THE PSYCHOSOCIAL EXPERIENCES OF IMMIGRANT LEARNERS AT A PRIMARY SCHOOL IN THE WESTERN CAPE

by

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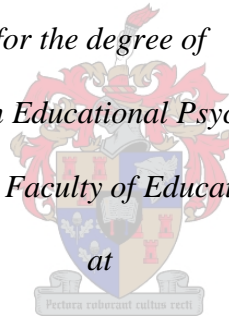
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DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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ABSTRACT

South Africa attracts a significant number of refugees and immigrants from poverty-stricken and war-ravaged African nations who come in search of greener pastures. As this population continues to grow, immigrant learners have begun to experience South African schools in an array of uniquely challenging ways (Vandeyar, 2010). This influx of foreigners has increased the diversity in South African classrooms and presents challenges for the foreign learner as well as for the school. While several studies have been undertaken to examine educational factors relating to the education of foreign learners in South Africa, the psychosocial experiences of these learners have not received research attention.

The present study sought to understand the psychosocial experiences of immigrant learners in South Africa. The theoretical framework of the study was guided by Erikson's psychosocial theory. Within the framework of Erikson's psychosocial theory (Passer & Smith, 2008; Plotnik, 1993), psychological factors such as self-esteem, self-identity, self-efficacy and confidence, as well as social factors such as language, culture and peer relations, were explored in an attempt to understand their adjustment to learning in a culturally different environment.

A basic qualitative research design was utilised. Participants were voluntarily recruited at a primary school in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. Purposive sampling was used to identify nine immigrant learners between the ages of six and twelve, who had at least attended the first-grade level in their native countries, for participation. Data were collected through the draw-and-tell technique, interviews and observations and analysed by means of thematic content analysis.

The recurring themes derived from the interviews indicated that immigrant learners experience psycho-social challenges that involve the accent of the English language, establishment of friendships and bullying. These challenges have had a negative impact on their self-confidence, self-efficacy and self-esteem and their characters have also been changed in trying to adapt to the environmental demands. It is anticipated that the findings of the study will contribute to the development of meaningful support strategies for immigrant learners.

The recommendations made include that the school must devise school policies which promote acknowledgement and acceptance of diversity within the school. There is a need for activities that accommodate diverse learners within the school. Learners need to share and enlighten each other about their cultural values and morals. Activities may involve role-plays at assembly, and having different weeks of commemorating or celebrating the different cultures of different learners within the school. The host learners also need to participate in these activities.

Adopting the circle of courage philosophy, that is, sense of belonging, respect, generosity and industry, should be the starting point for the school and all learners. Bringing in the circle of courage can assist the whole school in accepting and understanding one another. The circle of courage is a model of empowerment; it is a philosophy in support of 'reclaiming environments' for learners. Future studies should investigate the identified themes using a quantitative approach, as well as undertake a comparison of the immigrant learners' experiences with those of the host learners.

OPSOMMING

Suid-Afrika het groot aantrekkingskrag vir 'n aansienlike aantal vlugtelinge en immigrante vanaf armoede- en oorlog-geteisterde volkere in Afrika wat 'n beter heenkome soek. Namate hierdie bevolking toeneem, kry immigrantleerders in skole in Suid-Afrika met 'n unieke reeks uitdagings te doen (Vandeyar, 2010). Die instroming van vreemdelinge het die diversiteit in Suid-Afrikaanse klaskamers laat toeneem en stel uitdagings aan die buitelandse leerder sowel as aan die skool. Alhoewel verskeie studies reeds is onderneem om opvoedkundige faktore met betrekking tot die opvoeding van buitelandse leerders in Suid-Afrika aan te spreek, het die psigososiale ervarings van hierdie leerders nog nie die aandag van navorsers gekry nie.

Die huidige studie verteenwoordig 'n poging om die psigososiale ervarings van immigrantleerders in Suid-Afrika te ondersoek. Die teoretiese raamwerk van die studie is deur Erikson se psigososiale teorie gerig. Binne die raamwerk van Erikson se psigososiale teorie (Passer & Smith, 2008; Plotnik, 1993), word psigologiese faktore soos selfagting, self-identiteit, selfdoeltreffendheid en vertroue, en sosiale faktore soos taal, kultuur en verhoudings met die portuurgroep ondersoek in 'n poging om die leerders se aanpassing aan die leer in 'n omgewing met 'n verskillende kultuur te verstaan..

'n Basiese kwalitatiewe navorsingsontwerp is gebruik. Vrywillige deelnemers is by 'n primêre skool in die Wes-Kaap Provinsie van Suid-Afrika gewerf. Nege immigrantleerders van tussen ses en twaalf jaar oud wat reeds vir minstens een jaar in hul land van herkoms skoolgegaan het, is deur middel van 'n doelgerigte steekproeftrekking vir deelname geïdentifiseer. Data is met behulp van die teken-en-vertel tegniek, onderhoude en waarneming ingesamel en met behulp van tematiese inhoudsontleding geanaliseer.

Die terugkerende temas wat in die onderhoude na vore gekom het, het aangedui dat die immigrantleerders psigososiale uitdagings betreffende die aksent van die Engelse taal, stigting van vriendskappe en afknouery ondervind het. Hierdie uitdagings het hul selfvertroue, selfdoeltreffendheid en selfagting nadelig aangetas en hulle het geaardheid laat verander in die poging om by die eise van die omgewing aan te pas. Die verwagting is dat die bevindings van die studie 'n bydrae tot die ontwikkeling van betekenisvolle ondersteuningstrategieë vir immigrantleerders sal lewer.

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Voorstelle wat gemaak word behels dat die skool 'n beleid moet daarstel wat erkenning en aanvaarding van diversiteit in die skool bevorder. Daar is 'n behoefte aan aktiwiteite wat diverse leerders binne die skool akkommodeer. Leerders behoort hul kulturele en morele waardes met mekaar te deel en mekaar daaroor in te lig. Aktiwiteite sou rolspel gedurende byeenkomste kon insluit, en verskillende weke sou daaraan toegewy kon word om die verskillende kulture van verskillende leerders in die skool te gedenk of te vier. Die gasheer leerders moet ook by hierdie aktiwiteite betrek word.

Aanvaarding van die *Circle of Courage* filosofie, wat die gevoel van saamhorigheid, respek, ruimhartigheid en ywer omvat, behoort die beginpunt vir die skool en al die leerders te word. Om die *Circle of Courage* in te voer kan die hele skool help om mekaar te aanvaar en te verstaan. Die *Circle of Courage* is 'n model vir bemagtiging; 'n filosofie wat die 'terugwinning van omgewings' vir leerders ondersteun. Toekomstige studies behoort met behulp van 'n kwantitatiewe benadering ondersoek in te stel na die geïdentifiseerde temas, en ook 'n vergelyking van die ervarings van die immigrantleerders en gasheer leerders te tref.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my supervisor Lynette Collair: You made me realise my other side. Thank you very much for believing in me and for the unwavering guidance and support you have provided. I really appreciate all your efforts to make me a better person intellectually.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1   INTRODUCTION

Very few people in the world nowadays spend their lives in a single unified culture (Bakker & Ruane, 2009). In Africa, internal immigration for social, economic and political reasons is extremely prevalent (Drennan, 2001). South Africa is one of the countries experiencing the challenges of internal African immigration. It perhaps receives the largest number of asylum seekers in the world. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the majority of immigrants entering South Africa are children or youths (UNHCR, 2010). The advent of democracy and the easing of both legal and unauthorised entry to South Africa have made the country a new destination for asylum-seekers, long-distance traders, entrepreneurs, students and professionals (Vandeyar, 2010). What has made South Africa a target for most migrants is the relative prosperity, political stability and its liberal outlook compared to its African members with dismally performing economies, political and other crises. As a result, South Africa now houses millions of foreigners from economically challenged, poverty-stricken and war-ravaged nations such as Somalia, the DRC, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and many others. The influx of foreigners has increased the diversity amongst learners in South African schools. These learners experience various psychological and social challenges that affect their adjustment and social wellbeing. Little is known about immigrant learners although they have established a visible presence at some of the schools in Western Cape. According to Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001, p. 67), "immigrant children experience a particular constellation of changes that have lasting effects upon their development. Surprisingly, little systematic research has focused on the psychosocial experiences of immigrant children".

This study constitutes an exploration of the psychosocial experiences of immigrant children at a selected school with a considerable number of immigrant learners. Of particular salience to the study is how these immigrant learners who are mostly from different African countries fare psychosocially in South Africa, which is the host country. The study focused on only those

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children who have at least had first-grade experience in their native country and are now learners in the selected school in the Western Cape Province of South Africa.

1.2   MOTIVATION AND RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

Every year foreigners from poverty-stricken, war-ravaged and economically unstable nations such as Libya, the Ivory Coast, Egypt, Somalia and Zimbabwe flock to South Africa in search of greener pastures. This influx of foreigners, especially from within the African continent, has increased the diversity amongst learners in South African schools. The change in context and the associated socio-cultural and relational dynamics pose psychosocial challenges to foreign learners. Children brought to South Africa by foreign immigrants face a number of difficulties as a result of their migrant identity and experiences, including coping with the stress of growing up and relocating to a new physical, social, and cultural environment (Aksel, Gun, Irmak & Cengelci, 2007). Igoa (1995, p. 3) vividly describes the difficulties that immigrant children encounter:

> Immigrant children have individual histories and inner struggles as they wrestle with the changes in their lives. Their development began in another country; their lives were first attuned to a different culture.

As such, immigrant children's adjustment to the new environment occurs at several levels, as it is not limited to language but extends to society, school and church, creating new friends and inhabiting a new country (Diaz, 1991; Vandeyar, 2010).

Studies on how immigrants experience adjustment in new cultural environments have been carried out mostly in western countries, with a few conducted in South Africa, but the focus has largely been on adult and adolescent immigrants. In South Africa, Nadine Dolby conducted ground-breaking research in 1996 in which she documented the lives of youths at a school in Durban at the close of the 20th Century after the 'crumbling' of apartheid. Vandeyar (2010) focused on educational and socio-cultural experiences of immigrant students in South African schools. Recently, Foubister (2011) investigated the experiences of immigrant youths but no study has focused precisely on the children within the middle childhood developmental stage. Viewing the growing immigrant populations in South Africa, one wonders how immigrant

children fare. This is a big question, especially for those children who would have immigrated after some pronounced prior socialisation in their native countries, which, for example, comes with being enrolled in local schools and developing associational networks and connections with various social groups such as peers and teachers. It remains to be seen how immigrant learners between the ages of eight and twelve fare psychosocially in terms of the related issues of self-esteem, self-concept, self-efficacy, self-confidence, social skills such as peer relations, as well as curriculum adaptation, in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. Erikson (1963) and Bronfenbrenner (1970) shed some light on some developmental aspects of children at this age.

1.3   THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Erikson posits that children in the approximate age range of eight to twelve will be going to school and experiencing the ego development crisis which he termed industry versus inferiority. During this stage, often called latency, children are capable of learning, creating and accomplishing numerous new skills and knowledge, thus developing a sense of **industry**. This is also a very social stage of development and if children experience unresolved feelings of inadequacy and **inferiority** among their peers, they can have serious problems in terms of competence and self-esteem (Passer & Smith, 2008; Plotnik, 1993). Movement that uproots them from the familiar environment of diverse connections and associative networks in which they have begun to develop their sense of self, being and belonging, poses a threat of upsetting their future development. A question then emerges as to how they reorganise themselves or fare in the new context that they go to. Bronfenbrenner's (1970) bio-ecological theory took Erikson's perspective further, to show how social context affects child development.

Bronfenbrenner postulates that child development occurs when there is a direct or indirect influence on a child's life or reciprocal interaction amongst the ecological systems in which the child operates, by referring to the many levels of contexts (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem) or environment. This is possible, depending on the personal characteristics of the child (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). For an immigrant learner, adaption occurs within the microsystem, which includes the family, friends, school activities and teachers. In the case of an immigrant child, part of the extended family, in some instances, will

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not be the same. The present study attempts to explore the psychosocial experiences of immigrant children as the consequence of separation and loss incurred during migration. Attempts were made not to attach meaning to any action and to view reality from the children's perspectives. The type of meaning that they attach to their experiences in the new environment psychosocially was explored.

The study is expected to contribute to national and international literature on child psychological development by bringing to the fore realities that pertain to the psychosocial experiences of immigrant children between the ages of eight and twelve. The study will add to the existing corpus of knowledge by giving audibility to the voices of those who have for long been denied a voice to articulate their own experiences and situations. In doing this, the study will also present some snapshots of the experiences of children in host countries. Furthermore, the study will potentially contribute to the field of education and help both teachers and parents to understand the challenges that immigrant learners face, as well as uncover the possible causes of seemingly strange and unexpected behaviour that contradicts the learning domains. With this knowledge, both the teachers and the parents may be able to devise suitable interventions and strategies that could mitigate cases of low performance.

1.4   PROBLEM STATEMENT

The overarching research interests in and motivation for this study were to investigate the psychosocial experiences concerning self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-confidence; social skills such as peer relations; and curriculum adaptation of immigrant children, especially those between ages eight to twelve. When immigrant children leave their countries, some of them are not aware of what the duration of their stay in the host country will be; some are not even aware of the destination. Although children often enjoy travelling, radical changes that come with migration, such as new classrooms, new peers, new teachers and a new curriculum pose significant psychosocial challenges. Immigrant children are brought along by parents and suffer the tribulations of migration without the mitigating effects of adult reasoning and the possibility of making alternative choices. Immigrant children are seldom consulted about the doubts, the motivations and the decisions of migrating. They are uprooted from their familiar environment

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and are often separated from friends. Bar-Yosef (2003) emphasises that the children are taken out of the known surroundings and taken into the unknown.

Whitehead and Hashim (2005) noted that, although studies focusing on the adjustment of immigrants in host countries have been carried out, there is need for a close look at how immigrant children fare in terms of self-esteem, self-efficacy, confidence, curriculum acquisition and peer relations with host members, as well as to understand the related issues of cultural adjustment and language problems. This study explored the psychosocial experiences of immigrant learners in South Africa. By giving a voice to those whose perspectives have been marginalised, this study anticipates to generate an emancipatory contribution which will make teachers, schools and parents responsive to the needs of immigrant learners that enable their positive development.

1.5 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of the study was to gain insight into the lived psychosocial[1] experiences of immigrant learners at a selected school who had prior socialisation in their native countries before they came to host country South Africa.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTION

In essence the study wished to answer the question: What are the lived psychosocial experiences of immigrant learners at a selected primary school in the Western Cape province of South Africa?

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[1] Psychosocial refers to psychological and social aspects that affect an individual's adjustment and behaviour. Psychological factors, for instance self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-concept and cultural accommodation, relate to the way that an individual's mind works and how it subsequently affects their behaviour while social factors have to do with the determinants of the quality of people's lives, such as how language and culture affects people's living patterns, livelihoods and adjustment within groups.

1.7   THE RESEARCH PROCESS

1.7.1   Research paradigm

This study employs a qualitative research design that falls within the interpretive paradigm. In this design, knowledge arises through the acting and interacting of self-reflective beings (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In trying to understand the meaning immigrant learners attach to their experiences, the researcher engaged in face-to-face interaction with the research participants. Merriam (1998) asserts that the key concern of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the phenomenon of interest from the participants' perspective and not that of the researcher. The interpretive paradigm emphasises that the social world, and consequently social phenomena, has different meanings, that is, there are multiple realities that people attach to it, depending on their context. Given this fact, the researcher approached this topic from the lived experiences of the subjects of research.

Strauss & Corbin, 1998) highlights that in basic qualitative research one has to know that the universe is not and cannot stand still; nothing is strictly determined so one has to understand the world in a naturalistic way. The experiences of immigrant learners differ due to a myriad of experiences the learners are exposed to, so the researcher ought to have an open mind, knowing that there are a multitude of perspectives. According to the interpretive paradigm, reality is socially constructed as people's experiences occur within social, cultural, historical or personal contexts (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011). This enabled the researcher to approach every step of the research with an open mind, curiosity, empathy and flexibility, in order to be able to listen to the participants telling their stories.

