teacher-learner interactions as positive or negative, and Table 4.4 represents their responses:

TABLE 4.4: EDUCATOR-LEARNER INTERACTIONS

Participant	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**
Yes						+		+
No	+	+	+	+	+		+	

During the interviews I requested that the participants describe their views on educator-learner interactions which negatively impact on this relationship. From the responses five categories emerged, namely **empathy, trust, respect, understanding and boundaries.**

Within each of these categories, properties were allocated, as found in the responses across participant transcripts.

TABLE 4.5: CATEGORIES

Category	Properties of category
Empathy	Properties: empathetic listening; communicate understanding, verbally and non verbally, contribute to sense of belonging
Trust	Keeping confidences; trust educator with personal issues; trust educator to provide emotional safety and protection
Respect	Communicate respectfully by listening to another persons words, tone of voice, facial expressions, body language and emotions
Understanding	Unconditional positive regard; unconditional acceptance
Boundaries	Refrain from probing into another's personal issues; any hindrance to moving from one region of the lifespace to another; boundaries bring openness to a relationship

During the interviews I requested that the participants describe their views on educator-learner interactions which negatively impact on this relationship.

TABLE 4.6: YOUTH CARE LEARNERS' VIEWS OF EDUCATOR ATTITUDES WHICH NEGATIVELY IMPACT ON THIS RELATIONSHIP

Participants	Lack of empathy	Trust	Respect	Under-standing	Boundaries
A	"No one listen to me."			"She always understand."	
B	"I would like to be listened to." "She … interrupts while I am speaking." "The child's opinion is not asked."		"Miss, if you respect me, then I will respect you." "This is why we never respect you (teachers), because you (teachers) do not respect us."	"… nobody will understand how I am feeling …"	
C		"It is better to find a teacher you can trust, who don't speak out."			"She wants to know everything about me … I don't tell her anything about me …"

Participants	Lack of empathy	Trust	Respect	Under-standing	Boundaries
D		"I take Miss … as my mother. I love her a lot. I trust her."			
E		"I speak to them (teachers), but I can never tell them something personal."			"… always asking me personal stuff …"
F			"Communicate respectfully, then I will listen"		
G					
H	"… everything is okay, don't worry. Soon everything will be over."				"Teachers ask me personal questions about my mother …"

- ***Category: Lack of empathy***

PA (Participant A) commented that **"… no one listens to"** her (line 16). PB (Participant B) also pointed out that she would like to be listened to, but that the educator interrupts her while she is speaking and that she (the educator) does not **"have time"** for her. She described her opinions not being valued, by stating that **"… the child's opinion is not asked."** This participant pointed out that only the perspectives of educators are taken into account because the educators **"… don't come to the child and ask the child what her problem is or they only listen to the one side of the story … because the lady is an adult and I am a younger person"** (Line 138, 139). PH (Participant H) commented that her feelings are being invalidated when educators use clichés or philosophise, **"… everything is okay, don't worry. One of these days everything will be over"** (Line 46). Educator recognition of learners' feelings frees them from the need to express them through improper behaviour.

- ***Category: Trust***

PC (Participant C) would have liked to speak about what was on her mind, but she preferred speaking to educators whom she could trust, **"who don't speak out"** (Line 41). PD

(Participant D) valued the trusting relationship she had with an educator by stating that **"I take Miss … as my mother. I love her a lot. I trust her"** (Line 24-26). PE (Participant E) spoke to her educators, but she did not trust them with personal issues, **"… no matter what they say"** (Lines 15, 16).

- ***Category: Respect***

PB (Participant B) described how respect is earned by saying that **"… so I said Miss, if you respect me, then I will respect you …"** She continued by saying that **"… this is why we never respect you (educators), because you (teachers) do not respect us"** (Line 14). PF (Participant F) adds to this by stating that when educators communicate respectfully, **"… then I will listen."**

- ***Category: Understanding***

PA (Participant A) referred to a specific female educator who **"… always understand … the way she speaks to me is nice"** (Line 1, 2). PB (Participant B) gave an account of educators' lack of understanding how she felt, because **"… nobody know what we go through in the residences"** (Line 104, 106).

- ***Category: Boundaries***

PC (Participant C), PE (Participant E) and PH (Participant H) wanted their educators to refrain from probing into their personal life. PH related how a male educator, during an informal activity, inappropriately probed into her life space by making a personal remark about her mother **"… he told me last week … he said: Is your mommy a prostitute …?"**

TABLE 4.7: PROVIDES A SUMMARY OF EDUCATORS' ACTIONS (BEHAVIOURS) WHICH IMPACT NEGATIVELY ON THE LEARNER-EDUCATOR INTERACTION

Participants	Rejection	Exclusion	Ignoring	Verbal Abuse	Physical Abuse
A			"She does not want to hear … ignore you."	"I would like them to speak to me, rather than shouting and screaming."	
B	"I feel like a piece of paper thrown away." "The quiet and well-behaved learners get no action from	"She told me that I can run away."		"She screams at us."	"They push and pull us."

Participants	Rejection	Exclusion	Ignoring	Verbal Abuse	Physical Abuse
	their teachers."				
C				"She shouts at us."	"They hit us." "… then she threw me with a broom."
D	"The teacher does not like me."			"… she says we are stupid children." (belittling)	
E	"Rude children get immediate attention."		"… but she ignores me and then I become angry."	"… they (teachers) swear at us." "Sometimes they say they do not have time for a stupid person." (belittling)	
F		"She told me that I am not invited into the class."			
G		"She asked me to leave the class."	"When I ask for help, she ignores me."	"They (teachers) yell at us." "When I ask for help … they swear at us."	
H				"The teachers swear at us"	

I continued using open coding to code the responses. These responses I divided into five categories: **rejection, exclusion, ignoring, verbal abuse, physical abuse:**

- ***Category: Rejection/Exclusion***

Participant B (PB) experienced rejection as a result of not being listened to. She stated that she felt like **"… a piece of paper that have been thrown away."** Participant B (PB) described feeling rejected after being told that she could **"run away"** from the Youth Care Centre (Line (92). She continued by saying that **"… the quiet and well-behaved learners get no action from their teachers"** (Line 66, 79). Participant (PE) confirmed this by stating that **"… rude children get immediate attention from their teachers"** (Line 51). Participant D verbalised that **"… the teacher does not like"** her (Lines 14, 21). The above-mentioned participants experienced a sense of remoteness in the educator-learner relationship which could contribute to being lonely, detached, alienated and isolated from others. Participant B (PB) described feeling rejected after being told that she could **"run away"** from the Youth

Care Centre (Line 92). When entering a classroom, participant F (PF) was told that she was **"not invited"** into the class (Line 33). While being sworn at by the educator, Participant G (PG) had been asked to **"… leave the classroom."** All these participants described being excluded from the educational process. Exclusion is a painful social and emotional experience which could lead to loneliness and depression and could trigger feelings of distress in the brain.

- ***Category: Ignoring***

Participant A (PA) described being ignored by an educator by stating that **"… she does not want to hear … ignore you … doesn't give you a chance to speak … she just ignored me and I did nothing to her …"** (Line 3, 4, 5). This girl took courage to apologise to the teacher, but she (the educator) ignored her, walked away and did not want to hear (Line 9-15). This participant cried and displayed intense sadness throughout the interview (Line 20, 21). Participant E (PE) also experienced being ignored by a female educator by stating that **"… that she ignores me …"** and that she (the learner) became **"angry"** as a result (Line 28). It was also the experience of Participant G (PG) that some educators will **"ignore"** you when asking for help (Line 14). The above-mentioned participants described educators' behaviours which disconnect learners from important relationships which fuel animosity and which are contrary to a pedagogy of belonging.

- ***Category: Verbal abuse***

Participants described how educators' demands, blunt directives and verbal abuse disconnect the Youth Care learners from important relationships and contribute to an unsafe physical and emotional environment. Participant A (PA) would prefer if educators rather discuss bad behaviour with her, rather than **"shouting and screaming"** (Line 23, 24). Participant B (PB) confirmed this by stating that she (educator) **"screams"** at them (Line 78). PC added to this by stating that her educator **"shouts"** at her (Line 2). It was also the experience of PD (Participant D) that educators **"swear"** at them (Line 54). PD described how the experience of belittlement evokes feelings of worthlessness by stating that educators sometimes say that they are **"stupid"** (Line 3). PE confirmed this by stating that educators sometimes say that they do not have time for a **"stupid"** person (Line 34, 35). PG (Participant G) also experienced that **"… they** (educators) **yell"** and **"swear"** at them (learners) (Line 12).