The basic qualitative research design helped identify issues from the perspective of the participants, and understand the meanings and interpretations that participants gave to behaviour, events or objects. Engaging in the interpretive paradigm gave an in-depth understanding of the contextual influence of how immigrant learners adapt to the environment they are exposed to.

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1.7.2   Research design and methodology

Data were collected through a combination of visual (image making) and children's narratives (interviews) as the primary methods, and observation as a secondary method. The use of images and drawing (visual method data collection) was done through the use of the draw-and-tell technique by participants. Visuals have the potential to provide deeper and subtle explanations of how social contexts and relationships are recognised, allowing us to see every day experiences with new eyes (Spencer, 2011). Furthermore, visuals may assist learners who have conceptual or linguistic difficulties in expressing themselves orally (Kenny, 2009). The researcher used the visuals as auto-driving mechanisms to elicit conversation from the participants whereby they would respond by explaining their visuals. This, in a way, enables the children to reflect on what they want to say and become active participants in the research study (Leitch, 2008; Pridmore & Lansdown in Kenny, 2009). This will, in turn, enable the researcher to engage with the world of these children (Young & Barrett, 2001).

In addition to this, the use of interviews as a primary method and observation as a secondary method provided the researcher with some insight into the real situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context, as well as the interaction that takes place in that context (Merriam, 1998). This furnished the researcher with the immigrant learners' perspectives. Interviews enabled the researcher to access interior experiences, uncovering and exploring the meanings that underpin migrant learners' lives.

Observations provided the researcher with some insight into immigrant learners' interactions, context of behaviour as well as explanations of behaviour. Daniels (2011) postulates that it gives direct personal contact with the setting, hence providing first-hand experiences which will allow the researcher to be open and inductive in the discovery of the migrant learners' psychosocial experiences. Furthermore, it accorded the researcher an opportunity to learn some new things that the immigrant learners might have unconsciously wished to share during the interview.

1.7.3   Data analysis

Since the study used an interpretive research paradigm, understanding the meaning of the process that the immigrant learners experience constituted the knowledge to be gained from an inductive mode of inquiry of the multiple realities constructed socially by individuals. In other words, the patterns of the lived experiences of the learners were brought to the fore and subsequently discussed.

The conventional qualitative content analysis method of data analysis was used. Data gathered or documented were compared to another incident in the same set of data or in another set. These comparisons in turn led to the formulation of themes which were then compared to each other and to other instances. Content analysis allows the researcher to test theoretical issues to enhance understanding of the data. Through content analysis, it is possible to distil words into fewer content-related categories. It is assumed that, when classified into the same categories, words, phrases and the like share the same meaning (Cavanagh, 1997 in Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The aim is to attain a condensed and broad description of the phenomenon, and the outcome of the analysis is concepts or categories describing the phenomenon. Usually the purpose of those concepts or categories is to build up a model, conceptual system, conceptual map or categories (Elo & Kynga, 2007).

1.7.4   Selection of participants

Due to the nature of the study, the purposive sampling technique was used to select participants. Purposive sampling entails selecting participants for a particular purpose; in this case, immigrant learners were targeted. This method allows one to select a sufficient number of particular cases to provide enough in-depth information in order to build a credible analysis of the issue under study (Patton, 1990 in Merriam 1998; Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004). Participants were selected from a list of names of learners enrolled at the primary school. Eligibility was determined by age, place of origin, ethnicity, language, and length of stay in Stellenbosch. In terms of consent, the researcher explained to the parents/guardians and the participants all the

procedures involved in the study. Letters seeking permission and subsequent letters granting permission by parents were used as written evidence of permission. All the interviews with learners were carried out within the school premises. The interviews took place after school in an appropriate time slot which was determined by the principal. The interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim. If the participants felt uncomfortable with tape-recording of the interviews, notes were taken during interviews.

This study was confined to a selected primary school in the Western Cape Province. This school consists of learners of many nationalities who are mostly children of students at the nearby university. It has a sizeable number of learners from Nigeria, the DRC, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Namibia, among several others. Nine immigrant learners took part in the in-depth interviews. Only learners who migrated after attending first grade (those aged between eight and twelve) were participants in the study and the study was confined to the immigrant learners' experiences in the host country. The study did not include local participants, teachers or immigrant learners' parents.

1.7.5 Trustworthiness and verification of the data

There is need to have credible research findings for a study to be trustworthy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The data gathered need to be verified to determine accuracy. Triangulation was used in this study so as to verify whether the experiences of immigrant learners were captured accurately.

> Triangulation may be defined as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour…. The use of multiple methods, or the multi-method approach, as it is sometimes called, contrast with the ubiquitous but generally more vulnerable single-method approach that characterizes so much of research in the social sciences …. Triangulation techniques in the social sciences attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint… (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 233)

Bush (2000) notes that there are two main types of triangulation, methodological triangulation, which is using several methods to explore the same issue, and respondent triangulation whereby

questions are put to different participants. This is done to test the consistency of the data (Patton, 2002).

In this study, methodological triangulation was used as interviews were the primary data source and observations the secondary source. Data were gathered from the experiences of the immigrant children only – teachers or parents were not included as it would provide interpreted and attached meanings of the psychosocial experiences of the children.

1.7.6 Ethical considerations

The ethical considerations of research were adhered to. The main underlying principle was non-maleficence ('do no harm'), through the other universal principles such as honesty and respect for the rights of others, and that subjects should participate freely, on the basis of informed consent.

In this study informed consent was sought from both the parents and the children. Both parents and children were enlightened about what the research entailed and all the procedures that were to be followed. According to the Children's Act of 2005, all children from 12 years and above can give consent and those below must give assent; this guideline was followed accordingly. Since the researcher wanted to explore the psychosocial experiences of the immigrant, there was need to establish rapport and ascertain the safety of the participants. The ethics of confidentiality and anonymity were also maintained. Some feedback on the project will be provided to the participants and parents if they so wish.

Written informed consent was obtained from the Western Cape Department of Education, the immigrant children, the parents of the immigrant children and the school before interviews were conducted.

1.8   CLARIFICATION OF RELEVANT TERMS

Immigrant – this is a term that is used in the present study to describe any child who decides, or is forced, to migrate from their home territory within Africa to South Africa for a variety of reasons, be it political, social or economic, but in the company either of both parents/guardians or one of the parents/guardians.

Children / learners - these are immigrant learners between the ages of eight and twelve with prior socialisation in their native countries. The words children and learner(s) are used interchangeably but have the same meaning.

Psychosocial - the *Concise Oxford dictionary* describes psychosocial as an adjective relating to the interrelation of social factors and individual thought and behaviour.

Psychosocial factors - (Vandenbos, 2007) include social, cultural, and environmental phenomena and influence or affect the mental health and behaviour of the individual and of groups. Such influences include social situations and relationships. In this study, psychosocial factors will include psychological factors such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, confidence, identity and emotions; and social factors such as culture, language, peer relations and school curriculum.

1.9   OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The thesis is made up of five chapters:

Chapter One

This chapter gives a brief overview of the study, that is, motivation, relevance and the context in which the study is located.

Chapter Two provides an overview of the literature.

Chapter Three outlines the methodology, which incorporates the research design, sampling strategy and data collection procedures.

Chapter Four presents the results of the study.

Chapter Five discusses the results, implications and the limitations of the study.

<center>**CHAPTER TWO**

LITERATURE REVIEW</center>

2.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the background of the study and the question initiating the research were introduced. The purpose of the present study was to answer the question, "What are the psycho-social experiences of immigrant children aged between eight and twelve at a selected school in the Western Cape Province?" In order to answer the question initiating the research, a review of the prevailing literature on immigration was vital.

2.1.1 Facts about immigration

The creation of a global economy has transformed the workface of the 21st century organisation. This scenario has resulted in a massive intra- and inter-continental brain drain as individuals search for greener pastures. This movement has led to some poverty- and war-stricken countries losing their citizens to other nations regarded as safe destinations due to their economic stability. This, in turn, has increased the diversity of learners in South African schools. Swart and Pettipher (2011) point out that, schools do not function in isolation, but are influenced by economic, political and social developments. What happens in the schools is a reflection of the developments and changes in society. Societies are undergoing fundamental change as they go through transformational change from industrial to informational and from national to international societies (Artiles & Dyson, 2005; Artiles & Bal, 2008; Fletcher & Artiles, 2005). All this is due to the migration of different population groups from one country to another. This has made societies to be more diverse and multicultural, resulting in classrooms which consist of learners from diverse ethnic, linguistic, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds and abilities (Ferguson, 2008; Mittler, 2005).

The arrival at a foreign destination often triggers feelings of insecurity which are due to the uncertainty and anxiety in the face of the unknown, hence regression is inevitable. Immigrant learners experience this when they are left at school for the first time by their caregivers. It is this regression which makes the immigrant feel defenceless and inhibited at times, incapable of

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making effective use of the resources one possesses. In such situations immigrant learners search for trustworthy individuals who can take over or neutralise their anxieties and fears felt towards the new unknown world. This can be compared to a situation when a child who is left alone and desperately searches for the familiar face of his mother or mother substitute (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989). The newly arrived immigrant learner is like a newborn baby and is exceedingly sensitive. There is a great need to feel welcome, such that any arrangement that works out or any individual who shows some interest whatsoever and is cordial and sympathetic makes the immigrant feel loved. In the same way, any setbacks can make the immigrant learner feel rejected by the new environment (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989).

Immigration is a complex psychosocial process with significant and lasting effects on an individual's identity (Akhtar cited in Kogan, 2010). Widely cited reasons for immigration include the search for greener pastures, the need to flee from persecution, poverty and famine. In addition, immigration involves the search for security and safety or avoidance of persecution. However, immigration may involve various traumatic factors and may even be a catastrophic change, particularly for children. It is described as a period of disorganisation, pain and frustration, accompanied by anxiety (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989).

Immigration involves change of countries and cultures. Thus, the language and customs, values, religions and moral codes, even modes of thinking, are likely to be different differ (Kristal-Andersson, 2000). This may worsen if the immigrants are of a different race to the inhabitants of the destination country. Within the individual, there is likely to be a process of comparing homeland, childhood and adult experiences with those of the host country. An immigrant seems to be forced to see, remember, question and compare the old with the new. Hence, a long, difficult and sometimes painful psychological process of self-questioning starts. This includes an evaluation of one's lifestyle and values. This conscious or unconscious state of questioning can lead to positive development and change, and the successful integration of the two worlds. However, if the worlds cannot be combined, it can lead to an identity ridden by conflict and incongruity (Kristal-Andersson, 2000).

Worldwide migration is changing not only in terms of its scope, but also in terms of its goals, and the immigration and integration strategies required in destination countries. Historically, migration tended to favour low-skilled, relatively uneducated workers who sought to improve their life circumstances in a new country. These newcomers were primarily employed on farms, in manufacturing, and in construction industries. The last few decades, however, have been marked by a shift in immigration recruitment to a focus on attracting highly skilled labour to fill positions in advanced economies (Martinez-Herrera, 2008; Shachar, 2006). Highly skilled workers have become a highly sought-after valuable asset for developed countries in that they provide a competitive advantage in the knowledge-based global economy (Shachar, 2006). The changing nature of the challenges brought about by immigration has also been met with some corresponding adaptability psycho-social challenges for the immigrants, especially the immigrant learners.

2.1.2 Acculturation

Central to the entire process of migration is the acculturation process that awaits immigrants on arrival at the new environment. Acculturation refers to changes that take place as a result of contact with culturally different people, groups, and social influences (Gibson, 2001). It is the cultural change that results from the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems (Social Science Research Council, 1954). Acculturation research has focused largely on refugees, asylum seekers, sojourners, immigrants, expatriates, and indigenous and so-called ethnic minorities (Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga & Szapocznik, 2010). Rudmin (2003) argued that the similarity between the receiving culture and the migrant's heritage culture can help to determine how much acculturation is needed to adapt to the receiving culture.

The acculturation process involves four different acculturation strategies namely: assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization (Berry, 1980). These strategies depend on the extent to which the individual balances the two issues of the original culture maintenance and contact with the new culture (Sam & Berry, 2010).

Assimilation is the strategy used when individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and seek close interaction with other cultures (or in some cases adopt the cultural values, norms,

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and traditions of the new society). The separation strategy is defined by individuals who place a high value on holding on to their original culture and avoid interaction with members of the new society. The integration strategy is used by individuals with an interest in maintaining one's original culture while having daily interactions with other groups— there is some degree of cultural integrity maintained, while at the same time they seek, as a member of an ethnocultural group, to participate as an integral part of the larger social network (Sam & Berry, 2010). Recent studies have suggested that Berry's integration category is often associated with the most favourable psychosocial outcomes such as better adjustment (e.g., show higher self-esteem, lower depression, pro-social behaviours; Chen, Benet-Martı´nez, & Bond, 2008; Schwartz, Zamboanga, & Jarvis, 2007) and are better able to integrate competing tenets from the different cultures to which they are exposed (Benet-Martı´nez & Haritatos, 2005; Tadmor, Tetlock & Peng, 2009).

The marginalization strategy is defined by little possibility or lack of interest in cultural maintenance (often for reasons of enforced cultural loss) and little interest in having relations with others (often for reasons of exclusion or discrimination).

In my opinion, these four acculturation strategies have a significant bearing on the immigrant learners' adaptation. The process of adapting involves the learners' quest to acclimatise and learning to fit into the broader group. This is the beginning of the acculturation process since they may take years to become fully acculturated. The role of acculturation in the psychosocial adjustment of the immigrant learners is further expanded upon in this chapter.

2.2   THE PSYCHOSOCIAL THEORY AND IDENTITY FORMATION

This study focuses on middle childhood**.** The psychosocial theory as the backbone of the study theorises that personality development progresses through stages. The child at each stage resolves some conflicts pertaining to needs and feelings and external obstacles. The satisfactory resolution of these conflicts leads to a healthy personality and a productive lifestyle (Bukatko & Dehler, 2004). Erikson (1950) outlined eight stages of development. Each stage identifies an important mode of adapting to the environment. According to Erikson, society plays a critical

role in shaping and forming reality for the child. Communities create their own demands and set their own criteria for socialising the child. Cultures differ vastly in the requirements imposed on children, yet they must adapt to their own cultural regulations. Thus Erikson highlights the child's composite need to initiate adaptive modes of functioning while meeting the variety of demands framed by the society in which the child lives.

The common theme underlying the various features of Erikson's theory is the search for identity, or the acceptance of both self and one's society (Bukatko & Dehler, 2004). The child is viewed as actively in search of an identity although the psychosocial stages are common in every individual in every culture. The success with which each stage is negotiated can vary dramatically from one individual to another and from one society to another. The theory is not specifically focused on individual difference in development, but offers many insights into how and why these differences might come about. The theory links social, emotional and cognitive development in the individuals' efforts to achieve identity. For example, a sense of industry reflects intellectual competences as well as ability to interact effectively with others and discovering one's identity requires the integration of an individual's psychological skills and competences.

Erikson (1963), in his psychosocial theory of development, describes middle childhood as a stage of industry versus inferiority. During this stage, the child attends a place where informal instruction takes place and issues of competency arise. The child compares him- or herself against his peers. Children who feel inferior to their peers develop a sense of inferiority, and those who achieve and develop confidence about what they can achieve, become industrious (Ntshangase, 2006). According to Erikson, this stage, on one hand, is the time when a child must master important social and educational skills. As the children encounter the challenges of school, positive outcomes lead to personal valuing and a sense of competency or industry is instilled into the child. It is at this stage that the child acquires social and academic skills to feel self-assured. On the other hand, negative outcomes lead to a sense of failure and feelings of inferiority. During this stage, teachers and peers are significant environmental and social agents (Goldstein, 1994; Shaffer, 2002).