Category: Physical abuse

Participants furthermore described how educators' aggressive physical responses violate the rights of the female Youth Care learners. PB (Participant B) described how the educators **"push"** and **"pull"** them (Line 77). PC (Participant C) confirmed that educators sometimes **"hit"** them and she described how she once was **"thrown with a broom."**

The female Youth Care learners described how educator attitudes, word and actions negatively affected their emotions:

TABLE 4.8: YOUTH CARE LEARNERS' EMOTIONAL RESPONSES TO EDUCATORS' ATTITUDES, WORDS OR ACTIONS

Category	Participant	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Lack of emotional management	Keep emotions inside		+				+		
Lack of emotional self-awareness	Inability to verbalise feelings	+	+						
Helplessness	Sadness	+	+						+
	Feelings of uselessness		+						
	Rejected		+		+	+			
	Excluded	+	+				+	+	
	Depressed (withdrawn)		+				+		
	Discouraged		+		+		+		
Anger	Aggression		+			+			

For the above table, each of the four categories is defined by the properties, as summarised below.

(1) category: lack of emotional management (includes lack of assertiveness)
properties: keep emotions inside; inability to identify emotions

(2) category: lack of emotional self-awareness

properties: inability to explain feelings

(3) category: helplessness

properties: sadness, feelings of uselessness, feeling rejected, excluded, depressed, discouraged

(4) category: anger
properties: overt aggression; passive-aggressive

During the interviews I then asked the participants how this relationship with their educators could be enhanced, and what they need within the relationship with their educators.

TABLE 4.9: A SUMMARY OF YOUTH CARE LEARNERS' SUPPORT NEEDS

Categories	Participant	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Empathy	Spoken to	+		+					
	Understood	+	+						
	Listened to	+	+						
	Feel Special		+			+			
Respect	Respect my boundaries			+		+			+
	Communicate Respectfully	+	+	+	+	+		+	+
Trust	Cannot trust educators to provide safety and protection		+		+	+	+		
	Lack of confidentiality		+			+			+
Hope	Encouragement		+	+				+	

4.2 FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

During the two focus group interviews I asked the participants to describe their views on learner-educator interactions which negatively impact on this relationship.

TABLE 4.10: PROVIDES A SUMMARY OF EDUCATOR ATTITUDES WHICH INFLUENCE THIS RELATIONSHIP

Focus Group Participants	Empathy	Lack of trust to provide safety and protection	Respect	Under-standing	Boundaries
A	"… before transformation there was support for these learners. It was nice, we were a family …"	"… learners will do anything educators suggest …' go slap her …'	"… educators swear at them."		
B	"… only certain educators have a degree of feeling 'sorry' for these		"… she (educator) swore at her …"	"I will always try to understand both sides …"	

Focus Group Participants	Empathy	Lack of trust to provide safety and protection	Respect	Under-standing	Boundaries
	learners …"				
C	"… they took away the caring. The moment transformation took place …" "… the whole day this pessimism … the whole day" "You need to have a soft approach…you only need to change your tone of voice …" "… for a learner to survive here, they must act out…they must be the cruellest. If you (learner) are a 'goodie-two-shoes' you will go through hell … like this girl …"	"… here is a lack of supervision … our children are not safe …"	"… the educator started the fight because she treated the girl with disrespect ... but if it was vice versa, the outcome would not have been positive." "… these learners are spoken to, really, with no respect."	"I don't dare saying something nice about a learner …" "… they (educators) do not ask why a child react in a certain way …"	"They (educators) want to know everything about the learners' past … when angry … they (educators) use their (learners') past as a weapon against them …"
D	"I try hard to look at them with soft eyes …"				
E	"When you are empathic, you achieve more …"	"I want her to feel safe …"		"… you must first understand what goes on behind the behaviour …"	"Everybody wants to know everything about their (learners') past …"
F	"Since transformation the caring aspect has been done away with. I can count the educators who show empathy on one hand …"	"Learners do not feel safe in the residences …"	"She (learner) said that she wanted to be treated with respect …"		"Educators want to know everything about the learners' past … then they (educators) take their past and throw it back at them."

- ***Category: Lack of empathy***

PA (Participant A) commented that **"… before transformation there was support for these learners. It was nice, we were a family …"** (Line 6). PC (Participant C) and PF (Participant F) agree with this by stating that **"… they took away the caring. The moment transformation took place …"** (Line 131) (Line 1). PB (Participant B) also pointed out that **"… only certain educators have a degree of 'feeling sorry' for these learners …"** (Line

2). PF (Participant F) agree that she **"… can count the educators who show empathy on one hand"** (Line 13). PC (Participant C) described that she experiences **"… this pessimism the whole day …"** (Line 151). This participant is also of the opinion that **"You need to have a soft approach … you only need to change your tone of voice …"** (Line 51). Educators need to recognise learners' feelings, otherwise they will express them through improper behaviour. PC confirmed this view by stating that **"… for a learner to survive here, they must act out … they must be the cruellest. If you** (learner) **are a 'goodie-two-shoes' you will go through hell … like this girl …"** (Line 69). However, PD (Participant D) related that she tries **"hard to look at them with soft eyes …"** (Lines 14, 15). PE (Participant E) is of the opinion that when you are empathic **"you achieve much more"** (Line 13). These educator responses reflect a lack of empathy in the educator-learner relationships.

- ***Category: Trust***

PA (Participant A) commented that **"… learners will do anything educators suggest …'go slap her …'"** (Line 23). As mentioned in (5.5.2), at-risk-learners need continuous acts of kindness to foster a trusting educator-learner relationship. PC (Participant C) also alluded to the fact that learners cannot trust educators to provide safety and protection. She said that **"… here is a lack of supervision … our children are not safe …"** (Line 76). However, PE (Participant E) related that she wants **"… her (learners) to feel safe"** (Line 18). Furthermore, PF (Participant F) commented that **"… learners do not feel safe in the residences …"** (Line 15). These educator responses reflect a lack of trust in the educator-learner relationships.

- ***Category: Respect***

PA (Participant A) related how **"… educators swear at them (learners) …"** (Line 37). PB (Participant B) also described how **"… she (educator) swore at her (learner) … and she achieved nothing …"** (Line 33). PC (Participant C) related how **"… the educator started the fight because she treated the girl with disrespect … but if it was vice versa, the outcome would not have been positive"** (Line 69). PC further commented that **"… these learners are spoken to, really with no respect"** (Line 116). PF (Participant F) agree with this by stating that **"She (learner) said that she wanted to be treated with respect"** (Line 14).These findings confirm that educators need to understand that respect is earned and it cannot be forced or demanded. There are many negative outcomes when educators communicate disrespectfully.

- ***Category: Understanding***

PB (Participant B) related that she **"… will always try to understand both sides …"** (Line 18). PC (Participant C), however, related how she **"… does not dare saying something nice about a learner (in staff meetings) …"** (Line 51). PB also related how **"… they (educators) do not ask why a child react in a certain way …"** (Line 122). PR (Participant E) is also of opinion that **"… you must first understand what goes on behind the behaviour …"** (Line 14). Educators skilled in helping relationships need to communicate to Youth Care learners that they hear and understand what the learners are feeling.

- ***Category: Boundaries***

These responses are a reflection of educators' boundaries in their relationships with Youth Care learners. PC (Participant C) commented how **"… they (educators) want to know everything about the learners' past … when angry … they (educators) use their (learners') past as a weapon against them"** (Lines 116, 117). PF (Participant F) confirm this by stating that **"Educators want to know everything about the learners' past … then they (educators) take their (learners') past and throw it back at them …"** (Line 8). PE (Participant E) also related how **"Everybody wants to know everything about their (learners') past"** (Line 16). These responses reflect a lack of boundaries in the educator-learner relationships.

TABLE 4.11: PROVIDES A SUMMARY OF EDUCATORS' ACTIONS (BEHAVIOURS) WHICH NEGATIVELY INFLUENCES THE EDUCATOR-LEARNER RELATIONSHIP

Participants	Rejection	Exclusion	Ignoring	Verbal Abuse	Physical Abuse
A	"… they do not receive that attention". "She gives them sweets …"	"… she sits in her room …" "… with some (learners) she chats for hours, but the rest she leaves alone …" "… they (educators) make learners angry, then as a result, they (learners) must be placed out … also our academic strong candidates."	"… she receives put downs and is ignored in the residence …"	"I told her to keep her ugly mouth shut … but other educators swear at them …" "The women are the ones who humiliate like that …"	"… she (educator) tells me … 'if you have a problem with a learner … I will sort her out' …" "I was so upset … a lady educator came from her class and slapped a girl through her face … in front of all the other learners. If it was me, I would have

Participants	Rejection	Exclusion	Ignoring	Verbal Abuse	Physical Abuse
					been in jail …" "… when they (educators) find a child alone, they (educators) hit her … she (learner) can say nothing because no one saw".
B				"Some educators will threaten learners". "… she (educator) shouted at her and the learner shouted back and she shouted ..." "… when they (learners) become agitated, they could not care what they do …" "I stood on the stoep many times … and she shouted at the child …"	"… educators who slap learners and who carry on … it makes things worse …" "In school there are educators … some think they can use physical measures … it makes the learners angry."
C	"... no, send her away … a learner who so often has been rejected in life …"	"they (learners) are sent to the residence to sit there until don't know when …" "… educators focus on the negative things … then they (educators) say 'get rid of them …" "… the educator then locked the girl in her room …"	"… instead, they (educators) must learn to communicate with learners".	"… educators scream and are militaristic … and swear …" "… as far as authority is concerned, they (educators) do not have effect … these learners do not want to be shouted at". "They (educators) cause havoc on the stoep".	"Educators still live in the past where everything has been 'cured' by hitting …" "Last week … this learner asked the educator something in a nice way. She (educator) screamed at the learner … 'pick up that carpet! The girl decided to ignore her (educator). The educator grabbed her behind her back and threw her into her room". "Then the educator

Participants	Rejection	Exclusion	Ignoring	Verbal Abuse	Physical Abuse
					grabbed the broom from another girl and said 'you will never see the sun again …"
D			"… to ignore is sometimes a good thing…but it must not be driven too far. It could be very cruel …"	"I lately find that learners are often being screamed at …" "You (educator) are a loser when you overreact."	
E			"I will ignore a learner when I am angry …"	"Learners know that I don't scream and yell".	
F	"… when their (learners) behaviour don't improve, they must be sent away."	"… then she (educator) sent her out of the classroom"		"From the word go in the mornings, learners are being shouted at. It's very degrading. Everything is so cold and distant". "… she (educator) told her (learner) that she is a 'slut'.	"… and she (educator) slapped her through her face …"

- ***Category: Rejection/Exclusion***

PA (Participant A) described that **"… they (learners) do not receive that attention. She gives them sweets …"** (Line 46). PA also related that **"… she (learner) sits in her room …"** (Line 92). PA also referred to an educator who **"… with some (learners) she (educator) chats for hours, but the rest she leaves alone …"** (Line 107). PA also related how **"… they (educators) make learners angry, then as a result, they (learners) must be placed out … also our academic strong candidates"** (Line 18). PC (Participant C) confirmed this by stating that educators often suggest that learners be **"… sent away … learners who so often have been rejected in life …"** (Lines 122, 123, 124). Educators also **"focus on the negative things … then they (educators) say 'get rid of them' …"** (Line 65). PF (Participant F) also related that **"when their (learners) behaviour don't improve, they (learners) must be sent away"** (Line 15). PC also related that **"… they (learners) are sent to the residence to sit there until don't know when …"** (Lines 58, 59). She related how an educator **"then locked**

the girl in her room …" (Line 26). PF (Participant F) also related how an educator **"… sent her (learner) out of the classroom"** (Line 15). These participants confirm that exclusionary and rejection promoting disciplinary methods could contribute to many negative results included being lonely, detached, alienated and isolated from others.

- ***Category: Ignoring***

PA (Participant A) related how **"she (learner) is ignored in the residence …"** (Line 91). **"… instead (of ignoring) they (educators) must learn to communicate with learners"** (Line 98). PD (Participant D) commented that to **"ignore is sometimes a good thing … but it must not be driven too far … it could be very cruel …"** (Lines 43, 44). PE (Participant E) related that she **"will ignore a learner when she is angry …"** (Line 6). Ignoring is a painful emotional experience which disconnects learners from important relationships. Prolonged disconnections may fuel animosity and cause further rejection.

- ***Category: Verbal abuse***

PA (Participant A) related how she once told a learner **"… to keep her ugly mouth shut"**. PA also related how other educators **"… swear at them (learners) …"** (Line 36). According to this participant **"… the women are the ones who humiliate like that …"** (Line 87). PB (Participant B) commented how **"… some educators will threaten learners"** (Line 12). She also related how **"… she (educator) shouted at her and the learner shouted back and she shouted …"** (Lines 28, 29, 30). It is also PB'S experience that **"… when they (learners) become agitated, they could not care what they do …"** (Line 58). This participant also described that she **"… stood on the stoep many times … and she shouted at the child"** (Line 28). PC (Participant C) commented how **"… educators scream and are militaristic … and swear …"** (Line 32). PC also related that **"… as far as authority is concerned, they (educators) do not have effect … these learners do not want to be shouted at"** (Line 106, 107). According to this participant **"… they (educators) cause havoc on the stoep"** (Line 107). PD (Participant D) commented that she finds that **"… learners are lately often being screamed at"** (Lines 19, 20). PD also stated that **"… you (educator) lose when you overreact"** (Line 39). PE (Participant E) related that **"… learners know that I don't scream of yell …"** (Line 10). PF (Participant F) describe that **"… from the word go in the mornings, learners are being shouted at … it's very degrading. She (educator) told her (learner) that she is a slut"** (Line 11). These responses from educators disconnect Youth

Care learners from important relationships. As a result, these learners will find it difficult to disengage from self-defeating patterns of behaviour.

- ***Category: Physical abuse***

PA (Participant A) alluded to the fact that **"… she (educator) tells me … 'if you have a problem with a learner … I will sort her out' …"** (Line 25). PA described how upset she was when **"… a lady educator came from her class and slapped a girl through her face … in front of all the other learners. If it was me, I would have been in jail …"** (Lines 30, 31, 32, 33). PA also related **"… when they (educators) find a child alone, they (educators) hit them … She (learner) can say nothing, because no one saw ..."** (Lines 26, 27, 28, 29). PB (Participant B) is of the opinion that **"… educators who slap learners and who carry on … makes things worse …"** (Line 24). PB also believes that **"In school there are educators … some think they can use physical measures … it makes the learners angry"** (Line 55). PC (Participant C) agree with this by stating that **"Educators still live in the past where everything has been 'cured' by hitting …"** PC related an incident which happened the previous week. She said that **"Last week … this learner asked the educator something in a nice way. She (educator) screamed at the learner '… pick up that carpet!' The girl decided to ignore her (educator). The educator grabbed her behind her back and threw her into her room"**. Then the educator grabbed the broom from another girl and said **"… 'you will never see the sun again' … and locked her into her room"** (Lines 24, 25). PF (Participant F) also related how **"… she (educator) slapped her (learner) through her face"** (Line 12). When educators display angry emotions, Youth Care learners could perceive the situation as threatening and an automatic reaction follows, called the fight-or-flight response.

4.3 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

In this chapter, I started by providing the introduction to the study, followed by a description of how the data analysis process was undertaken. This entailed the introduction and discussion of the research project. The aim was to reflect the educator-learner interactions that were pertinent to this research. I have attempted to present my research process by providing the steps which engage a researcher in a systematic process of analysing the textual data. I started the process by providing the biographical data obtained from the interviews.