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The social messages that the children receive as they interact with the environment play an important role in developing the child's self-concept. The middle childhood period could be regarded as a sensitive period for the development of the self-concept because specific kinds of experiences have significant consequences for its development (Louw, Van Ede, Ferns, Schoeman, Wait, 1998). Children of school-going age begin to define themselves in psychological terms; they develop the concept of who they are (i.e. the real self) and also of how they would like to be (i.e. the ideal self) (Ntshangase, 2006). Freud suggests that the ideal self develops with the super-ego, for instance, as much as they can define themselves according to the norms they have learned, and it helps them control their impulses so that they can be seen to be the 'good' person they would like to be (Louw *et al*., 1998).

Children at this stage develop a sense of their own competencies, the things they are good at and the things they feel unable to do. This is derived partly from what others tell them and partly from comparing themselves to others, be it in athletics, completing puzzles, reading or sewing. These competencies, as well as the degree of liking or respect that others show towards them, are likely to contribute to their self-esteem (Tyson, 1987). This stage is viewed as a period of greater emotional maturity. Children are seen as having outgrown the period of helplessness and are expected to be independent and self-sufficient. This implies a period of greater emotional flexibility and greater emotional differentiation (Louw *et al*., 1998). In elaboration, although children at this stage are better able to express their emotions, social gender-role stereotyping often prevents such expression. Boys, for instance, are often taught not to cry and not to show fear, while girls are often criticised if they become aggressive. Such gender stereotyping has the potential of preventing children from exploring and experimenting with their full repertoire of emotions (Louw *et al*., 1998). The resultant 'bottling up' of emotions, particularly among boys, is established as a potential contributing factor in mood disorder among children (Kaplan, Sadock, 1998).

This places the school in the position of a powerful agency of socialisation during middle childhood. Schools are sites where cultural values and norms that will be adhered to are treasured for years and formally transmitted. One of the purposes of school is to extend the socialisation process begun by the family. At school the child is expected to relate to new forms of authority,

namely teachers; follow a new set of rules; make new friends; and learn to get along with those who are not his or her friends. The child is also expected to develop interest in the acquisition of knowledge in a formal and structured manner (Ntshangase, 2006). Ultimately, the school provides the child with the knowledge and skills necessary for social and economic adjustment (Behr *et al*., in Mwamwenda, 2004). As such there is an agreement that the social factors such as home and school environment contribute substantially to the child's development (Ntshangase, 2006).

Immigrant learners are confronted by a variety of social factors which are more demanding. In addition, immigrant learners can be viewed as special learners as they will be trying to fit into the new society. The inclusion process is a complex, multidimensional and controversial concept (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Though there are different interpretations of inclusion in view of immigrant learners, what is important and expected is for the learners to receive more equitable and quality education and for the learners to feel and experience that they are part of the community. A sense of belonging is something that immigrant learners long to have.

Inclusion in a broader sense is about developing an inclusive community and education system. It is based on the value system that invites and celebrates differences and diversity arising from gender, nationality, race, language, socio-economic background, cultural origin and level of educational achievement (Ainscow, 2009; Artiles & Kozleski, 2007).

There are theories that give background information and some guidance in including immigrant learners and assisting such learners to have better experiences and get proper learning support. Theory can be defined as a set of assumptions and concepts ordered in such a way that it tells us about the world, ourselves or an aspect of reality (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Theory, however, is not synonymous with 'recipe' or 'prescription' (Green, 2001). The part of theory presented here forms the background for understanding the social developmental growth of children in the light of the effects of changing the context or environment in the middle childhood stage (Erikson).

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Bronfenbrenner (1979) has argued that children's development is influenced not only by the family system but also by other institutions with which the child and family interact. Moreover, people and contexts are not viewed as static but as continually evolving, one as the function of the other and vice versa. The emphasis moves away from static unidirectional influences to person process–context interactions over time. In our case, a child of an immigrant family is not seen as passive but as an active and selective agent, who brings his or her own aspirations and expectations regarding his or her education into the situation. Consequently, individual differences within the same context (e.g., school) are expected as a function of the particular processes in which each individual participates in his or her interactions with that context (García Coll, Szalacha & Palacios, 2005; García Coll & Marks, 2009)

2.3   BRONFENBRENNER'S BIO-ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

There is a need to understand the complexity of the influences, interactions and interrelationships between the individual learners and multiple other systems that are connected to the learner from an ecological systems theory or systems change perspective (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Bronfenbrenner's model is an example of a multidimensional model of human development. The model suggest that there are layers or levels of interacting systems resulting in change, growth and development, such as physical, biological, psychological, social and cultural. What happens in one system affects and is affected by other systems. Swart and Pettipher (2011) summed it up by saying that relationships among causes are reciprocal and multifaceted. Multidimensional models are useful in describing developmental as well as complex casual processes involved in many other kinds of change. In this study Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model of development has relevance in emphasising the interaction between an individual's development and systems within the social context. Immigration can be viewed as rooted in the range of systems. With reference to the study the model can help in understanding and exploring the development of the immigrant learner in terms of his/her psychosocial growth within the new environmental context or within the school system. It can also help in identifying the protective factors that can contribute to resilience. Subsequently, understanding the origins, maintenance and solution to the risk factors and psychosocial adjustment challenges, on the one hand, and the

protective factors, on the other, cannot be separated from the broader social context and the systems within it, including the individual (Swart & Pettipher, 2011).

2.3.1   Key elements of Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model

In trying to highlight the developmental growth of children, Bronfenbrenner in his bio-ecological theory emphasises that a person's development is the product of a network of interactions in the form of cultural, social and economic and not merely psychological factors. Central to Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological perspective are four interacting dimensions that need to be considered to understand human development or any other changes in context (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). The interacting dimensions are proximal processes, person characteristics, systems/context and time (chronosystem). Within these dimensions there is definition of properties or assumptions of the bio-ecological perspectives. The first assumption is that human development takes place through a process of progressively more complex reciprocal interaction between an active, evolving biopsychological human and the persons, objects and symbols in its immediate environment (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994). To be effective, these interactions or proximal process ought to occur regularly over extend periods of time (Swart & Pettipher, 2011).

The second assumption proposes that the effectiveness of proximal processes is a joint function of the biopsychosocial characteristics of the individual and immediate and distant environments in which the process occurs, and development outcome being examined. The third assumption specifies the role of proximal processes in actualising genetic potential for effective development and functioning. Proximal processes serve as "mechanisms for actualising genetic potential for effective psychological development" (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994, p. 572). The theory places a significant amount of emphasis on processes, person characteristics, context and time. Swart and Pettipher (2011) clarified the four dimensions of Bronfenbrenner's theory and highlighted that the dimensions are in constant interaction with each other.

2.3.1.1 Proximal process

Development takes place when there is person-environment interaction. Proximal processes constitute the core of the model and have been specifically described as referring to "particular forms of interaction between organism and the environment … that operate over time and are posited as the primary mechanism producing human development" (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 994). These proximal processes (enduring forms of interactions) need to involve progressively more complex reciprocal relationship and interaction between an active individual and the persons, objects and symbols in his or her immediate environment. For the interactions to be effective they must occur on a regular basis and over extended periods of time so as to become more complex. This view has been influenced by Vygotsky's (1978) work, which argued that developmental functions first appear on the inter-psychological plane with participation in cultural activities with more knowledgeable others. The question is whether immigrant learners will have the opportunity, as they had before they migrated, to change the context and encounter a new set of knowledgeable others. Further examples of enduring patterns of proximal processes can be found in parent-child and peer-peer activities, group solitary play, reading and learning new skills (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). However, viewed from the bio-ecological perspective, proximal processes on their own cannot produce effective understanding of the experiences of immigrant learners in the new environment. They are guided and fuelled by the characteristics of person and context.

2.3.1.2 Person characteristics

There are three types of person characteristics which are said to be instrumental in shaping the course of future development through the ability to influence the direction and power of proximal processes (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). *Dispositions* are forces which can mobilise proximal processes and sustain their operation or, conversely, interfere with, limit or even prevent their occurrence. Examples of these different types of dispositions include feelings of insecurity, shyness, unresponsiveness or, by contrast, feelings such as curiosity and responsiveness to initiatives by others (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Ecological resources consist of bio-psychological liabilities and assets that influence the capacity of the person to engage

effectively in proximal processes. *Demand and characteristics* are so called due to their capacity to provoke or discourage reactions from the social environment that either foster or disrupt psychological processes of growth. These characteristics include an open immigrant learner and reserved learner. These person characteristics are in constant interaction with each other, thereby accounting for difference in the direction and power of resultant proximal processes and their development effects.

The persons' characteristics that shape the person's future are nested in the systems, ranging from micro to macro. Of importance is the definition of the microsystem to recognise significant others, apart from the developing individual as present and participating in the setting and also possessing distinctive person characteristics of temperament, personality, or systems of belief that influence development. Such characteristics can invite or inhibit engagement between the individual and significant others. A person's characteristics also need to be considered in a definition of the macrosystem. Systems of belief are developmentally instigative personal characteristics that are contextually bound. The development of one's characteristics as a person depends to a large extent on the options that are available or not in a given culture at a given time (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Bronfenbrenner's theory highlights what constitutes the macrosystem and also the importance and significance of this system for human development. Within the macrosystem, the micro-, meso- and exosystems share common patterns of characteristics, such as similar belief systems, social and economic resources, "hazards, life styles, opportunities, life course options, and patterns of social interchange that are imbedded in each of these systems" (Bronfenbrenner, 1992, p. 228).

2.3.1.3 Context

Bronfenbrenner (1970) explained the direct and indirect influences on the child's life by referring to the many levels of environment or context that influence a person's development. In a way these contexts play a role in the psychosocial experiences of immigrant learners.
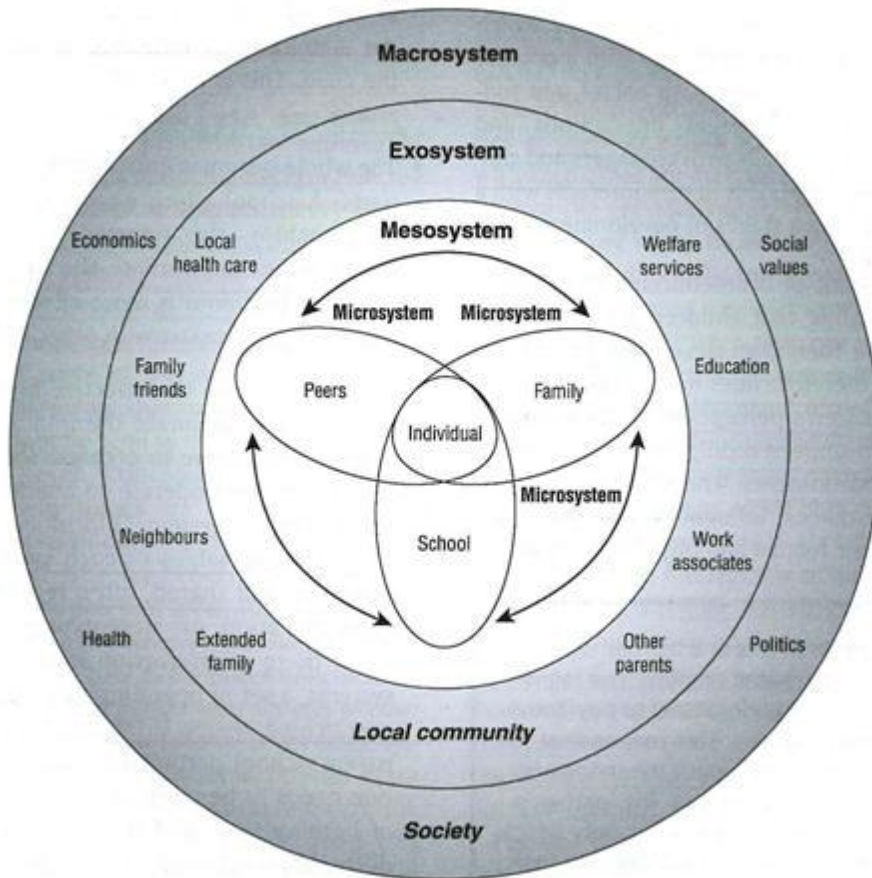
Figure 2.1: Ecosystemic model layout

Source: Swart & Pettipher, 2011, p. 13

Bronfenbrenner suggested that it is helpful to conceive of the social context or environment as "nested structures, each contained inside the next". These structures (also referred to as context, ecological levels or environmental systems) include the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem. These all interact with the chronosystem, a time dimension, as shown in Figure 2.1.

2.4   THE MICROSYSTEM

This system constitutes a pattern of activities, roles and interpersonal relations experienced between individuals and the system in which they actively participate, such as the family, the school or peer group. Proximal interactions, which are face-to-face, long-term relationships,

exist within the microsystem. Within the school system proximal interactions occur between the teacher, the learner, peers and parents. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2010) elaborated by saying that microsystems involve roles, relationship, and patterns of daily activities that shape many aspects of cognitive, social, emotional, moral and spiritual development. It is characterised by those individuals and events closest to one's life, such as the family. This system should support the child's feeling of belonging, love and support, and subsequently serve as a protective factor (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). This poses the question of how immigrant learners experience the transition from one microsystem to another. Grinberg and Grinberg (1989) comment that, in the early stage of migration, a person's mind is more occupied with the people and places him/her left behind than with what confronts him in the new place.

2.4.1 The mesosystem

The mesosystem is the linkage and process taking place between two or more settings. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2010) cited the example of a child who is not supported by family but may experience care and support from a neighbour, peer, or teacher. In this way, although the lack of support from the family may make the child anxious and insecure, interaction with the neighbour, peer or teacher may, over time, change the sense of insecurity. This may in turn change the interactions the child has at home.

2.4.2 The exosystem

The exosystem consists of the settings or events that do not directly involve the microsystem and mesosystem but still influence the operations within these systems. The learner is not involved directly as an active participant but may influence, or be influenced by, what happens in settings and relationships that directly influence the learner. Lerner (2005) observed that the parents' stress caused by either working long hours or retrenchment does not involve the learner directly, but can influence the quality of relationship with the learner and other microsystems in which the learner has proximal relationships, such as the peer group. In the case of immigrant learners, the parents may struggle to get new jobs which offer approximately the same remuneration as the

ones they had in their native country, which, in a way, may cause the parents to be stressed and this has some influence on the immigrant child.

2.4.3 The macrosystem

This refers to dominant social and economic structures and the attitudes, beliefs, values and ideologies inherent in the systems of a particular society and culture. The cultural values may include obeying authority and respecting senior members of the community. These values will influence the proximal interactions in the child's microsystem and probably in the whole mesosystem.

2.4.4 The chronosystem

The chronosystem incorporates the dimension of time and how it relates specifically to the interaction between the systems and their influences on individual development. In the early stage of migration, a person's mind is more occupied with the people and places left behind than with what confront him or her in the new place. Due to the duration of immigrant learners' stay in the host country and their experiences, this may change and they may get used to the new context.

2.5   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The framework focuses on the systematic practices relating to how one functions within an environment which is new and made up of new systems. The focus is on the person in context, examining characteristics of the individual, the context in which the individual is operating (both the local and the larger social structure), and their potential interaction. Each child is born with temperament. Temperament refers to an individual's characteristic manner of responding to the environment, and there are three types of temperament namely, 'easy' temperaments, 'difficult' temperaments and 'slow-to-warm up' temperaments (Thomas, Chess & Birch, 1970 cited in Ntshangase, 2006). These categories are based on children's differences in activity level, rhythmicity, approach-withdrawal, adaptability, and intensity of reaction, threshold of

responsiveness, quality of mood, distractibility and attention span. In a way children with easy temperaments are generally happy, adaptable, regular and easy to soothe. These kinds of children may experience fewer difficulties in the case they immigrate. Children with difficult temperaments adapt slowly. They are also easily distractible, inflexible, exhibit intense reactions and cry a great deal. Children with a slow-to-warm up temperament take some time to adjust to changes in their environment, but their reactions are not intense.

Physical growth and social development are interrelated. Based on their level of physical growth, the environment assigns children particular roles and has certain expectations of them. The framework presented here suggests a way of looking at and gaining insight into the psychosocial world of immigrant learners. It offers a method for structuring and systematising the inner and outer worlds of the immigrant by considering learners' past life experiences in the homeland, the current experiences in the new country, and how the combination of the two may influence their psychosocial development. This is illustrated in Figure 2.2.

2.6   MIDDLE CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE

The well-being of children in the middle years is significantly influenced by their families and by their experiences in school (Hanvey, 2007). This period generally marks children's first significant entrance into institutions beyond the family. Developmentally, this is a time of significant emotional, social, cognitive and physical development. Children in middle childhood learn new skills, make independent decisions, and increasingly control their own behaviour and emotions. This is a time when children move from being young and completely dependent on parents and caregivers, to venturing off to school for the first time, – to a young teen, soon to be headed for high school, spending more and more time away from home, and increasingly relying on the support and wisdom of their peers (Hanvey, 2007).

Immigrant situation

STATE OF BEING

- the stranger
- loniliness
- missing
- longing
- seperation and loss

sorrow
lonilines   language degradation
value degradation
inferiority
bitterness

ADAPTION CIRCLE

- arrival
- flashback

confrontation

REVEVANT BACKGROUND CONDITION

- age
- homeland
- climate
- religious background
- language

sex
environmental
culture
skin colour
education

TRANSITIONAL RELATED CONDITIONS

- previous homeland
- loss of society
- dream of return

lowered self-esteem
ambivalence

INDIVIDUAL AND ENVIROMENTAL ADAPTION

Figure 2.2: Individual and environmental adaptation

Source: Adapted from Kristal-Andersson, 2000

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The middle years for children are a particularly important stage in the developmental process, it is "that period in life when the child leaves the security of his or her family and independently enters the external world". Immigrant and refugee children are especially vulnerable during this period as they not only struggle with the usual tensions associated with growing up but also struggle with coming to a new country that can be significantly different from their own. Immigrant children may feel the effects of culture shock and refugees may suffer from trauma related ailments (Crowe, 2006). This is the time when children begin school, a key setting for learning how to participate in their wider communities, both as children and later as adults. Moreover, children and families increasingly navigate across multiple contexts, such as home, work, school, peers, sports, or religious activities. Still, families, in all their varied forms, continue to be one of the most influential contexts for children's development (Cooper, García Coll, Bartko, Davis & Chatman, 2005, p. 5).

In addition, forming a coherent identity begins in middle childhood, spurred on by growing cognitive sophistication. The shift leads to greater social comparison, greater demands for performance in school and at home, and children's increasingly differentiated view of themselves and their abilities, hopes, and fears.

This is a crucial stage in children's development, characterised by their first sustained encounters with different institutions and contexts outside of their family (Eccles, 1999). For most immigrant children in their middle years, schools are the first point of contact with their new world. The transition to new schools for immigrant children can be overwhelming and challenging. Many face different learning styles and systems of rules than those they are used to. Some children come from mono-cultural communities and must cope with coming to classrooms full of children from a diversity of cultures and backgrounds. In addition, many children have little or no knowledge of either official language (Crowe, 2006).

2.7   PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

A newly arrived immigrant is viewed as similar to a new baby who is exceedingly sensitive. There is need to feel welcome and acceptable, so that any arrangement that works out or person who shows any interest whatsoever and is cordial or sympathetic makes the immigrant feel loved. In the same way, a setback can make an immigrant feel rejected by the new surroundings. Thus, the first impression upon arrival in the host country has a great impact. The immigrant's reaction to the first impression depends on the nature of the immigrant's experiences in relation to their experiences at home. Individuals internalise objects that exacerbate paranoid features in response to the inevitable frustrations one finds along the way. If the immigrant's internal object bonds are predominantly conflictive in nature, he/she will most probably undergo serious regression, causing the immigrant to rely on primitive defence mechanisms of the paranoid-schizoid type which may result in loss of self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-confidence (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989). Consequently many immigrant families, especially children, experience psychological challenges in the form of stress.

According to Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco (2001), immigrant families experience a sense of euphoria in anticipation of migrating to a new country. This is caused by too many expectations, anticipated possibilities and the struggle to attend to the immediate needs of securing some accommodation, employment, in some cases, and enrolling the children in schools. This initial phase of migration is often accompanied by a variety of psychological problems such as mild sadness, depression and perpetual mourning due to the loss of loved ones and familiar contexts. The general dissonance in cultural expectations and the loss of predictable context will be experienced as anxiety and an acute disorientation. Others who had exaggerated expectations of opportunity and wealth are forced to touch base with reality. Furthermore, when expectations are coupled with a hostile reception in the new environment, this may lead to feelings of mistrust, suspicion, anger and even paranoia (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001).

Such a hostile reception in the new environment may include aspects of xenophobia. A number of studies suggest that many South Africans are uneasy about immigrants (Leggett 2003; Mattes,

Taylor, McDonald, Poore, & Richmond, 1999). A study by the South African Migration Project (SAMP) suggests that 25% of South Africans totally oppose immigration of any form and 45% favour strict immigration policy. Only 6% support an open door policy and about a fifth of the respondents support a more flexible immigration policy that takes into account the availability of jobs (Mattes *et al.*, 1999). This could have led to the unexpected sudden change of attitude towards foreigners by most host residents living in a township leading to the killing and eruption of violence against foreigners. This engagement in xenophobic behaviour against foreigners left many immigrant families, especially children, wondering why they left their nations. Some immigrant family members were, without doubt, left with acute psychological symptoms that could be treated while others still feel only transient discomfort and adapt to their circumstances with relative ease. It is therefore important to delve into the psychological experiences of immigrant learners in order to get first-hand information about their experiences in the host country.

2.7.1   Acculturation stress

Acculturation is defined as the process of interaction between cultures. That is, the exchange of cultural attitudes and behaviours that occur when people from different cultural backgrounds come into contact with one another. The process involves accommodation with eventual and irreversible assimilation into the dominant group (Berens, 2010). In as much as there is little agreement among scholars on what constitutes acculturation and its measurement, Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco identify a form of stress specific to immigration termed 'acculturation stress'. These authors define it as "the process of learning new cultural rules and interpersonal expectations," (2001, p. 73). While Hughes (1994) defines 'culture' as a socially transmitted system of ideas that: 1) shapes behaviour; 2) categorises perceptions; 3) gives names to selected aspects of experience; 4) is widely shared by members of a particular society or social group; 5) functions as an orientational framework to coordinate and sanction behaviour; and 6) convey values across the generations, the concept of acculturation describes the process of cultural change and adaptation that occurs when two or more ethnic groups come into contact with one another (Perreira & Ornelas, 2011). It is the exchange of cultural features that results

when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact; the original cultural patterns of either or both groups may be altered, but the groups remain distinct (Kottak, 2007). The concept of acculturation can easily be confused with enculturation, which describes the process of retaining distinct cultural identities, beliefs, and norms of behaviour that distinguish one ethnic group from another. Both influence child development (Perreira & Ornelas, 2011). Studies on how immigrants adjust to new cultural environments carried out especially in western countries suggest that acculturation is one of the dimensions that can be used to determine the extent of belonging among immigrant groups of children to their mainstream culture (Berry, 1995; LaFromboise Goleman, & Gerton 1993; Mouw & Xie, 1999; Yeh & Inose, 2003; Yeh, 2003).

Individuals learning a new culture may experience obstacles which seemingly are normal challenges in everyday life as events of strain due to adaptation to what might be a total new set of rules and habits (Berry, Kim, Minde & Mok, 1987). The challenge of adapting to a new cultural environment is specifically salient for migrant children from diverse cultural backgrounds as they are required to meet a variety of demands in the new society and school setting, such as learning the dominant language or dialect, learning the rules, norms and expectations of school, making new friends, and getting to know teachers and other school personnel (Morrison, Brown, D'Incau, O'Farrell & Furlong, 2006). These obstacles are viewed as daily hassles and may act as risk factors in developing mental health problems (Kanner, Coyne, Schaefer, & Lazarus, 1981). Part of the reasons for the possible experienced stress is the accommodation to a second culture in regard of individuals' identity.

The process of immigration causes intra-familial stressors that result from the process of acculturation, since family members frequently reach different levels of acculturation and family bonds can be threatened by conflicting acculturation responses. One of the functions of the parents in the family is to teach and to provide leadership and guidance in firm, but loving ways. This capacity can be weakened by immigration. Schools are an important site of cultural contact for immigrant children as they meet and converse with many other immigrant children who are likely to be members of other ethnic and racial groups. These children become their peers and this accelerates the child's absorption into the new culture, leading to the creation of conflict and

tension as the children become embarrassed by certain aspects of their parents who they start to regard as 'old-fashioned' (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). The children's increased exposure to the new culture often enables the children to learn the new language quicker than their parents. According to Rothe, Pumariega and Sabagh (2011), it is not usual for a disciplinary meeting to take place at school where the child in question serves as the translator between the parents and the school teacher or principal, thus undermining the hierarchical structure of the family and compromising the executive power of the parents in the eyes of the school authorities.

2.7.2 Identity formation and acculturation

Central to the process of acculturation lies the matter of establishing identity, which Erikson describes as a sense of knowing where one is going, and an inner openness to anticipated recognition from those who count (Shelley-Robinson, 2005). Researchers argue that the psychological wellbeing of immigrants will be affected by their sense of feeling of belonging to a particular ethnic group (Phinney & Chavira, 1992; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedder, 2001). Identity formation has been historically viewed as one of the principal tasks of the passage into adulthood. The concept of identity is composed of individual and social components and is closely related to the culture. Ethnic identity is developed as individuals become aware of other groups and of the ethnic differences between themselves and others, and these last-mentioned studies have shown that the combination of a strong ethnic identity and a strong identification with the host culture promotes the best adaptation.

Research on the psychological acculturation process since the acculturation model formulated by Berry and his colleagues (Berry,1990; Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989) has mainly focused on three elements: acculturation attitudes, that is, how immigrants wish to maintain their own identity and at the same time relate to other groups in the host society; the specific changes in their conduct or way of life in the new society; and finally, the stress caused by acculturation in terms of the difficulty experienced by individuals when confronted with their new situation. Luque, Fernández and Tejada (2006), guided by the Berry *et al.,* 1989 model, postulate that Berry proposes two independent attitudinal dimensions: whether immigrants consider their cultural identity and their customs sufficiently valuable to keep them in the host society and

whether the relationships with other people or groups in the host society are sufficiently valuable to seek and stimulate. The combination of the responses (yes or no) to these two dimensions produce a classic model in which the four possible attitudes of acculturation adopted by immigrants may be observed: integration (yes, yes), assimilation (no, yes), separation (yes, no) and marginalisation (no, no).

Identity formation is linked to the acculturation of immigrants to their host society. In the formation of identity, hybrids emerge depending on the experiences of immigrants in their host society (Asanova, 2005; Vandeyar, 2008). It has also been demonstrated that identity formation depends on the degree of affiliation of immigrants to home cultures and the transnational space enterprise existing between the two cultures. Two pertinent concepts in the formation of identity are that of the 'social mirror' and 'psychosocial passing' (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). Winicott (1971) suggests that a child's sense of self is profoundly shaped by the re-flections mirrored back to him by significant others. Psychosocial passing refers to people who seek to render invisible the visible differences between themselves and a desired or chosen reference group. The importance of learning culture-specific skills has been fronted as another challenge in the process of acculturation (Ward, 2001).These skills include gaining acculturation competence, learning the host language and the norms and values of this culture, and represents different challenges for the acculturating individual.

Although immigrants face challenges in the formation of identity, there has been a positive identity that immigrant children develop (Hemson, 2011). The identity that immigrant children have developed can distinguish them from the host country children and elevates them in relation to host country children (South Africa) through the adoption of an oppositional, broader and more cosmopolitan identity.

2.7.3   Self-esteem

Previous research studies have documented that migration appears to somehow affect the self-esteem of foreign students as this tends to be quite low (Giavrimis, Konstantiou & Hatzichristou 2003; Hatzichristou & Hopf, 1992, 1993; Palaiologou, 2007). This is probably due to the fact

that migration experiences destabilise children as they must not only learn to cope with the stresses of growing up but with moving to a new physical, social, and cultural environment (Aksel, 2007). As a result, modifications in terms of self-esteem are likely to occur during such transition periods. However, some scholars are of the opinion that migration can serve as a learning condition that enables people to reconstruct their perceptions and expectations by responding to altered social configurations. According to Kim (2010), in a study with adult participants, participation in social activities within the migrant society nurtured people's skills, such as their self-efficacy and esteem, intercultural capability, knowledge and awareness of cultural diversity and democratic attitude and civic virtue. This indicates that, for the continual social interaction and engagement with local people, migrant workers who moved across borders were likely to fall into disjuncture from social ties in the host society. Furthermore, immigrant adolescents' host-national orientation seems to be enhanced by being accepted and supported by teachers and peers in the school context, which, in turn, boosts self-esteem (Oppedal, 2006). According to Bakker, Elings-Pels and Reis (2009, migrant children may also suffer from various psychosocial difficulties including feelings of alienation, experiences of xenophobia, insecurity and depression.

2.7.4 Self-concept

Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934) were among the first to recognise the self as a product of social interaction and that we see ourselves as others see us. Cooley (1902) defined the self as "that which is designated in common speech by the pronouns of the first person singular, 'I', 'me', 'my', 'mine', and 'myself' [p. 1361". Cooley noted that what is labelled by the individual as self produces stronger emotions than what is labelled a non-self, and that it is only through subjective feelings that the self can be identified. The author believed that the feeling state is produced by the belief that one has control over events, or by cognitive discrimination, such as in noting that one's own body is different from other people's bodies. Cooley used the terms 'self-concept' and the 'looking-glass self' to convey the idea that self-concepts reflect the evaluations of other people in the environment.

Mead (1934) expanded on Cooley's looking-glass self by arguing that the self-concept arises in social interaction as an outgrowth of the individual's concern about how others react to him. In order to anticipate other people's reactions so that they can behave accordingly, the individual learns to perceive the world as they do. By incorporating estimates of how the 'generalised other' would respond to certain actions, the individual acquires a source of internal regulation that serves to guide and stabilise his or her behaviour in the absence of external pressures. According to Mead, there are as many selves as there are social roles. Some of the roles are relatively broad and of considerable significance for the individual, whereas others are specific to particular situations, and of little significance as personality variables.

Self-concept is the cognitive or thinking aspect of self (related to one's self-image and self-esteem) and generally refers to "the totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence" (Purkey, 1988). Self-concept may be defined as the totality of perceptions that each person has of himself. This self-identity plays an important role in the psychological functioning of everyone. Self-concept refers to a multidimensional concept, which involves neurophysiologic as well as psychological components. Sometimes, a distinction is made between self-concept, which is what one thinks about one's self, and self-esteem, which is the positive or negative evaluation of one's self (how one feels about oneself). Marsh, Parada and Ayotte (2004), however, state that researchers have commonly used the terms self-concept and self-esteem interchangeably in mental health research.

Self-concept is considered an important psychological attribute and is thought to be associated with mental health. Numerous empirical studies have demonstrated the importance of self-concept for children's psychological growth (Lau & Kong, 1999 cited in Liu, Sun, Zhang, Wang & Guo, 2010; Pope & Ward, 1997). Low self-concept is seen in various psychiatric disorders. A study showed that there was a strong relationship between self-concept and loneliness (Lau & Kong, 1999).

Studies have demonstrated differences in levels of self-concept and body-concept between boys and girls (Demarest & Allen, 2000; Garner, 1997; Kearny-Cooke, 1999; Muth & Cash, 1997;

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Smolak, 2004). Adolescent girls tend to evaluate their physical as well as their intellectual capacities in a more negative way and put more attention to their appearances (Kearny-Cooke, 1999; Muth & Cash, 1997). However, girls' general self-concept does not differ from that of boys possibly due to perceptions in other areas of self-concept that compensate for the lower physical aspect (Bowker, Gadbois & Cornock, 2003).