The categories that emerged across interviews were clustered and presented in tabular form. Within each of these categories, properties were allocated, as founded in the responses across

participant transcripts. In this way I have attempted to indicate the sequence of categories that emerged as well as the key notions that arose in each case. I also conducted focus group interviews with educators to validate the data collected from the girls and to gain clarity on some of the findings that emerged from the data.

In Chapter Five I return to the research questions, to help guide the discussion of the findings of the research. Chapter Five concludes with an overview of the preceding chapters and dialogues on the constraints and criticisms of this study. Recommendations for further research follow. Finally, I present the general conclusion.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 4 the main focus was on exploration and interpretation of the themes that emerged from the data produced from the transcribed semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews. From these responses categories emerged, and within each of these categories, properties were allocated, as found in the responses across participant transcripts. In this chapter, Chapter Five, I first discuss the findings of the study and relate the data to the literature I reviewed for this study. I concluded from the results of this research that the life-world of the female Youth Care learners involved in this study are characterised by recurrent themes. These themes are discussed according to the categories of influential factors as presented in the individual interviews and focus group interviews:

Influences on relationship: 1. Empathy 2. Trust 3. Respect 4. Understanding 5. Boundaries	**Disciplinary methods**: 1. Rejection 2. Exclusion 3. Ignoring 4. Verbal abuse 5. Physical abuse
Emotions: 1. Lack of emotional self-awareness 2. Lack of emotional management 3. Helplessness 4. Anger	**Support needs**: 1. Empathy 2. Respect 3. Trust 4. Hope

To guide this study, the following research questions were posed:

- What are the experiences of the female Youth Care learner in their interaction with their educators?

- What are the female Youth Care learners' views on what their interaction should be with their educators?
- What suggestions do the female Youth Care learners have in establishing a relational connection with their educators?

These factors are discussed in terms of whether they were experienced as having an impact on the learner-educator interaction. The dialogue on possible influential factors is then followed by a discussion of the female Youth Care learners' views on what their interaction should be with their educators and what suggestions they have in establishing positive relationships with their educators.

It is vital to note that the ways in which individuals give meaning to their personal experiences is central to understanding these experiences. This concept recognises the interactive link between the researcher and the researched. This chapter is a record of my subjective interpretations of the experiences of the participants as shaped by their own constructs. One should also recognise that the personal experiences of the learner-educator interaction at the Youth Care Centre have shaped the meaning that is given to these experiences by the participants. The findings are thus presented within this interpretive paradigm.

The discussion of the findings is followed by possible recommendations that emerge from the data for educators in pursuing a relational connection with Youth Care learners. A summary of this chapter, Chapter Five, and a discussion of constraints and criticisms of my study follow this. The chapter closes with recommendations for further study and my final conclusion.

5.2 INFLUENCES ON RELATIONSHIPS

The eight participants were female Youth Care learners with special education needs, and enrolled at the Youth Centre for care, education and training, in accordance with the Children's Act 38 of 2005 (Republic of South Africa, 2005).

5.2.1 Empathy

Within the individual interviews the eight participants described how communication between themselves and some educators is hampered as a result of not being listened to. Participant A commented that no one "listens" to her. Participant B shared a similar experience by stating that she would like to be "listened" to. This view is supported by Meese

(1996), MacGrath (2000), Goleman (1998) and Le Roux and De Klerk (2001). In this research it was found that through active-reflective listening the educator hopes to clarify the learner's point of view and reflect it back to the learner as a starting point for problem solving. This is consistent with McNamara and Moreton (2001) who claim that this means using words and phrases that encourage learners to say how they feel, thereby avoiding language which orders, commands, warns threatens, moralises, preaches, advises, lectures, judges, criticises or blames. A good listener tries to show a genuine interest in other people's emotions. In empathy the educator needs to validate the learners' feelings by tuning in to the emotions of the at-risk learners, looking beneath their problems and behaviour so that they can understand the private logic and emotions underlying the behaviour. On the contrary, not being listened to may erode confidence and self-esteem which may increase conflict.

Participant B reported that a particular educator **"… first want to interrupt"** while she is speaking and that she (girl) has **"no time"** for her (educator). From the findings it became clear that interruption was perceived by these participants as detrimental to the educator-learner relationship. This reflects the findings of McNamara and Moreton (2001) who claim that the skills of empathetic listening includes not interrupting, but instead, to listen to the learners' feelings. Educator recognition of learners' feelings frees them from the need to express them through improper behaviour. They claim, like Cherniss and Goleman (2001) that the effectiveness of relationships hinges on one's ability to attune oneself to the emotions of another person. The educator responses also confirm these findings.

Participant B reported that her opinion is not valued by stating that **"the child's opinion is not asked."** She also commented that educators **"… don't come to the child and ask the child what her problem is or they listen to one side of the story … because the lady is an adult and I am a younger person … I would like to be listened to."** This view is supported by Wood and Tolley (2003) who suggest that failure to see others' perspectives often leads to difficulty in interpersonal relationships. The only way to unpack a learner's real motivation is not to assume that one already knows what it is, but rather explore their feelings. They claim, like Brendtro and Du Toit (2005), that empathy is also a critical block of resilience. As listening skills develop, learners will also be able to appreciate each others' point of view and they will also be more interested in their work and will be able to achieve.

Participant H pointed out that her feelings are being invalidated when educators use clichés or philosophise, **"… everything is okay, don't worry. Soon everything will be over"**. This participant reflects the findings of Gill (in Egan, 1990) in his claim that being empathic is not

the same as being sympathetic. Sympathy has more in common with pity and condolence than with empathy. While these are fully human traits, they are not particularly useful in counselling. Through validation of feelings, one shows empathy, pay attention to and listen to another person. This could create a safe climate to express feelings and communication is strengthened.

5.2.2 Trust

Participant C alluded to the fact that **"… it is better to find a teacher you can trust, who don't speak out."** This view is supported by Brendtro and Du Toit (2005) and Weisinger (1998), who comment that at-risk learners will only connect and cooperate with those whom they trust and with whom they have established connections. Learners with behaviour problems need continuous acts of kindness to foster a trusting educator-learner relationship. It is connection that is so important in relationships, because connection gives depth, meaning and value to the relationship. Without communication there is no connection and hence no relationship. When educators engage in a power struggle with the learner, they become resistive of educator efforts to gain their trust. It is evident from the findings that some participants cannot trust educators to provide emotional safety and protection. Participant E reported how this trust is violated by stating that**: "I speak to them (educators), but I can never tell them (educators) something personal. No matter what they say".** Often learners who have given up trusting adults, compensate for feeling emotionally hurt, by seeking revenge.

Participant D reported that trust had a positive impact on the educator-learner relationship by stating that she takes her educator **"… as her mother. I love her a lot. I trust her."** Here it would seem that trust encouraged self-disclosure which in turn influenced the amount of trust. This reflects clearly Brendtro and Du Toit's (2005:57) claim, that **"when trust is built, at-risk learners open up and become vulnerable, believing that this person intends no harm".** This girl also describes how a trusting relationship with her educator helps her to disengage from self-defeating patterns of behaviour and to change the direction of her pathways **"… I will not do anything wrong in the residence. Now I talk to my friends instead of fighting …".** However, a high percentage of the educator-responses reflected a lack of trust in the educator-learner relationship.

5.2.3 Respect

Participant B related that respect is earned by saying that **"… so I said Miss, if you respect me, then I will respect you …"**. **Consequently "… this is why we never respect you (educators), because you (educators) do not respect us."** Brendtro and Du Toit (2005) agree with this view that respect must be earned and that it cannot be forced or demanded. Both educators and learners must learn to show respect by carefully choosing words, the tone of voice and the non-verbal behaviour. There are many positive outcomes when educators communicate respectfully. PB claimed that she "will listen." The educator responses also confirmed these findings.

5.2.4 Understanding

Participant B reported that nobody understood how she felt because **"… nobody know what we are going through in the residences."** Meese (1996) makes the point that educators skilled in helping relationships are able to communicate to the Youth Care learner that they hear and understand what the learner is saying and feeling. As mentioned in (2.9), the work of Bar-On (2000), Salovey and Mayer (in Taylor, 2001), Weisinger (1998), Cherniss and Goleman (2001) and Stone-McCown *et al.* (in Goleman, 1995) suggest that emotional self-awareness is a basic building block of emotional intelligence and a prerequisite for empathetic understanding. Participant A referred to a specific female educator who **"always understand … the way she speaks to me is nice".** Most of the educators related a lack with regard to understanding in the educator-learner relationships.

5.2.5 Boundaries

Participant H reported that she wanted her educators to refrain from probing into her personal life. During an informal activity, a male educator inappropriately probed into her life by making a personal remark about her mother by stating that: **"… he told me last week … he said: Is your mommy a prostitute?"** Brendtro and Du Toit (2005:68) suggest that **"youth resent being forced to answer questions about their personal lives and activities that they felt were intrusive and demeaning"**. These learners also resist those who probe into their past and they will not cooperate with educators with whom they have not established connections. A high percentage of educators confirmed these findings.

5.3 DISCIPLINARY METHODS

The participants elaborated on the issue of discipline. They described how the disciplinary methods employed by educators were punitive and had the potential to be exploited by them.

5.3.1 Rejection

Participant B reported feeling rejected as a result of not being listened to. She stated that she felt like **"… a piece of paper that have been thrown away".** Participant B also related that she tried to **"commit suicide"** many times. This is consistent with Beck and Malley (2003) who claim that the methods employed by the educator, especially in the Youth Care Centre, matter little if they do not satisfy the basic need for belonging. When learners feel rejected by others, they either internalise the rejection and learn to hate themselves or externalise the rejection and learn to hate others. Brendtro and Du Toit (2005:1990) claim that the rejected learner is hungry for love but unable to trust, expecting to be hurt again. This could also suggest that, in order for interpersonal relationships to be beneficial to the Youth Care learner, and to become knowledgeable, responsible, caring and non-violent, a sense of belonging is imperative.

Two participants related that **"the quiet and well-behaved learners get no action from their educators"**. Participant E confirmed this by stating that **"rude children get immediate attention"**. Participant D commented that the educator did not **"like"** her. This seemed to lead to a sense of remoteness in the educator-learner relationship which could contribute to many possible negative results which included being lonely, detached, alienated and isolated from others. When signs of rejection are registered, this triggers the emotion of shame. The pain of shame could lead to destructive acts against self or others.

5.3.2 Exclusion

Participant B reported feeling excluded from the educational process after being told that she could **"run away"** from the Youth Centre. When entering a classroom, Participant F was told that she was **"not invited"** into the class. While being sworn at by the educator, Participant G had been asked to **"… leave the classroom"**. According to Beck and Malley (2003), exclusionary and rejection promoting disciplinary methods are contrary to a pedagogy of belonging which emphasises the importance of the educator-learner relationship. Learners, who feel lonely, isolated, forgotten or excluded, will exhaust their energies to meet the need for belonging and will, as a result, have no reserves left for higher cognitive functions.

Beck and Malley (2003) claim that exclusion is also a painful social and emotional experience which could lead to loneliness and depression amongst rejected learners which place these learners at a high risk of dropping, out, joining gangs or using drugs. Participant B found self-regulation and impulse control difficult by stating that she just wanted **"… to do the things that go around in my head … like running away"**. PB disclosed that she wanted to **"commit suicide"** many times. Consequently, this participant dropped out from the Youth Centre a short while after completion of this research. The educator responses also confirm these findings.

5.3.3 Ignoring

It would seem that from the reports given, that the participants also reported how some educators excluded them by ignoring them which is associated with negative emotions experienced. PA describes being ignored by an educator by stating that **"She does not want to hear … ignore you. Doesn't give you a chance to speak. … She just ignored me and I did nothing to her …".** This girl took courage to apologise to the educator, but the educator ignored her, walked away and did not want to hear. She cried and displayed intense sadness throughout the interview. PE also experienced being ignored by a female educator by stating that she **"ignores me"** and that she became **"angry …"** as a result. PG described being ignored when asking for help by stating that **"… when you maybe ask certain teachers something, they will ignore you. They pretend as if they don't see you … this hurts".** Most of the educators related that ignoring as a disciplinary method is employed by them.

As Brendtro and Du Toit (2005) argue, coercive management methods employed by some educators for example ignoring, or the silent treatment, is a painful emotional experience which disconnects the learner from important relationships and inhibits socialisation which interferes with the innate human need for attachment. Prolonged disconnections caused by ignoring fuel animosity and cause further rejection. Beck and Malley (2003) claim that ignoring as a disciplinary method is contrary to a pedagogy of belonging which emphasises the importance of the educator-learner relationship.

5.3.4 Verbal abuse

Some participants, already burdened by out of school histories of verbal abuse, describe how educators' demands, blunt directives and verbal abuse disconnects them from important relationships and contributes to an unsafe emotional environment (Hargie & Dickson, 2001). Eighty percent of the participants repeatedly talked about being verbally abused. Thus,

educators make their point, thereby trying to force learners into submission. This implies that educators do not take the emotions or views of their learners into consideration. Participant A would prefer if educators rather discuss bad behaviour with her, rather than **"shouting and screaming."** Participant B confirmed this by stating that she (educator) **"screams"** at them. Participant C also experienced that her educators **"shouts"** at her. It was also the experience of Participant D that educators **"swear"** at them.

These participants' comments alluded to the fact that educators engage in verbal struggles with participants. Participant C also commented that **"some children swear back at the teachers"**. Educators may respond inappropriately by being counter-aggressive and controlling and this counter-aggression confirms the learners' sense of unworthiness. Educators need to understand that self-control and understanding is required to disconnect from the power struggle (Long *et al.*, 2001).

Participant C also commented that educators use disrespectful language when speaking about a learner: **"… some children swear back at the educators"**. Larson and Lochman (2002) also claimed that aggressive behaviour that is punished with counter-aggression and in an unpredictable, erratic fashion, becomes extremely resistant to change. An educator who is abusive and who constantly shouts is likely to engender an atmosphere of fear and remoteness in relationships. Shouting is often the way learners with behaviour problems try to assert their power and this behaviour has been modelled to them by educators and adults in their prior experience. The defence mechanism is to be violent or abusive when feeling hurt. It is operating for educators in exactly the same way when they see red and shout at learners. Sufficient impulse control is needed to verbalise negative feelings like anger.

Related to this, two participants described how the experience of belittlement evoked feelings of worthlessness. Participant B reported that an educator told them that **"... we are stupid children"**. Participant E confirmed this by stating that educators sometimes say that they do not have time for a **"stupid"** person. These findings are consistent with Hein (2000) who claims that belittling wears away the victims' self-confidence, sense of self-worth, trust in their own perceptions and self-concept. The experience of belittlement also evokes sadness and feelings of worthlessness. These responses from educators disconnect the learner from important relationships and may also lead to further alienation, rejection, breaking down of self-esteem, refusal to work and co-operation. This approach breaks down both the educator and learner's self-esteem, while continuing to break down the relationship with the particular

learner and also with the rest of the class. These findings are also consistent with educator responses.

5.3.5 Physical abuse

Given the fact that elements of at-risk imply an out of school history of emotional and/or physical abuse, when punished or confronted with aggressive educator behaviour, the child's brain is easily activated and escalating anger can be the result of a series of perceived provocations. On the other hand, being able to verbalise emotions, may calm the emotional brain.

Participant B described how they (educators) **"… pull and push us".** Participant E reported that **"… some teachers get angry … and maybe they hit the children … then the children get angry … then the child swear at the teacher and some teachers swear back …".** Goleman (1995) claims that when educators display angry emotions, the learner will perceive the situation as threatening and a natural, automatic and predictable reaction follows, called the fight-or-flight response.

Participant C described that **"… the teacher asked this girl … to do something, but I mean, she did not ask it in a nice (respectful) way … then she (girl) asked the teacher why she did not ask 'please' then she would help her … so she (teacher) hit this girl … and she (girl) swore back at the teacher so … she threw her with a broom …".** The comments of these participants alluded to the fact that educators mirror the learners' behaviour by counter-aggression. Stein and Book (2001) suggest that low impulse control is equated with a low frustration tolerance, impatience and impulsiveness, overreaction and loss of control. Problems with impulse control are also manifested by abusiveness, anger control problems and explosive and unpredictable behaviour. Because an emotionally literate person will be able to become aware of, identify and understand emotions, emotionally intelligent people are able to manage their emotions effectively, which leads to better social interactions. Weisinger (1998) observed that it is one's own thoughts, bodily changes and behaviour that drive our emotional responses, not someone else's actions or an external event. This implies that educators with low impulse control could act impulsively, hurting their learners by acting in anger, in which case the educator-learner relationship deteriorates.