2.7.5 Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to "people's judgements of their capabilities to organise and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances. It is not only concerned with the skills one has but with judgements of what one can do with whatever skills one possesses" (Bandura, 1986, p. 391). Bandura (1977, 1997) formally defined perceived self-efficacy as personal judgments of one's capabilities to organise and execute courses of action to attain designated goals, and he sought to assess its level, generality, and strength across activities and contexts. The *level* of self-efficacy refers to its dependence on the difficulty of a particular task, such as spelling words of increasing difficulty; *generality* pertains to the transferability of self-efficacy beliefs across activities, such as from algebra to statistics; *strength* of perceived efficacy is measured by the amount of one's certainty about performing a given task (Zimmerman, 2000).

There four main sources of self-efficacy development are enactive master experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective state (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy measures focus on *performance capabilities* rather than on personal qualities, such as one's physical or psychological characteristics.

One of the closest constructs to self-efficacy is *self-concept*. Self-efficacy is a more general self-descriptive construct that incorporates many forms of self-knowledge and self-evaluative feelings (Marsh & Shavelson, 1985). The latter self-concept measures emphasise *self-esteem reactions* by posing self-evaluative questions, such as "how good are you in English?" By contrast, self-efficacy items focus exclusively on task-specific *performance expectations*, such as "how certain are you that you can diagram this sentence?"

2.8   FACTORS AFFECTING ADAPTATION CULTURE

There are many and diverse definitions of culture. For some researchers, culture consists of the values, motives, and moral/ethical rules and meanings that form part of a social system. For others, culture comprises not only values and ideas, but the complete set of institutions within which humans live. Some perceive culture as consisting of learned ways of thinking and behaving, while others emphasise genetic influences on the repertoire of cultural traits. Finally, some researchers see culture as consisting exclusively of thoughts or ideas, while others maintain that culture consists of thoughts and ideas, as well as associated activities (Harris, 1999). Durham (1991), along with a majority of contemporary anthropologists, insists that a distinction must be drawn between culture and human behaviour. Culture consists exclusively of shared and socially transmitted ideational or mental entities, such as values, ideas, beliefs and the like "in the minds of human beings" (op. cit., p. 3). Culture is "the fabric of meaning in terms of which human beings interpret their experience and guide their action" (Geertz, 1973, p. 144-5). However, Harris's own view is "that a culture is the socially learned ways of living found in human societies and that it embraces all aspects of social life, including both thought and behaviour" (Harris 1999, p. 19).

A change in culture could cause psychological dissonance in an immigrant. Mead (1934), in an anthropological study, discussed the implications of cultural change for personality development, and suggested that the migrant is a culturally disoriented person, subject to special strains that intensify psychic conflicts. At the same time, the immigrant is bereft of the cultural means for reducing these tensions. Cultural disorientation appears to be temporary, but is sometimes permanently experienced by each individual, of different ages, in unique and specific ways during different times in his/her life in the new country. Cultural disorientation also seems to complicate and intensify other psychological conflicts (Kristal-Andersson, 2000).

During acculturation, gaining competence within the ethnic and/or host culture is assumed to increase adaptation within the current cultural domain and in this way function as a protective factor in terms of mental health. Host and ethnic culture competence are viewed as acculturation-specific protective factors that may be beneficial for a healthy adaptation (Oppedal, Røysamb, &

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Heyerdahl, 2005). Oppedal, Røysamb and Sam (2004) reported that higher levels of ethnic cultural competence have been related to lower levels of depression. Host culture competence has been found to increase the feeling of acceptance and acknowledgements as part of the mainstream society and in this sense strengthens adaptation. Having a sense of belonging to and understanding of the different cultures in which one is part of can therefore be seen as strength for the youth. In a society becoming more and more culturally diverse, young people's competence in navigating in and between different cultures should be viewed as a considerable resource for future working life and for decreasing cultural discrepancies and conflicts.

Oppedal, Røysamb and Heyerdahl (2005) acknowledged that the process of acculturation includes issues of both host culture orientation and own ethnic group culture retention and that these dimensions should be studied separately. It is viewed that looking at how one adjusts to a foreign country in terms of acculturation is idiosyncratic in nature. The child's developmental niche is described as consisting of multiple socio-cultural settings in which interaction is characterised mainly by the majority society's culture or by ethnic minority group culture (Sam & Oppedal, 2002). Culture competencies involve knowledge and skills and the inculcation of culturally saturated patterns of behaviour and meaning systems which are organised in terms of cognitive schemas or cultural working models (D'Andrade, 1992). Culture competence is presumably acquired as a result of participation and interaction within the respective socio-cultural domains and motivation to gain acceptance and succeed within these.

The degree to which the travelling was enforced (e.g. refugees) or voluntary (e.g. labour immigrants) is supposed to affect adjustment and wellbeing after resettlement. It is also believed that the greater the cultural distance between the sending and receiving countries, the more challenging is the acculturation experience (Ward, 2001; Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2001). In the society of resettlement, attitudes and behaviours towards immigrants in general and specific groups in particular, immigration policy, economic and other political issues are among the factors that may influence not only the psychological adaptation of immigrants, but also their attitudes towards social participation and contact across ethnic groups (Berry & Sam, 1997; Berry 1997; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedder, 2001; Virta, Sam & Westin, 2004). On the community level, ecological factors such as the ratio of minority to majority population and

number of co-ethnics are found to be related to intra-group variation in mental health of minority adolescents (Kvernmo & Heyerdahl, 1998; Neto, 2002).

Levitt, Levitt, Bustos, Crooks, Hodgetts, Milevsky, Lane, Perez and Pierre (2005) conducted a study to determine the predictors of self-perceptions and adjustment over time in 512 newly immigrant children and adolescents from Argentina, Colombia, Cuba, Haiti, and the West Indies. The authors reported that exposure to discrimination, economic hardships, and family acculturation conflicts were linked to diminished self-perceptions (self-concept and ethnic identity) and poorer adjustment (depression and psychological symptoms). Some effects varied by age and country of origin.

With regard to the effect of victimisation on adjustment, there is a general consensus among researchers that being victimised by one's peers is associated with a range of negative psychosocial consequences. Youths who are frequently bullied by their peers frequently experience loneliness, low self-esteem, depression and social anxiety (Graham & Juvonen, 2002). McKenney, Pepler, Craig and Connolly (2006) explored the peer victimisation experiences of immigrant youth in Canada and found out that youths who reported being bullied because of their ethnicity had higher rates of adjustment difficulties both at the time or one year later.

2.9   ADJUSTMENT AND GENDER

In terms of gender, findings were congruent with the general literature on gender differences. Girls had better school adjustment than boys, and boys reported better psychological adaptation than girls (Berry *et al*., 2006). A critical difference between boys and girls is in the realm of social relationships. Social relationships serve a number of crucial functions, including: providing a sense of attachment and support within trusting relationships; inculcating aspirations, goals, and values; and conferring status and identity, among others (Stanton-Salazar, 2001). In particular, relationships within schools provide several forms of support critical to academic outcomes, including access to knowledge about academic subjects, college, the labour market,

and how bureaucracies operate, as well as advocacy; role modelling; and advice (Stanton-Salazar, 2001).

In a series of elegant studies of Mexican-American adolescent social networks within schools, Stanton-Salazar (2001) found that, although boys were more likely to report family cohesiveness and supportive parental relationships, their school-based relationships were less supportive. Boys were less likely to be "engaged with teachers and counsellors. Furthermore, boys appeared to communicate less compared to girls, which forced them to infer the meaning of an agent's words and actions, usually from a position of little trust" (Stanton-Salazar, 2001, p. 203).

2.10 SOCIAL EXPERIENCES

The reaction of a host citizen towards the immigrant has diverse influences on how the new immigrant settles in and adapts. The native community also feels the impact of the newcomer as the newcomer's presence modifies the group structure, throws doubt on the community's moral, political, or scientific group rules, and can destabilise the existing group organisation. Therefore, the natives will find it difficult to neutralise and incorporate the presence of a stranger in their midst. It is not only the immigrant who feels their identity has been endangered; in a different way the community on the receiving end may feel that its cultural identity, the purity of its language, its beliefs, and its sense of group identity are also threatened (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989). To illustrate this, Bion's (1970) model on the relation between contained-container can be cited. The model tries to clarify the different dynamics that can occur in the interaction between the immigrant and the receptor of the group.

The model originally was applied to show the various possibilities for the development of the new idea, or the individual who nourishes the idea, in relation to the establishment that receives the idea. The dynamic interaction between the individual and the new idea (the immigrant), on the one hand, and the environment (host country), on the other, in Bion's view, qualifies as a catastrophic change that can in differing degrees disrupt the structure and composition of the group. The immigrant, with all his baggage and personality traits, represents the 'new idea-contained', which may receive diverse response from the container-receptor group. Extremes

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range from enthusiastic appearance to outright rejection. Migration constitutes a catastrophic change to the extent that certain structures become transformed into others, and in the process of change there are periods of pain, disorganisation, and frustration; if these are overcome and worked through, the changes offer the possibility of true growth and enriched development of the personality (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1989). According to Bakker, Elings-Pels and Reis (2009), migrant children suffer from various psychosocial difficulties which include feelings of alienation, experiences of xenophobia, insecurity and depression.

2.11 EDUCATION

The relationship between migration and education is gaining increasing attention in the literature on children's and young people's migration (e.g., Adams & Kirova, 2006; Hashim, 2005). This is partly fuelled by international pressure over the past decade to get more children educated as spelt out in the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, September 2000). In terms of education, migrant children often face difficulties due to language barriers, stigmatisation and ridicule by native children, causing disadvantage in the school system. Adjusting to school life can be conceptualised as a multifaceted task involving adaptation to the intellectual, socio-emotional, and behavioural demands of the classroom and school. Concerning factors that influence school adjustment, organismic models suggest that innate characteristics explain continuity of behaviour, with contexts or relationships supporting, albeit passively, the progressive development of social, emotional, and cognitive competencies over time (e.g., Loevinger, 1976). At the other end of the continuum are socio-cultural perspectives for which environments play a critical role in development. These models posit that growth and learning cannot occur without environmental intervention (Wentzel, 1999).

Scholars believe that host language competence is at the centre of the acculturation process (De Verthelyi, 1995). In fact, successful communication is necessary in the development of feelings of psychological wellbeing and satisfaction with life. On the other hand, in a study of Iranians in Southern California, Barati-Marnani (1981) indicated that variables such as English proficiency and length of stay had no positive correlation with level of cultural assimilation. Furthermore, as Kagan and Cohen (1990) pointed out, the single factor that contributed to personal, social and

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cultural adjustment is speaking English at home. It has been found, in another study, that the use of good teaching skills and a good rapport between the teacher and students enabled immigrant students who were English language learners to have a vivid understanding and keen interest in learning at school (Salinas, Franquiz, & Reidel, 2008). Pearson-Evans (2000) in a study of Irish students in Japan contended: linguistic skills posed one level of difficulty, but interpreting non-verbal behaviour and the underlying communication rules, based on cultural values and cultural 'logic', were the most challenging problems they faced (p. 244).

While the characteristics of the host country, like religion and language, are different from the home country of the students, acculturation and therefore adjustment to the host country is very slow and not simple. Migrants from non-English-speaking countries, due to their lack of English skills, can be at higher risk of developing psychological problems in their English-speaking host country (Stuart, Klimidis & Minas, 1998). Lack of English fluency also restricts the development of new social contacts and a sense of belonging (Ying & Akutsu, as cited by Mehdizadeh & Scott, 2005).

In their study of immigrant students Matti-Stefundi, Pavlopulos, Obradovic and Masten (2008) highlight that such students may need educational support, since most do not know enough host country language to do well in their classes. Yet schools provide little or no support to immigrant students and do not in practice recognise the needs of this multicultural population. Parents from Albania work long hours and cannot help their children with homework. Hence immigrant youths have been consistently found to have significantly lower school adjustment than their native classmates, but do not differ from them in their psychological well-being (Matti-Stefanidi *et al*., (2008). It has been reported in the literature that children who do poorly in school may begin to devalue school achievement and to disengage themselves from school-related activities and feedback as a way to protect their self-esteem. In any case, teacher beliefs and expectations are important because these often shape how teachers behave toward students, which may have a significant effect on students' learning and wellbeing (Eccles, 2004).

2.12   LANGUAGE

According to Yeh, Okubo, Ma, Shea, Ou and Pituc (2008, p. 784), "acculturation is not only a time to learn new norms and values, and to adopt salient reference groups of the host society, but is a process that includes the ability to grow beyond the original culture and encompass a new culture". Hence, communication is crucial to the adjustment process, and language is the fundamental means of effective communication, an important tool for social interaction and for retrieving information in daily life.

A recent study conducted by Gebre, Maharaj and Pillay (2011) with Ethiopian immigrants in Durban in South Africa indicate that Ethiopian immigrants have not integrated into the local community due to the host language competence problem. It can be deduced from the aforementioned studies that issues pertaining to language are very sensitive to the acculturation process and the 'belongingness' of immigrants at school (Soto, 1997; Wang & Phillion, 2007). Language acquisition and command of a second or foreign language is a factor which influences pupil's general school achievement. Children coming from a foreign country, usually when they initially attend the school of the host country, appear to have learning and psychosocial difficulties which, to a great degree are due to the difficulties they experience during the process of learning a second or foreign language. An encouraging issue is that Greek pupils were eager to build friendships with their immigrant classmates, though the latter contended that when they first attended a Greek school they experienced exclusion and isolation from the Greeks (Palaiologou, 2007). This indicates a need to improve educational opportunities and chances for immigrant pupils in order to improve their grasp of the second language, while maintaining their mother tongue.

In South Africa, immigrants also experienced challenges when teachers code-switched during teaching in order to ensure that the local black students fully understood what was being taught. The majority of immigrant students were extremely aggrieved and agitated by this practice (Vandeyar, 2010). Vandeyar (2010) further reported that, in all of the research sites, English was used as a means of instruction; however, in the one school that had a majority of Black immigrant students, indigenous students and the teacher code-switched to an indigenous

language [Sepedi]. Thus, Anglophone students were disadvantaged and Francophone students were doubly disadvantaged. Language became a tool of exclusion on the classroom floor and the school grounds. Indigenous Black students as well as Indian students felt a sense of power over Black immigrant students in terms of language. For the Black indigenous students it was the indigenous language and for the Indian students it was the English language. Further, code-switching was used by local Black learners during breaks to entrench social exclusion. Many local Black learners utilised the power of the indigenous languages to exclude immigrant students from their social networks. During the breaks one could witness pockets of ethnic groups intensely engaged in casual conversations through the use of indigenous languages. Immigrant learners do not only face the changes of learning new language but there is an enormous loss of an environment in which one primarily hears one's mother tongue, hence this has a negative impact on psychological, emotional and identity development (Kogan, 2010). However, immigration is not always a catastrophic change: it can develop into a true catastrophe. Whether it becomes one or the other depends in great part on the interaction between the contained and the container.

2.13   XENOPHOBIA

Lubbe (2008, p.1) vividly described the xenophobic incidents against foreigners that took place in South Africa:

> It was on Sunday 11 May 2008 that xenophobia became a tangible and embarrassing reality in South Africa. What has been simmering under the surface for at least 15 years, suddenly exploded in the streets of the Alexandra Township near Johannesburg? Mobs of angry residents took to the streets to launch attacks on legal and illegal immigrants. Shacks in informal settlements were plundered, property was stolen and people were assaulted. More attacks occurred elsewhere around Johannesburg.

According to Osman (2009), xenophobia is a problem in the school environment, although the severity may vary. Xenophobia is defined in the Concise Oxford Dictionary as a "morbid dislike of foreigners" (Crush & Pendleton, 2007, p. 66). Hostility is directed at Africans from other countries north of South Africa's borders. This kind of behaviour has been attributed to the fact that locals are afraid of economic competition, increase in crime, and loss of identity or acculturation. They often feel insecure because of the threat posed by the 'outsiders'. The level

of fear usually varies based on the socio-economic, educational, and employment status of the residents (Landau, 2005). The general reason for engaging in xenophobic behaviour is that locals from poor economic backgrounds usually develop a stereotype that their economic wellbeing is at risk because of foreigners as they are believed to take up all the jobs (Raijman, Schammah Gesser & Kemp, 2003). Immigrants are easily identifiable due to their physical features, distinct dress and inability to speak an indigenous language (Morris, 1999). The levels of prejudice and discrimination against immigrant learners appear to be severe and persistent. Furthermore, the interaction between South African and immigrant learners is highly segregated and can be described as pluralistic, since the minority group seeks some degree of separation from the larger group despite being treated equally by the educators. No matter how long the immigrants were living in the country, they still felt alienated as they encountered xenophobic behaviour from South Africans (Osman, 2009). Vandeyar (2010) further asserts that the immigrant students in the South African context also have to contend with discrimination and harassment, which is largely in terms of intra-black dynamics, while they struggle with issues of language, curriculum and instructional strategies that do not address their cultural or linguistic background and they feel a sense of alienation rather than one of belonging. These findings are in significant contrast with the literature in terms of the aspects of psychosocial passing, agency, identity and language as a tool of exclusion. Black immigrant students have different stories to tell regarding the way race affects their life experiences.

The immigrants' acculturation stress that had emanated from the host South African xenophobic behaviour was calmed by the intervention of the Nobel peace laureate and struggle icon Bishop Desmond Tutu's voice of reason which permeated the minds of the xenophobic perpetrators as reflected in the statement below:

> Please, stop. Please, stop the violence now. This is not how we behave. These are our brothers and sisters … The world is shocked and is going to laugh at us and mock us. We are disgracing our struggle heroes. Our children will condemn us in the future. (The Sowetan, 20 May, 2008)

2.14   CONCLUSION

This chapter has presented a review of some of the relevant literature on experiences of immigrants in different countries as a way to get a better understanding of some of the experiences that immigrants go through. The previous studies indicate that immigrant learners and their families encounter numerous challenges in the form of acculturation stress, adjustment as well as other identified stressors that new immigrants face in a new country. The immigrant learners, in particular, also encounter challenges at school which may influence their learning performance. These challenges involve the issue of language competence, victimisation and xenophobic practices in the South African schools. These immigration challenges have repercussions for the learners' identity formation, development and psychosocial welfare.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter two unpacked some of the previous studies on immigrants' experiences in different countries. Most of these studies did not concentrate on a particular age group but looked at the general experiences of immigrants. The primary focus of the present study is to understand the psychosocial experiences of immigrant learners aged between eight and twelve who have had some prior learning in at least the first grade in their native country before immigrating to South Africa. The researcher intends to highlight the psychosocial meaning the immigrant learners attach to their day to day living in the host country from their own point of view. This can be achieved through a process of interpretive activity (Smith & Osborn, 2008). This chapter focuses on the research methodology used and the nature of the study.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The basic interpretive research design which falls within the interpretive/qualitative paradigm was chosen for this study. According to Babbie and Mouton (2004), a research design is a blueprint of how the researcher proposes to conduct the research. It is therefore a plan that describes how the researcher intends to structure the research problem and how he/she focuses on the type of study selected, as well as on desired results (Mouton, 2004). With this design, knowledge arises through acting and interacting of self-reflective beings (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In trying to understand the meaning migrant learners have attached to their experiences, the researcher interacted with participants in order to have an in-depth understanding of the participants' perspectives on life in a foreign country and to present the research findings in a narrative way.

There are four principles which contribute towards design coherence and assist in answering the research questions (Durrheim, 2006). These are the purpose of the research, the context in which it takes place, the research paradigm, and the techniques used. These are discussed below.

3.3   CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The study was confined to a selected school in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. This school enrols learners of many nationalities. Most of the foreign learners are children of students at a local university. The school has a sizeable number of learners from Nigeria, the DRC, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Namibia, among several others. The study did not include local participants, teachers or immigrant learners' parents as no attached meaning was required.

3.4   RESEARCH PARADIGM

A paradigm is "a basic set of beliefs that guides action" (Guba, 1990 in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 22). Paradigms are complex, integrated systems which cannot be seen in isolation from their epistemology, ontology and methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 22; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 6). The paradigm plays a role in research design as it affects the nature of the research problem and the way in which the problem is explored. Ontology, epistemology and methodology are interrelated components that elaborate on the definition of a research paradigm. Ontology can be defined as the characteristics or nature of the reality in question, while epistemology refers to the relationship and interaction between the researcher and the knowledge which exists but needs to be 'discovered'. Methodology, on the other hand, is the way in which the researcher approaches this unknown and attempts to bring it into the known.

In the present study, the interpretive paradigm was employed. The interpretive paradigm emphasises that the world in social phenomena has different meanings, that is, there are multi-realities that people attach to phenomena, depending on the context as well as the richness of language. The researcher was interested in understanding the meaning immigrant learners attach to their school experiences in the host country. In other words, the interpretive paradigm is based on the premise that reality is socially constructed as people's experiences occur within social,

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cultural, historical or personal contexts (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011). Research conducted within this paradigm views reality as subjective, and as constructed by the individuals involved (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). Knowledge is gained through an inductive, hypothesis- or theory-generating manner of inquiry and the process relies on interacting methodologies, such as interviews and participant observations (Merriam, 2002).

The main concern of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the phenomenon of interest from the participants' perspective instead of the researcher's perspective. This enabled the researcher to approach every step of the research with an open mind, curiosity, empathy, and flexibility; hence she was able to listen to the participants telling their stories. As such, there was need for the researcher to be detached from the study to avoid bias in being objective. As a foreign student studying in South Africa, there was need to guard against allowing personal experiences and perceptions to prejudice the research findings. Thus, in order to ensure research reliability, a written record of personal experiences highlighting individual attitudes and possible bias was kept. Secondly, interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. In addition, participants were requested to confirm the written reflection of ideas, facts and interpretations. In short, the interpretive/constructivist paradigm accepts that data collection is an interactive process whereby the researcher and the participants are personally involved, influencing each other through mutual interaction (Mertens & McLaughlin, 2004).

3.5   RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The basic aim of all research is to produce information that is representative of the population about whom the investigation was conducted. In this study, nine immigrant learners who came to host country South Africa after attending school and at least completed the first grade level in their native countries (within the African continent) were selected. Participants were selected from a list of names of learners enrolled at the primary school.

3.5.1   Sampling

Purposive sampling is based on the assumption that the researcher wants to discover, gain insight into and understanding of a phenomenon, situation or issue. It involves locating individuals with specific characteristics as specified by the researcher (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). The participants selected should be *information-rich,* and the ones from which the most can be learned about the most important issues related to the purpose of the research (Patton, 1990, as cited in Merriam, 2009; Henning *et al.*, 2004). The main motivation should be to gain as much knowledge as possible about the topic, which will allow for an in-depth study.

Since the researcher wanted to obtain an in-depth understanding of the immigrant learners' experiences after attending at least the first grade level in their native countries, purposive sampling was used to select the nine participants for the study. Purposive sampling uses a variety of different strategies to purposefully select 'information-rich cases' that will illuminate the research questions (Patton, 2002, p. 230). The predetermined criteria for selecting participants in this study involved: (a) immigrant learners who attended at least the first grade in their native countries, (b) selection of those aged between eight and twelve and (c) the selection of immigrant learners from the African continent only.

3.6   DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Studies conducted within basic qualitative studies typically use three methods for collecting data: observation, interviewing and the reviewing of documents and records (Merriam, 2009). In this study, interviews, the draw-and -tell technique and observations were the data collection methods deemed to be appropriate for a study of this nature.

3.6.1   Interviews

DeMarrais (2004) defines an interview as a process in which a researcher and participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to a research study. The study focused on the person-to-person encounter in which the researcher elicits information from the participant. The

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interviews were chosen as a way to have the verbatim information on the psychosocial experiences of immigrant learners in the host country. Researchers interview people to find out from them those things that cannot be directly observed (Patton, 2002). We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe behaviours that took place at some previous point in time. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer. We cannot observe how people have organised the world. We have to ask people questions about things. The purpose of the interview is then to allow the researcher to enter the other person's perspective. An interview guide was used. This included a mixture of more or less structured interview questions; the questions were flexible, and specific data is usually required from all respondents. A large part of the interview was guided by the list of questions or issues to be explored, but there was no predetermined order (Merriam, 2009).

The use of interviews as a primary method and observation as a secondary method provided the researcher with some insight into the real situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context, as well as the interaction that takes place in that context (Merriam, 2009). This furnished the researcher with both verbal and non-verbal information on the immigrant learners' perspectives.

3.6.2   Observations

Observations provided the researcher with some insight into immigrant learners' interactions, context of behaviour and explanations of behaviour. Daniels (2011) postulates that it gives direct personal contact with the setting, hence first-hand experiences allowed the researcher to be open and inductive in the discovery of the migrant learners' psychosocial experiences. Furthermore, it provided the opportunity to learn new things that the immigrant learners might have unconsciously forgotten to share during the interview.

Observations were done so as to triangulate emerging findings. The observer sees things first-hand and uses his or her own knowledge and expertise in interpreting what is observed, rather than relying on once-removed accounts from interviews. Observation makes it possible to record behaviour as it is happening (Merriam, 2009). Observations also provide some knowledge of the

context or provide specific incidents and behaviours that immigrant learners engage in and this can be used as reference points for subsequent interviews. This is a particular strategy to understand ill-defined phenomena (Merriam, 2009). Observations are determined by the purpose of the research. What to observe depends on the topic, the conceptual framework, the data that begin to emerge as the observer interacts in the daily flow of events and activities, and intuitive reactions and hunches that the observer experiences as all these factors come together (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).

3.6.3 Draw-and-tell technique

In order to deal with confounding effects of the use of the second language, the researcher made use of the draw-and-tell technique. The use of images and drawing (visual method data collection) was done through the draw-and-tell technique with participants being asked to make drawings of situations and then being encouraged to talk about their drawings. Visuals have the potential to provide deeper and subtle explanations of social contexts and relationships (Spencer, 2011). Kenny (2009) commented that visuals assist learners who have conceptual or linguistic difficulties in expressing themselves orally. The researcher used the visuals as auto-driving mechanisms to elicit conversation from the participants whereby they responded by explaining visuals. This in a way enables the children to reflect on what they want to say and become active participants in the research study (Pridmore & Lansdown in Kenny 2009; Leitch, 2008). This, in turn, enabled the researcher to engage with the world of children (Young & Barrett, 2001).

For the draw-and-tell exercises, the participants were gathered together in a group. Working with groups allows access to an interactive experience (Mertens, 2005; Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Kelly, 2006). In this study, a group meeting was convened, firstly, to facilitate the initial contact rapport, not only between the interviewer and participant, but also between the group members themselves. Secondly, the group format has the capacity to support individuals and promote greater candour. Thirdly, the group format encourages people to form opinions about the selected topic through interaction with others (Vaughn, Schumm & Sinagub, 1996).

Meeting participants in a group also gives some additional insight from the interaction of ideas among the group participants (Mertens, 2005). In this case, the relationships of immigrant learners at the host country school were also observed. This group meeting provided substantive information in relatively little time (Vaughn *et al*., 1996). Participants were made to draw their experiences. The study was conducted in English: for most of the participants, English was their second language.

3.7   PROCEDURES

The initial procedural steps involved the application for permission from the Western Cape Department of Education to conduct research at the selected primary school. Permission was granted by the Director of research services at the WCED (Ref: 20120322-0017) contained in Appendix A. After consultation with the principal, appointments were made with parents of selected participants for gaining informed consent. Letters of consent were given to parents (see Appendix B).   Immigrant learners of parents who gave consent were contacted and informed assent was sought from the nine participants selected for the study; they signed the forms (see Appendix C). Ethical clearance was sought from the Ethics Committee at the University of Stellenbosch (reference **HS792/2012**). As soon as permission was granted, arrangements for conducting the interviews and observations were made with the school principal.

The interviews with learners were carried out on the school premises. The interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim. If participants felt uncomfortable with the tape recorder, notes were to be taken during interviews. However, all the participants in this study agreed to their voices being recorded.

3.8   DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis is a process of making sense out of data (Merriam, 2009). In an interpretive study there is no clear point when data collection stops and analysis begins (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002). Interpretive analysis provides a thick description, which means a comprehensive description of contexts, characteristics, and the processes of the phenomenon being studied. Real-life events are

thus placed into some form of perspective (Geertz, 1973 in Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002). Since the study was using an interpretive research paradigm, understanding the meaning of the process or immigrant learners' experiences constituted the knowledge to be gained from an inductive mode of inquiry; hence multiple realities are constructed socially by individuals. In other words, the patterns of the lived experiences of the learners were brought to the fore and subsequently discussed. The main method of analysis in the present study was content analysis.

3.8.1   Qualitative content analysis

Qualitative content analysis has been defined as "any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings" (Patton, 2002; p. 453). Content analysis emphasises an integrated view of speech/texts and their specific contexts. It goes beyond merely counting words or extracting objective content from texts to examine meanings, themes and patterns that may be manifest or latent in a particular text. It allows researchers to understand social reality in a subjective but scientific manner. Qualitative content analysis is mainly inductive, grounding the examination of topics and themes, as well as the inferences drawn from them, in the data. In some cases, qualitative content analysis attempts to generate theory. It usually consists of purposively selected texts which can inform the research questions being investigated; a qualitative approach usually produces descriptions or typologies, along with expressions from subjects reflecting how they view the social world. By this means, the perspectives of the producers of the text can be better understood by the investigator as well as the readers of the study's results (Berg, 2001). Qualitative content analysis pays attention to unique themes that illustrate the range of the meanings of the phenomenon rather than the statistical significance of the occurrence of particular texts or concepts.

Qualitative content analysis furthermore involves a process designed to condense raw data into categories or themes based on valid inference and interpretation. This process uses inductive reasoning, by which themes and categories emerge from the data through the researcher's careful examination and constant comparison. But qualitative content analysis does not need to exclude deductive reasoning (Patton, 2002). Generating concepts or variables from theory or previous

studies is also very useful for qualitative research, especially at the inception of data analysis (Berg, 2001).

Hsieh and Shannon (2005) discuss three approaches to qualitative content analysis, based on the degree of involvement of inductive reasoning. The first is conventional qualitative content analysis, in which coding categories are derived directly and inductively from the raw data. This is the approach used for grounded theory development. The second approach is directed content analysis, in which initial coding starts with a theory or relevant research findings. Then, during data analysis, the researchers immerse themselves in the data and allow themes to emerge from the data. The purpose of this approach usually is to validate or extend a conceptual framework or theory. The third approach is summative content analysis, which starts with the counting of words or manifest content, then extends the analysis to include latent meanings and themes. This approach seems quantitative in the early stages, but its goal is to explore the usage of the words/indicators in an inductive manner.

One challenge of this type of analysis involves failing to develop a complete understanding of the context, thus failing to identify key categories. This can result in findings that do not accurately represent the data. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described this as credibility within the naturalistic paradigm of trustworthiness or internal validity within a paradigm of reliability and validity. Credibility can be established through activities such as peer debriefing, prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, negative case analysis, referential adequacy, and member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Manning, 1997).

Despite criticism levelled against content analysis, it remains a content-sensitive method (Krippendorff, 1980). Another advantage is its flexibility in terms of research design (Harwood & Garry, 2003). It is also much more than a naive technique that results in a simplistic description of data (Cavanagh, 1997) or a counting game (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992).

The process of qualitative content analysis often begins during the early stages of data collection. This early involvement in the analysis phase helps the researcher to move back and forth between concept development and data collection, and may help direct subsequent data

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collection toward sources that are more useful for addressing the research questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To support valid and reliable inferences, qualitative content analysis involves a set of systematic and transparent procedures for processing data.