It is evident from the findings that educators often display angry outbursts in response to volatile classroom situations, but rarely communicating feelings. The reason why communicating feelings are so difficult could be that we are unaccustomed to doing it and if

they tell the learners how they feel as a result of the learners' behaviour, they will appear vulnerable. Expression of sadness is also not considered socially acceptable. Instead, the effect of saying how one feels without blame has almost always a de-escalating effect (McNamara & Moreton, 2001). According to Hein (2000), educators need to demonstrate that it is safe to express personal thoughts and feelings, otherwise emotion regulation (management) will only receive attention during a crisis situation. Mayer (in Cherniss & Goleman, 2001) uses the term meta-mood for key aspects of emotional self-awareness, which is the first step in modifying one's otherwise alienating behaviours. Educators, therefore, need to be conscious of what they are feeling and the impact of these feelings on their learners. For this to happen, educators need to get in touch with their own feelings. It is through sharing feelings that one also becomes much more connected to other people. Educators who model verbalising of feelings create a classroom atmosphere that values communication. These findings are also consistent with educator responses.

It is my position that Youth Care educators who are aware of, who can identify and understand emotions, would be better able to manage those emotions which lead to improved relational connections with their learners. This is echoed in the work of Bar-On (in Sternberg, 2000), Bar-On (1997), Apfel and Sifneos (in Taylor 2001), Elias *et al.* (2001), Stone-McCown *et al.* (1998), Mayer, Caruso and Salovey (in Ciarrochi, 2001) and Johnson and Indvik (in Denton, 2005).

5.4 EMOTIONS

5.4.1 Lack of emotional self-awareness

- ***Inability to describe feelings***

Often educators expect that when learners behave badly, they are expected to show contrition and remorse. When they do not, the conclusion is that they need harsh punishments in order to make them understand or respond and make them feel sorry for the victim. The reason why this does not work, is because the inability to feel and express remorse is more likely to do with the inability to feel anything at all.

Participant A commented: **"I do not know how to explain my feelings Miss. I don't feel like talking anymore, because no one listens to me …".**

Participant B also stated the following: **"… I will just finish my schoolwork and see to myself Miss (silence) … I cannot describe my feelings".**

These participants reflect the findings of Apfel and Sifneos (in Taylor 2001) in their claims that individuals with 'alexithymia' ("being unable to describe feelings as a result of trauma") have difficulty with regulating those emotions which corresponds with low emotional intelligence. The inability to identify and give a name to emotions is detrimental because individuals are frequently overwhelmed and act out in unhealthy ways. They do not feel good about themselves and have insecure attachment styles which make an individual prone to mental disorders. Awareness of one's inner self (self-awareness), and that which happens in other people is a pre-requisite for any change which one wants to make in oneself and it is the basis of relationships (Le Roux & De Klerk, 2001). A growing body of research concludes that emotional self-awareness could be considered an essential criteria for predicting positive outcomes in therapy.

Interestingly enough, Participant B was the participant who **"keep everything inside,"** who described feeling **"useless," "… like a piece of paper that have been thrown away"** and who tried to **"commit suicide"** many times. This was also the participant who commented **"I just want to do the things that go around in my head … like running away".** This participant reflects the findings of Miezitis (1992) in his claims that some learners may brood on the pain of hopelessness and helplessness in withdrawal and depression and that withdrawn, abused learners may avoid all meaningful relationships and attachments as it would only cause more pain and rejection. Through the description of these data, some participants alert the reader to an area of concern, namely depression. This participant, at-risk for suicidal behaviour, feels psychological pain including depression, anger, inadequacy and powerlessness. In keeping with Le Roux and De Klerk (2001) and De Klerk and Le Roux (2003), I would argue that feelings of hopelessness will interfere with Youth Care learners' ability to become resilient and to behave assertively and independently.

5.4.2 Lack of emotional management (which includes lack of assertiveness)

- ***Keeps emotions inside and not opening up***

PB commented: **"I never go to people Miss. I keep everything inside because I see that nobody listens to me. I keep everything inside".**

PF said that **"… some things I keep inside, and some I tell to Miss ...".**

As mentioned in (2.10) self-awareness is an essential criteria to become assertive. This enables one to identify feelings before they are expressed (Le Roux & De Klerk, 2001).

5.4.3 Helplessness

Participants related painful emotions as a result of rejection and exclusionary disciplinary methods. Literature confirms that pain is a powerful force engulfing emotions, thoughts and behaviour. Previous experiences of pain or pleasure, sadness or happiness, punishment and reward produces physiological changes in the body, which are experienced as different emotions. Current events, such as punishment, coercion, belittlement, physical and verbal abuse by educators, are thus evaluated on the sum of all previous emotional experiences (McMullen, 2003). Such methods could trigger prior traumatic emotional events from their primary caregivers. Closer examination revealed that, in this way, educators contribute to learners' negative general mood.

- ***Sadness***

Sadness is a negative emotional state with possible incidents of tearfulness.

Participant B and Participant A cried and displayed intense sadness throughout the interview **"… (cries) … (cries) … (sobbing) … she was rude to me Miss man … She was like …".** Participant B commented that **"… I don't open up to anyone and tell what is really bothering me … I really never speak to other teachers … Sometimes only to … (educators' names)". "… I just kept my mouth … I just kept everything inside".**

Participant H also commented that she **"never like open up to other teachers. I never really like to speak to other teachers".**

- ***Feelings of uselessness***

Participant B described feeling **"… useless. Everything is useless to me. I also feel useless"**. This participant commented that she broods on the pain of powerlessness in withdrawal and depression.

- ***Rejected***

Participant B also believed that **"… because your parent have put you here, … they (the educators) also accept that I am a child whom has been thrown away …".** She also commented that she **"… feels like a piece of paper that have thrown away".** Participant D mentioned that the educator does not **"like"** her. Participant E pointed out that the **"rude children get immediate attention".** Participant B related that she also tried to **"commit suicide"** many times.

Participant B reported that an educator told her that she can **"run away"** from the centre. PF commented that she was also told that she was **"not invited"** into the class and an educator also told PG that she can **"leave"** the class. These girls described feeling excluded from the educational process. PG commented that when she would ask an educator for help, they would **"ignore"** or **"swear"** at her.

The themes of rejection and exclusion emerged repeatedly across participant transcripts. Thus, it would seem that Youth Care learners experience increased anxiety which leads to the secretion of stress hormones during which state they become overwhelmed and demoralised. I could argue that, in keeping with Beck and Malley (2003), that rejected learners could internalise the rejection and learn to hate themselves or externalise the rejection and learn to hate others. Excluded from a group, they "often switch their allegiance to other peers in order to replace the pain of shame with the pride of belonging" (Brendtro & Du Toit, 2005).

The issue of sadness again emerged, which implies that the participants do not feel content with themselves and others. They also find it difficult to express positive emotions and they showed symptoms of depression. According to Stein and Book (2001) and Vermeulen (1999), happy people are enthusiastic and have fun and being happy releases energy, which is a motivating factor for whatever one has to do.

- ***Depressed (withdrawn)***

Learners often turn to defensive fight-and-flight reactions to cope with problems, but these emergency pain-avoidance measures like withdrawal, are self-defeating reactions to distress and do not provide real solutions. Some learners may brood on the pain of hopelessness ('inability to anticipate positive change') and helplessness ('inability to cope') in withdrawal and depression. Withdrawn, abused learners may avoid all meaningful relationships and attachments as it would only cause more pain and rejection (Miezitis, 1992). PB commented that she **"… expect nothing of the teachers. I also don't speak to the educators ...".**

Through the description of this data, some participants alert the reader to an area of concern, namely the impact of the emotional aspects of the educator-learner relationships in relation to the depressed learner. Young people at-risk for suicidal behaviour feel psychological pain including depression, anger, inadequacy and powerlessness. Since they are unable to bring about change, they feel helpless and hopeless (Miezitis, 1992). PB also commented that **"Nobody understands me. It is useless to talk, I am done with talking Miss, I do not want support here. I have tried to commit suicide many time ...".** Feelings of

hopelessness and helplessness will diminish the ability to behave with confidence and disturbing bodily symptoms will interfere with their ability to become resilient and to behave assertively and independently (Le Roux & De Klerk, 2001; De Klerk & Le Roux, 2003).

- ***Discouraged***

PB said that she **"never go to people"** and that she **"keeps everything inside"** because **"I see that nobody listens to me"**. She also mentioned that change takes time by saying that **"They (teachers) want us to change. They cannot expect of us to change in a split second. Everything takes time. I just want to do the things that go around in my head … like running away"**. As a result of educators' unrealistic expectations, this participant described feelings of discouragement and hopelessness to overcome difficulties. PD commented how an educator labelled them by saying that they are **"stupid"** children. PF confirmed this by stating that educators sometimes say that they do not have time for a **"stupid"** person.

5.4.4 Anger

- ***Aggression***

According to Vermeulen (1999), a person becomes angry when one feels that others have power over one. It is also a general feeling often covering for hurt, fear or frustration. This was evident in the participants' responses too.

Participant B commented: **"Things I already know I must always hear. I want nothing to do with Miss … I ask nothing of her anymore."** She also said that **"I do not want help from teachers …".**

5.5 SUPPORT NEEDS

In keeping with the research questions, outlined in Chapter One (1.3.1), participants shared their views on what their interaction should be with their educators and they made many suggestions on how this relationship with their educators could be enhanced.

5.5.1 Empathy

From the findings it can be deduced that the participants wanted empathy from their educators. They wanted them to listen to and speak to them, thereby satisfying their need to be understood. As discussed in (2.9), the Youth Care learners supported the findings of Bar-On (2000) and Weisinger, (1998) in their claims that educators with this competency will be

empathic, caring, compassionate and productive, with a capacity to give and will be able to model the value of concern. They claim, like Meese (1996), MacGrath (2000), Goleman (1998) and Le Roux and De Klerk (2001), that through active-reflective listening, the educator mirrors, summarises and shares his/her perceptions of the content and feelings voiced by the Youth Care learner. This gives credence to the work of Bar-On (2000), Denton (2005) and Salovey and Mayer (in Taylor, 2001), outlined in Chapter Two (2.9), that empathy is a core competency in their definitions of emotional intelligence, and is part of what Gardner describes as interpersonal intelligence. Emotional intelligence focuses on the important effect emotions have on one's interactions with others.

5.5.2 Respect

As discussed in (5.2.3), the participants related to the fact that being respected by educators will lead to many positive outcomes. One participant claimed that she will respect educators when treated with respect. Another participant also claimed that, for her, she would be obedient. For young people to develop a sense of respect, they need educators who model the skills such as perspective taking, active listening and respectful communication. This is echoed in the view of Brendtro and Du Toit (2005) and Hein (2000). Accepting and respecting others as they are without judgment, are the basic aspects of interpersonal relationships.

5.5.3 Trust

As discussed, the participants repeatedly made reference to the fact that they cannot trust educators to provide emotional safety and protection. The literature suggests that an open, trusting and positive educator-learner relationship is very powerful in creating a positive school atmosphere. Learners will try to succeed with their behaviour and their work for an educator they feel comfortable with and whom they like. Intrinsic motivation will be diminished if they do not feel good about their relationship with their educator. Often learners with behaviour problems, who have given up trusting adults, compensate for feeling emotionally hurt, by seeking revenge (Weisinger, 1998; Brendtro & Du Toit, 2005).

5.5.4 Hope

Some participants related that they found it difficult to bounce back from frustration and failure. They also find it difficult to find the courage to disengage from self-defeating patterns of behaviour and to change the direction of their pathways.

Participant B related that: **"… here I only become worse … in this place I want to do the things that goes around in my head … like running away".**

Participant C reported that she found it difficult to change when an educator **"shouts"** at her.

From the findings it can be deduced that Youth Care learners lack a sense of hope. This implies that this lack of hope impacts negatively on Youth Care learners' motivation to transcend adversity, to disengage from self-defeating patterns of behaviour and to become resilient. This is echoed in the work of Goleman (1998:128), who suggests that hope is "a primal motivating force and its absence is paralysing". Competency studies show that top performers in the human sciences, especially in teaching and counselling, express hope for those they seek to help. This would thus suggest that Youth Care educators with an optimistic view can decrease the number of learners who have sad or hopeless feelings. In keeping with Bar-On (in Stein & Book, 2001), general mood is also considered an important facilitator of emotionally and socially intelligent behaviour. General mood also **"contributes to one's ability to be hopeful, optimistic, positive and sufficiently self-motivated to set and pursue one's goals"**. It can be concluded that Youth Care educators who possess superior skills in this realm, could cultivate hope in their learners in a loving, nurturing, supportive and challenging environment, and they will find it easier to recover from setbacks and disappointments.

It would also seem that a lack of hope also impacts negatively on Youth Care learners' capacity for stress tolerance which is associated with low impulse control. This gives credence to the work of Brenner and Salovey (in Salovey & Sluyter, 1997) in their claims that the capacity for stress tolerance and impulse control is associated with resilient individuals. In conclusion, it would seem that feelings of hopelessness will interfere with Youth Care learners' ability to become resilient and to behave assertively and independently.

5.6 SUMMARY

In Chapter Five, I discussed the findings. This was done within the context of the influential factors in educator-learner relationships. This allowed me to see how these factors impacted on educator-learner relationships and the Youth Care learners' emotional responses as a result of these factors. Specific attention was given to Youth Care learners' support needs from their educators. These findings were then placed within the context of recent research on emotional intelligence, a key determinant in maintaining mutually satisfying and responsible interpersonal relationships. The findings indicated that many factors were experienced as

impacting on the educator-learner relationship within a specific Youth Care Centre. These factors were experienced as detrimental to the development of positive educator-learner relationships. Following this, Youth Care learners made many suggestions on how this relationship with their educators could be improved. From the findings it can be deduced that the participants wanted empathy and respect from their educators. Participants also need educators whom they can trust to provide emotional safety. They also suggested that educators cultivate hope in them as learners. Since it has already been established that self-awareness has an essential role to play in establishing secure attachments, it was concluded that enhancing these skills in Youth Care educators could play a role in decreasing Youth Care learners feeling detached, alienated and isolated from the educational process.

5.7 CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITATIONS

My aim was not to generalise the findings so much as it was to highlight the need for further consideration of the importance of the educator-learners' relationships within the context of the Youth Centre. Merriam (1998) suggests when using qualitative methodology, it implied that what one learns in a specific situation can be generalised to other situations. Thus, some degree of generalisation could be appropriate. Another possible limitation may have been the subjectivity of the researcher. It is vital to note that, in keeping with Mertens (1998), these findings are a record of my subjective interpretations of the experiences of the participants as shaped by their own constructs.

5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations can be made, based on the conclusions of this study:

In view of recent research on emotional intelligence, a key determinant in maintaining mutually satisfying and responsible interpersonal relationships, I suggest that further studies be conducted to assess the emotional skills of Youth Care educators and to determine in which realm they need improvement.

I further suggest the evaluation of the emotional skills of Youth Care educators. In-service training of educators to develop their own emotional skills is recommended. Youth Care educators also need to demonstrate these skills they want to see in their learners.

Empirical research could be conducted to establish in which realm most Youth Care educators and learners need improvement and in which areas they are sufficiently developed.

Since it has already been established that social and emotional intelligence refers to the ability to be successful in all the critical domains of life, emotional intelligence programmes should be available to all Youth Care learners and their educators within this context. I also recommend that emotional intelligence programmes be integrated into the existing Life Orientation curriculum currently being followed in Youth Care Centres. Since self-awareness is a basis of relationships and a pre-requisite for establishing positive educator-learner relationships, programme facilitators should emphasise the development of the empathetic and interactive components of emotional intelligence in order to establish a high self-awareness profile in both Youth Care learners and their educators.