Data analysis starts with reading all data repeatedly to achieve immersion and obtain a sense of the whole (Tesch, 1990) as one would read a novel. Then, data are read word by word to derive codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994) by first highlighting the exact words from the text that appear to capture key thoughts or concepts. Next, the researcher approaches the text by making notes of his or her first impressions, thoughts, and initial analysis. As this process continues, labels for codes emerge that are reflective of more than one key thought. These often come directly from the text and they then become the initial coding scheme. Codes then are sorted into categories based on how different codes are related and linked. These emergent categories are used to organise and group codes into meaningful clusters (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Patton, 2002).

The data for this study were analysed utilising conventional qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2000; Sandelowski, 2000). The advantage of the conventional approach to content analysis is gaining direct information from study participants without imposing preconceived categories or theoretical perspectives (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Codes were generated from the data and continuously modified by the researcher's treatment of the data "to accommodate new data and new insights about those data" (Sandelowski, 2000, p. 338). This was a reflexive and an interactive process that yielded extensive codes and themes. The extensive codes were further analysed to identify data related to key concepts in the research question, theoretical frameworks and literature review (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Multiple readings of the data were conducted, organising the codes and themes into higher levels of categories within and across the interviews, observations and other sources of data (Merriam, 1998).

The inductive processes described in the following sections were employed by the researcher in the data analysis of this study

3.8.1.1 Stage one: Defining analysis in terms of research goals

The aim of the research was kept in mind and the researcher ensured that appropriate and sufficient data were collected

3.8.1.2 Stage two: Familiarisation and immersion

This is the stage were the researcher becomes familiar with the data by listening and reading thoroughly (Baptiste, 2001). Qualitative content analysis can be used to analyse various types of data, but generally the data need to be transformed into written text before analysis can start (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2007). The process started with transcribing all the interviews verbatim into written text. The research was guided by qualitative content analysis process procedures which are most often used to analyse interview transcripts in order to reveal or model people's information-related behaviours and thoughts. When transcribing interviews, the following questions arise: (1) should all the questions of the interviewer or only the main questions from the interview guide be transcribed? (2) should the verbalisations be transcribed literally or only in a summary: and (3) Should observations during the interview (e.g., sounds, pauses, and other audible behaviours) be transcribed or not? (Schilling, 2006) All the questions and responses of all the nine participants were transcribed, including observations which the researcher thought were significant to the study. The transcribed interviews were then made into hard copies and stored safely at the researcher's home. All nine interviews were conducted in English.

In addition, transcribing an interview oneself is an excellent way to start familiarising oneself with the data (Riessman, 1993). Some researchers even argue it should be seen as "a key phase of data analysis within interpretative qualitative methodology" (Bird, 2005, p. 227), and recognised as an *interpretative* act, where meanings are created, rather than simply a mechanical one of putting spoken sounds on paper (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999).

3.8.1.3 Stage Three: Formulation of themes

The interviews were then read through several times, after which a process of open coding was implemented whereby units of meaning were identified and coded using one- to three-word phrases. Open coding refers to when the researcher initially reads through the available data and then begins to locate units of meaning and attempts to name them. The aim of this is to identify any patterns or themes within the data. A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of *patterned* response or meaning within the data set. An important question to address in terms of coding is what counts as a pattern/theme, or what 'size' does a theme need to be? This is a question of prevalence, both in terms of space within each data item, and prevalence across the entire data set. Ideally, there will be a number of instances of the theme across the data set, but more instances do not *necessarily* mean the theme itself is more crucial (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The coding, or labelling, of themes needs to be flexible as meaning is not fixed in a small segment of words, but needs to be seen in the light of the overall meaning of the particular data at hand (Henning *et al*., 2004; Neuman, 2011). The process generally moves from more concrete themes to increasingly abstract ones due to the influence of theoretical concepts and the availability of more data (Neuman, 2000, p. 422). This then led to a list of themes being formulated

A database was created where these codes were tracked. Codes were adjusted when necessary due to increased insight and information. The process of coding is part of analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994), as the data are being *organised* into meaningful groups (Tuckett, 2005). However, coded data differ from the units of *analysis* (the themes) which (often) are broader. Themes, which start to develop in the next phase, appear when the interpretative analysis of the data occurs, and in relation to which arguments about the phenomenon being examined are made (Boyatzis, 1998).

3.8.1.4 Stage Four: Revision of proposed themes

This step involved the refinement of identified themes. During this phase, it becomes evident that some candidate themes are not really themes (there may are be enough data to support them, or the data may be too diverse), while apparently separate themes might form one theme) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Other themes might need to be broken down into separate themes. Patton's (1990) dual criteria for judging categories - *internal homogeneity* and *external heterogeneity* - are worth considering here. Data within themes should cohere together meaningfully, while there should be clear and identifiable distinctions between themes.

This phase involved two levels of reviewing and refining themes. Level one involved reviewing at the level of the coded data extracts. All the collated extracts for each theme were read again, and consideration was given to whether they appeared to form a coherent pattern. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), if candidate themes appear to form a coherent pattern, one may move on to the second level of this phase. If candidate themes do not fit, it is necessary to consider whether the theme itself is problematic, or whether some of the data extracts within it do not fit there – in which case, the theme has to be reworked and a new theme has to be created for the extracts that do not work in an already-existing theme, or they could be discarded from the analysis. Once the researcher is satisfied, the next step is taken.

3.8.1.5 Stage five: Formulation of sub-themes

The sub-themes followed where relationships and themes were identified. Categorisation refers to the grouping of codes that seem to be connected, the naming of which is often influenced by theory (Henning *et al*., 2004, p. 105). Sub-themes help to inform a more holistic view of the data which is then used during interpretation and discussion of results. The themes and categories were revised as the process of data analysis progressed; this led to a final list of themes and sub-themes, which were used as the basis of the argument for the findings of the studies from which conclusions were drawn. Baptiste (2001) refers to this stage as tagging data. This refers to the process of selecting from an amorphous body of materials, bits and pieces that satisfy the researcher's curiosity, and help support the purpose of the study. For the purpose of this study,

tagging was employed as a means of crosschecking and corroborating evidence from interviews, the draw-and-tell technique and observations. Tagging takes the form of open coding, where the focus is on potential meaning, and pre-existing codes are not used. The themes were elaborated by grouping the data together according to some criteria. In this study, the term sub-themes is employed, although Baptiste (2001) refers to them as categories. The sub-themes were mutually exclusive as far as possible.

3.8.1.6 Stage six: Making connections

The data were interpreted through defining and redefining themes. Certain patterns of relationships and concepts were identified. This is illustrated in the following chapter on research findings and discussion.

3.8.2   Data verification

3.8.2.1 Triangulation

Every research study is concerned with producing valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner. It is important for professionals to trust research results especially in applied fields because practitioners intervene in people's lives (Merriam, 2009). This study view reliability and validity within the philosophical assumptions underlying the interpretive paradigm. This may even result in naming the concepts themselves differently for credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability as substitutes for internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity. This study engaged in triangulation as a way of verifying the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. Triangulation entails collecting material in as many different ways and from as many diverse sources as possible. This is done to help the researcher to 'home in' on a correct understanding of a phenomenon by approaching it from several different angles (Terre Blanche & Kelly, 2002). The different types of triangulation are data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, method triangulation and methodological triangulation. In this study method triangulation was used. This refers to the use of multiple methods to study a single issue, looking for convergent evidence from different sources, for

example interviewing, participant observation and the draw-and-tell technique used in this study. However, the researcher took note of some criticism levelled against triangulation. Triangulation assumes a 'fixed point' or 'object' that can be triangulated (Richardson & St Pierre, 2005). Nevertheless in postmodern, research, 'we do not triangulate; we crystallize. What we see depends on our angle of response – not triangulation but rather crystallization' (Richardson & St Pierre, 2005, p. 963).

3.8.2.2 Ethical considerations

Ethics are typically associated with morality. The ethical consideration of research was adhered to. According to Babbie and Mouton (2001), for research to be considered a scientific inquiry it has to conform to ethical principles. In this study, the Ethical Code of Professional Conduct of the Professional Board for Psychology, Health Professions Council of South Africa provided the framework.

3.8.2.3 Respect for the dignity, moral and legal rights of people

The researcher respected the dignity of the immigrant learners who participated in this study. This requires the researcher to demonstrate respect for other people through actions and language. In addition, the researcher ought to be punctual, responding to participants' requests expediently, and giving participants space when they need it (Allan, 2008). Since the study involved participants who were to a certain extent stigmatised or marginalised, the researcher's approach was non-judgemental and tolerant and the researcher refrained from imposing personal values on participants.

3.8.2.4 Voluntary participation

Qualitative research usually intrudes into people's lives; it often requires people to reveal personal information that may be unknown to their friends and family. Participants volunteered completely in the study. Informed consent was sought after participants were made aware of

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what the study entails. They were informed that they have the right to refuse to participate (Mertens, 2005), as no one should be forced to participate (Babbie, 2011).

3.8.2.5 Informed consent

Written informed consent was obtained from the Western Cape department of education. The immigrant learner's parents/guardians gave informed consent before interviews and observations were conducted. According to the children's Act 2005, all children from 12 years and above can give consent and those below will give assent. The participants in this study were below twelve years of age, so assent was sought and the procedures of the study were explained to them in simple language that they could understand. They were made aware that they could refuse to answer questions that they are not comfortable with and could withdraw at any time without any consequences to them. The informed consent sought was in accordance with the basic elements noted by Babbie (2011). These include informing the participants that they would be engaged in a research project, explaining the purpose of the research and the expected duration of the study and describing the procedures to be followed. Participants were also made aware of possible discomfort that could arise as they narrated their experiences in the host country. The aims of the study were disclosed to the participants and their parents/guardians.

3.8.2.6 Anonymity, privacy and confidentiality

Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained in order to guard the participants' interests and well-being through the protection of their identity. However, confidentiality and anonymity are two different words with different meaning (Babbie, 2011). Anonymity is the ethical protection that participants remain nameless, their identity is protected from disclosure and remains unknown (Neuman, 2011).The study used pseudonyms for the participants as well as the school where the study was conducted. Confidentiality was defined as the ethical protection of those who are studied by holding the data in confidence or keeping data from the public; not releasing information in a way that may permit linking specific individuals to specific responses (Neuman, 2011). Any information obtained in connection with this study that may be identified with the

participant will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with the participant's permission or as required by law.

3.8.2.7 Non-maleficence and Beneficence

As mentioned briefly in Chapter 1, the main underlying principle was non-maleficence practised through the other universal principles of honesty, respect for the rights of others, and free participation, based on informed consent. The principle of non-maleficence requires that the researcher "ensures that no harm befalls research participants as a direct or indirect consequence of the research" (Wassenaar, 2006, p. 67). However, in spite of trying not to harm participants, subjects may be harmed psychologically in the course of the study, hence the researcher has to look for the subtlest dangers and guard against them (Babbie, 2011). The study could have, although remotely expected, caused emotional instability because participants were asked to reveal an inner world regarding their psychosocial experiences of the new environment. It was decided that learners would be referred to the University of Stellenbosch Educational Psychology Counselling Unit for counselling sessions if there was such a need. In cases where there was immediate need for counselling, the researcher provided the counselling under supervision by her supervisor.

The beneficence principle is not the opposite side of non-maleficence; it refers to the moral obligation of the researcher to act for the benefit of the participants (Allan, 2009). In combination with non-maleficence, beneficence finds expression in research ethics in "risk/benefit determinations, where the researcher and ethics committees have to consider the relative risks of the proposed study against any benefits that the study might actually bring to the participants or to society through knowledge gained" (Wassenaar, 2006, p. 67). This study gave the immigrant learners the opportunity to air their psychosocial experiences in the new environment. Revealing their inner worlds had the potential of benefiting them and allowing other immigrant learners to come up with ways of supporting them in their learning as well as their psychosocial development

CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses the study's research findings which were organised around emergent themes. Since a constructivist/interpretive paradigm was utilised in the present study, this chapter draws from an in-depth examination of the research participants' responses and how they speak to the central concerns and focus of the study. As discussed in the previous chapters, the overarching research question which the study sought to answer was the following: What are the lived psychosocial experiences of immigrant learners at a selected primary school in the Western Cape Province of South Africa?

The research findings of the study are discussed according to the themes which emerged during data analysis. Three central themes that were identified reflected the psychosocial experiences of immigrant learners of the middle childhood age at the selected school in the Western Cape Province. The data for this study were gathered through a triangulation of research techniques namely, the draw-and-tell technique, individual interviews and observation.

4.2   BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The biographical data included information on gender, present age, age at immigration, home language and other languages spoken, nationality and religion. School-related information included the last grade attended in the home country and the grade to which admitted in the host country, the duration of stay in the host country and the current grade at school. This information is presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Participants' biographical information

Participant	Gender	Age	Age of immigration	Home language	Other languages	Nationality	Last grade in native country	Grade started in host country	Duration of stay in host country	Current grade	Religion
P-1	boy	8yrs	7 yrs	Portuguese	Swazi & English	Swazi	Gr 1 in Mozambique	2	6 mnths	2	Christian
P-2	boy	10 yrs	9 yrs	Swahili	Kikaya & English	Tanzanian	3	3	1 yr	4	Christian
P-3	boy	10 yrs	10 yrs	Shona	English & Amanka	Zimbabwean	4	5	6 mnths	5	Christian
P-4	boy	11yrs	8 yrs	Oshiwambo	English &Afrikaans	Namibian	4	5	2 yrs	7	Christian
P-5	girl	12 yrs	11 yrs	Nupe	English &Hausa	Nigerian	5	6	1 yr	7	Christian
P-6	boy	12 yrs	10 yrs	Swahili	English	Tanzanian	3	3 (repeated)	1 yr	4	Christian
P-7	boy	12 yrs	10 yrs	Shona	English & Xhosa	Zimbabwean	5	5 (repeated)	2 yrs	5	Christian
P-8	girl	12 yrs	9 yrs	Shona	English & Xhosa	Zimbabwean	3	4	3 yrs	7	Christian
P-9	girl	12 yrs	11 yrs	Arabic	English	Libyan	6	6	1 yr	7	Moslem

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4.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS

Themes and sub-themes that emerged from the research findings concerned initial responses to immigration, social experiences, psychological adjustment and acculturation, each with several sub-themes. These are illustrated in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Themes and sub-themes that emerged from the study

4.4   INITIAL EMOTIONAL RESPONSES TO IMMIGRATION

4.4.1   Emotions of happiness and sadness

The majority of the immigrant learners indicated that although they were sad to leave their friends, relatives and school mates behind, they were excited about future prospects in a new context. The excitement was even more pronounced amongst those whose journeys entailed flying for the first time. However, some of the learners were profoundly affected by the fact that their new context would be devoid of familiar connections and networks of friends and relatives.

4.4.2   Migration preparedness and unpreparedness

Migration preparedness among the research participants varied according to the levels to which their parents involved them in the decisions, as well the time they had to notify those close to them about their trips. P-2, P-3, P-5, P-6 and P-9 were informed about the impending journeys in good time and managed to bid farewell to a few of their friends and relatives. P8 only came to know of the impending trip the night before their departure. P7 discovered that their visit would entail a prolonged stay when they were already in the host country. Decisions by parents to delay, informing the participants about the journeys were predicated on religious and cultural considerations of issues such as witchcraft and bad luck from those not wishing them well.

4.5   SOCIAL EXPERIENCES

The immigrant learners highlighted that they had expectations of being in a new environment in the host country. These expectations were discussed in relation to their subsequent practical experiences of South Arica, some of which contradicted their initial expectations. Some focused on the type of treatment they received as foreigners while some were more concerned about the radical difference between the host country and their native countries.

4.5.1 Friendships at school

During break time and home time it was observed that immigrant learners normally relate in groups made up of learners ranging from little ones in grade one to older learners in grade seven. The learners have developed a network within the school. They all know one another and each other's country of origin. This also stood out in the interviews and the drawings they did. The learners they referred to as friends were all foreigners. It was also brought to the researcher's attention during the first day of data collection, when all participants came for formal introductions that the immigrant learners related well with one another.