5.9 CONCLUSION

My study concluded that there are many factors such as lack of empathy, respect, trusting relationships and hope that impact on the educator-learner relationship within this specific Youth Care Centre. The findings indicated that many factors were experienced as impacting negatively on the educator-learner relationship. The Youth Care learners made many suggestions on how this relationship with their educators could be enhanced. These suggestions were, amongst others, that the participants wanted empathy from their educators. Youth Care learners also need trusting adults who will respect them and who could be models of hope to help them transcend adversity and to become resilient. Since it has already been established that emotions have an important effect on one's interactions with others, it can be concluded that Youth Care educators' ability to develop empathy, hinges on their own ability to understand feelings and emotions.

The most effective Youth Care Centre, therefore, can give young people a sense of meaning in their own lives and a sense of connection to others. Valente (in Roux, 2006:3), suggests that *"The more I get to know EQ, the more I believe that it should be on every school syllabus – whether school or adult training. The need for teachers and trainers to be aware of developing a learner holistically, has never been more important than now - not only in South Africa, but worldwide."*

The Youth Care Centre needs to be supportive of the process of change. For this to be the case, Bourey and Miller (in Denton, 2005) point out that investing in emotional intelligence is a major paradigm shift in Youth Care Centre's, schools, organisations and society as a whole. It is about altering Youth Care Centres in a very fundamental way. This research has presented information suggesting that enhancing certain realms of emotional intelligence

would result in a more efficient and productive workforce. Therefore, I hope that whole-school development practitioners and school management teams recognise the benefits of understanding and promoting positive, supporting educator-learner relationships within this context.

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APPENDIX A

LETTER OF APPROVAL – EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

An original letter of approval from the Western Cape Education Department granting permission to conduct research in a specific Youth Care Centre

Navrae
Enquiries
IMibuzo
Telefoon
Telephone
IFoni
Faks
Fax
IFeksi

Verwysing
Reference
ISalathiso

Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement

Western Cape Education Department

ISebe leMfundo leNtshona Koloni

Ms Renè Van Tonder
4 Robon Street
SOMERSET WEST
7130

Dear Ms R. Van Tonder

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: THE YOUTH CARE LEARNERS' RELATIONAL CONNECTION WITH THEIR EDUCATORS.

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **18th January 2006 to 31st March 2006.**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December 2006).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr R. Cornelissen at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the Principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the following school: XXXXXX.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Education Research.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

    The Director: Education Research
    Western Cape Education Department
    Private Bag X9114
    CAPE TOWN
    8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Ronald S. Cornelissen
for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**
DATE: 22nd December 2005

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANT'S INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Example of the consent form completed by the female Youth Care Centre learners participating in the research

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT

I, René van Tonder, want to invite you to take part in a research project on: "The relational connection between female learners in a Youth Care Centre and their educators".

The purpose of this research is:

- The exploration and description of your relational interactions with your educators; and
- To establish which aspects could enhance this relationship with your educators.

Information will be collected by interviewing you. The interviews will be tape-recorded, to clearly remember the information you give. Measures will be taken to ensure that you can not be identified in any way. The taped interviews will only be listened to by me, the researcher. The tapes will be locked away in a safe cupboard. After the information from the tapes have been written down, they will be destroyed.

I understand the information given about the project and its purpose. I may at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the project. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and, of my own free will, declare myself prepared to participate in the project.

Participant's name_____(Please print)

Participant's signature _____Date_____

Name: **René van Tonder**

Qualifications: BA (HONS), Guidance Psychology

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FEMALE ADOLESCENTS IN A YOUTH CARE CENTRE

I: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

A: The personal data on the eight participants:

- Age of participant?
- Years at school?
- Town?
- Parental structure?
- Reason for referral?

II: SOURCES OF SUPPORT

A: What are the sources of support?

- In the classroom?
- Outside the classroom?
- Informal sources (friends, others?)
- Formal sources (school, clinic, day hospital, social services, community workers, other?)

B: How do educators help you?

- Emotional support?
- Material support?
- Advice/information/knowledge?
- Concrete help?

III: Participants' views on learner-educator interactions:

- How do you experience your relations/interactions with your educators?
- Which educator-learner interactions impact negatively on this relationship?
- Which educator-learner actions (behaviours) impact negatively on this relationship?
- How could this relationship with educators be enhanced?

APPENDIX D

EXAMPLE OF AN INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW

INTERVIEW

Most of the teachers here at the Youth Centre....they're nice, they always understand or they try to understand me and they...The way they speak to me is nice, but then you get some of the misses that doesn't want to hear. How can I say, that doesn't want to hear how, hmm.....Now if something happened and now, something you know you did wrong and you want to apologize and they just ignore you. They don't give you a chance to speak. So, but most of the teachers here, they are nice. OK, for instance, if you and this miss had an argument, now you want to cool down or so before you go to her, because you know she is going to moan and skel at you and then hmmm...some of the teachers like they do like accept your apology but some don't...They make me feel cross because, how can I say? Actually, it is...OK, I'm talking about myself now, but...it's hard to say you're sorry to some people you know. And here you like try your best to stand up and go to the miss and tell her that..."Yeh, you're sorry for what you have did, what you have done and all". But then, she just throws it back in your face and you feel like jo.....like she will ignore you. She won't give you a chance, she won't hear you out man. She does not hear you out. She will just walk on or so, she will ignore you. She doesn't give you chance. That is basically all, they just walk away like now you really want to speak with her or.... She doesn't even give me a chance like...Now I am talking about one specific miss, now...She doesn't even give me a chance like...."Yeh, I am sorry or whatever....She just ignores me.....(long pause). How can I say, they complain about me, nê miss, they do complain about me, but, if they complain about a child here miss, they don't come to the child and ask the child what is her problem or why they only listen to the one side of the story, because the lady is an adult and I am a younger person. So miss..... I would like to be listened to, especially by her miss, jo.....I don't know, I am mos on trial here ne miss? Miss know all about that miss. Now, how can I say? When I came back, so we decided the NIC's we want to live in one cottage miss, like all together the NIC's (st. 9's). And then miss X told me I must go and speak with this lady now.....(cry). But this lady, she just like ignored me and I did nothing to her. I didn't see her like since I've been here miss, OK, the first week I didn't see her, so, I wasn't rude to her, I was nothing to her miss. I don't know if it is about last year's stuff that I did. Like I was rude last yer miss, miss I was very rude.....I was.... I was rude.....They will l basically come and tell me..... I wasn't so and so and what made it like that I am so now. I would like them to speak to me. "Jo, but you weren't like this and like speak sensible stuff into my head miss...and they must try to help me. Now this one person, I don't know what I did to her miss. I don't know if it is becaue of last year. It's almost, miss ne, I can see miss, man jo..... There was an incident yesterday. It was yesterday afternoon in the dining room. We were clearing up the table miss, now she was speaking, and I know she doesn't like me. So why must I speak while she is speaking? So I wasn't going to speak miss.. ..... Cries....cries, sobbing, sobbing..... So miss, while she was speaking I didn't say a word....so somebody else spoke while she was speaking. So she thought it was me, so she tried to.....(silence). She was rude to me miss man.....she was like hmmm.....I just looked at her. Normally I would skell back and backchat, but then I just

kept my mouth..... I just kept everything inside. She said: "I can see you are busy speaking" and she said, it is because I am so rude to speak while she was speaking, while another person is speaking, something like that miss.....cries. If they (the children) skell to the teachers now, and then the teachers get more frustrated and she shouts, and they shout louder, and they fight. But when the teachers talk sweet, the children is like, still rude and .....(cries). I don't open up to anyone and tell what is really bothering me.....especially now to miss too .....(laughs slightly). I really never speak to other teachers....sometimes only to miss Y, miss Z and miss A. Sometimes the children want to impress their friends. I speak to my friends in the cottage. I speak to everyone, but not my personal stuff. I never like open up to other teachers. I never like really speak to other teachers. Children must clean up for the way they behave and stuff like that miss. Or the teachers will tell the children "I was wrong, but they won't say it that way..... They will say, "But you are wrong, or you are bad or so..."