4.5.2 Language

When immigrant learners come to the host country, they, in most cases, already have some English language background. P-2, P-3, P-4, P-5, P-6, P-7 and P-8 had been exposed to English at the previous schools they attended before coming to South Africa. Most participants indicated that life was not easy for them in the host country when it came to language. They could not easily follow teachers' instructions and, conversely, the teachers could not follow what they were saying. The most challenging thing was the accent. Most participants highlighted that the way the local people speak English is totally different from the way they have learnt to say words. Some noted that the host people speak fast and use long words such that P-2 carries a dictionary all the time. Although some of the learners were exposed to English language before, they lacked the necessary competence to speak it confidently in front of other learners (P-2, P-6 and P-7). Some were discouraged from speaking by host learners who laugh at their accents when they speak (P-2, P-4, P-5, P-6, P-8 and P-9). Spoken language was challenging for most immigrant learners. The accent was the difficult part as it interfered with, as well as impeded communication. They cannot grasp things said by South Africans, who also, in turn, have a difficult time grasping what the immigrant learners are saying.

The observations made during classroom learning indicate that most participants are quiet and do not participate in class. After a particular lesson when I spoke to P-3, P-7 and P-5, they revealed that they decided to maintain silence in class because other learners laugh at them every time they speak. For P-9, English was a totally a new language that she had to

learn from scratch, a situation further compounded by the fact that she was the only one doing English in her home.

4.5.3 Bullying

Incidents of bullying were noted from participants, especially those who started school prior to 2012. P-6 came to the interview crying as he had been beaten up by a fellow classmate for not passing the ball whilst playing soccer. Immigrant learners noted that different forms of bullying were rife, especially when they were still new. The forms of bullying that they endure are verbal, emotional and physical. Although P-4 highlighted that the bullying is done to all newcomers regardless of country of origin, most participants noted that it is done mostly to foreign learners.

4.5.4 Verbal bullying

The verbal bullying involves pejorative statements and insults. P 2, P 3, and P 7 revealed experiencing bullying first-hand. P2 was confident that they were the target of bullying because they were foreign and immigrant learners.

4.5.5 Emotional bullying

Emotional bullying includes diverse issues such as being despised, looked down upon, laughed at and ridiculed through gestures and facial expressions. P-2, P-4, P-5, P-6, P-7 and P-8 revealed that they have been laughed at on more than two occasions in class when they attempted to participate. This has pushed the immigrant learners to embrace a passive role in class in order to avoid the humiliation of being laughed at.

4.5.6 Physical bullying

Some learners have been physically beaten and had their lunch boxes taken away from them. P2's draw-and-tell picture indicated his desire to retaliate the physical bulling. He mentioned that he was not socialised to fight back, but the circumstances and the experiences he has been encountering make him wish he could become someone like 'supper saint' to fight back

and transform back to his original self. Participants P3 and P4 were not sure whether to classify the way they were being treated as bullying or simply as an issue of host learners just disliking associating with them.

4.5.7 Change in behaviour and character

P-2, P- 4, P-5, P-8 and P-9 all indicated that the experiences they were encountering had made them change from the way they were before they came to the host country. Their responses ranged from being quiet to being talkative and character switches from being well-behaved to a callous 'I don't care attitude' as well as being rude. However, most of the participants highlighted that they hate the way their experiences have moulded their characters and behaviours.

4.6   PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES AND ADJUSTMENT

Upon reflection, the immigrant learners felt that they have become different individuals since the time they first came to South Africa. Some celebrate the new environment and believe that it has contributed to the building of confidence and personalities. Their self-esteem has been boosted as well as their self-efficacy, compared to the time they were in their home countries. P9, P7, P4 and P3 highlighted that the experiences they are going through have made them discover other dimensions of their personalities. P9 noted that being able to speak English without any prior background in the language was an achievement she never anticipated as within her reach.

Some learners described themselves as victims of the new environment and its pressures. They indicated that they have lost their confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy. P1, P2, P5, P6 and P7 felt that they live at the mercy of the environment. Some used to think they were born leaders, some believed themselves to be comforters and people with high tolerance, but the host learners have made them see the weaker side of themselves.

4.7   ACCULTURATION

Participants P3, P4, P5, P3 and P9 drew their countries' flags and maps indicating that they somehow miss home. They still identify with and feel that they are part of their respective native countries. P9 highlighted that she still follows everything that is happening in her country. P9 even drew both the old and the new flag of her native country.

4.8   THE DRAW-TELL VISUAL PICTURES

The draw-tell technique was used to deal with the possible confounding effects of the use of the second language during interviews. Below are some of the drawings by the immigrant learners as they attempt to portray some of their psychosocial experiences. References to some of these drawings have already been made in the preceding sections.
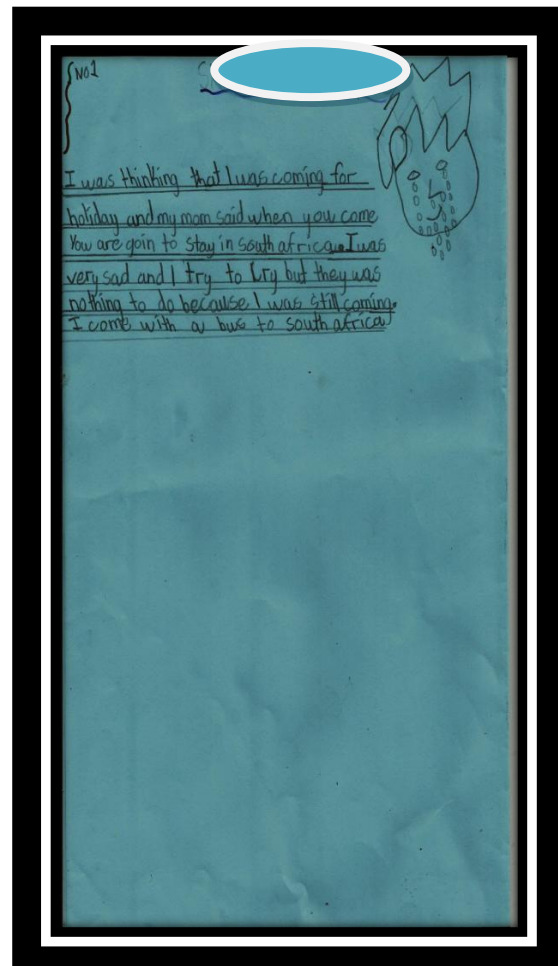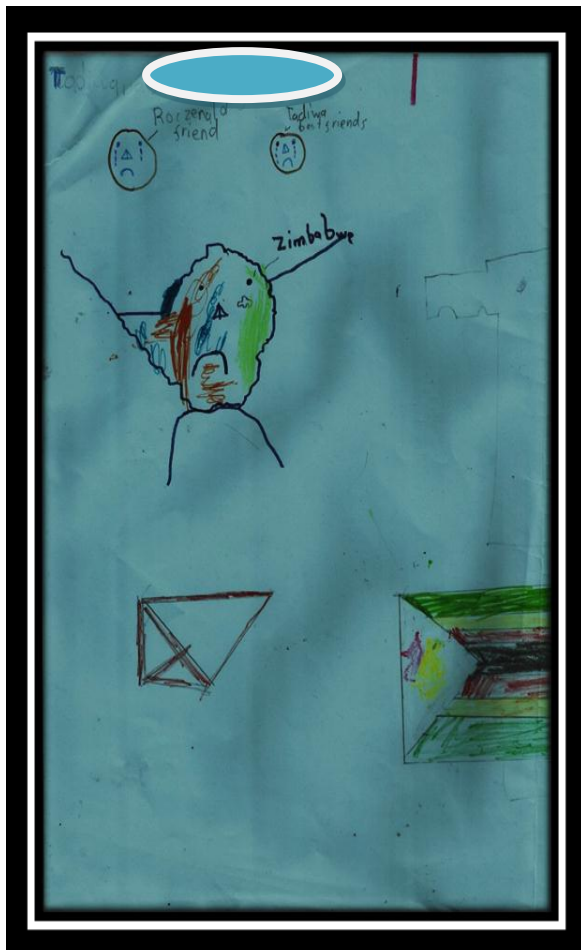
The day I left my home country
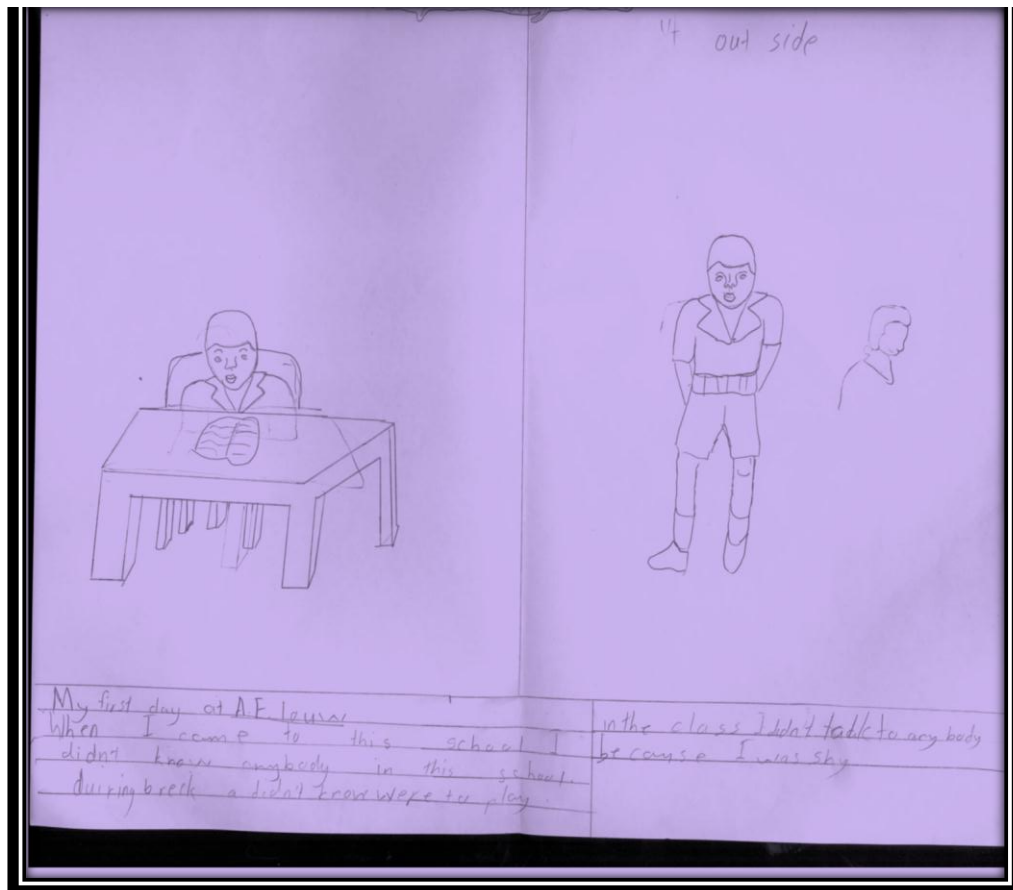
The first-day experiences at the host school (South Africa)
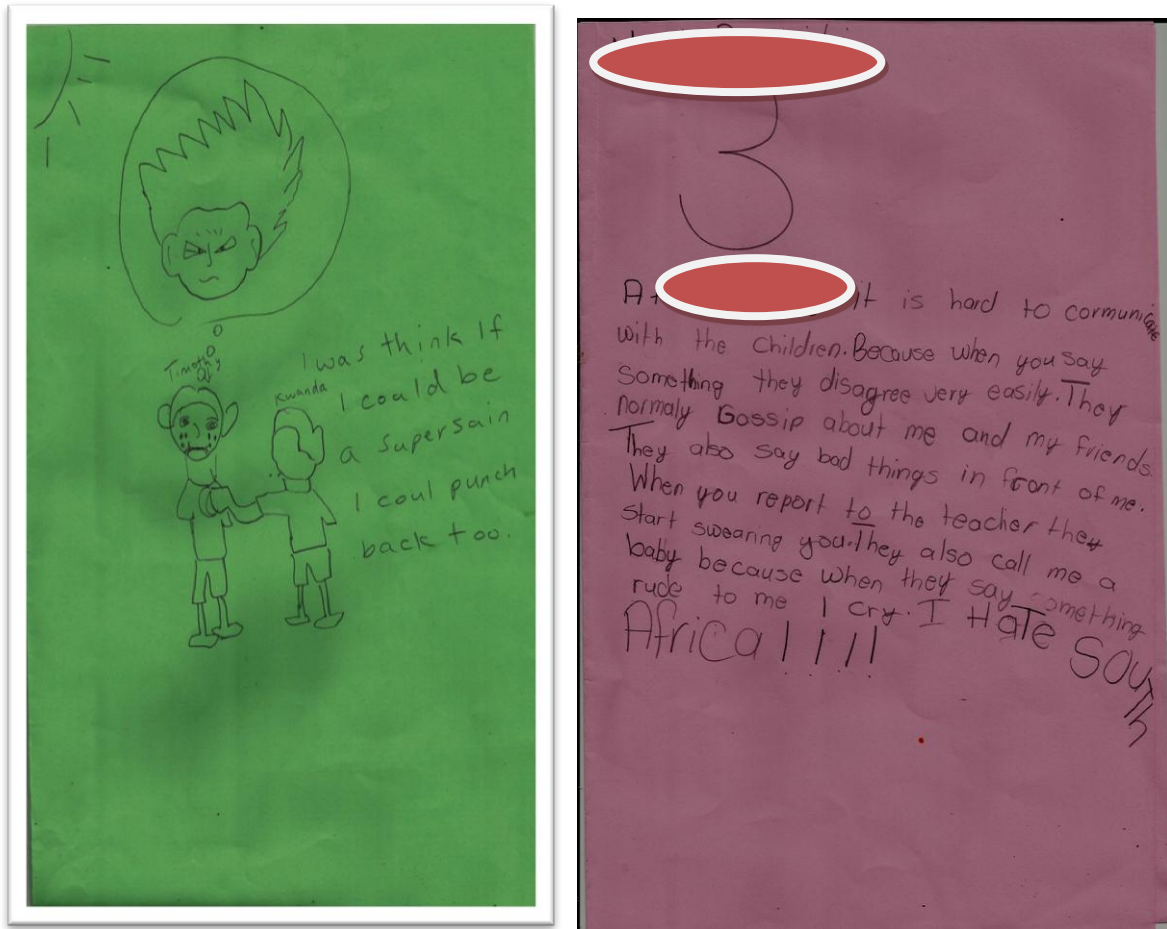
Daily experiences at the host school

Figure 4.2: The draw-tell pictures

Table 4.2: Findings of the psychosocial experiences of immigrant learners

Table 4.2 indicates the numerous experiences that the different immigrant learners encountered from the time when the idea to emigrate was communicated to them up to the time when they arrived as well as their experiences in the new environment.

MAIN THEME	SUB-THEMES	EXAMPLES OF RAW DATA
Initial emotional response to immigration	Happy about coming	✓ was happy when we arrived (P- 8). ✓ I felt happy and we left by bus from Mozambique to South Africa (P-1)
	Sadness about coming	✓ from the draw-tell; I drew my friends I see that they were feeling sad and Zimbabwe was also sad, my friends were sad because we were very close, I drew Zimbabwean flag because I like it, Zimbabwe was sad because I was leaving it (P-3). ✓ I was sad I started to cry but there was nothing I could do. It was sad to leave …..(P-7).
	Neutral	✓ it was a very happy day and a sad day for me because I was going to leave my family and I was going to come to a new place (P-5). ✓ I was both happy and sad. …I was happy because I had heard a lot of good things about South Africa, sad because I was leaving my family and cousins (P-4).
	Unpreparedness	✓ Aah well my father was talking to us and he told us that we were going to South Africa then I were not ✓ to tell my friends I was very happy because 7 o'clock in the morning we were supposed to leave.(P-8) ✓ I didn't say bye to some of my friends we left in a rush. (P-1)

MAIN THEME	SUB-THEMES	EXAMPLE OF RAW DATA
Social experiences	❖ Friendships at school	✓ somehow didn't like talking to me. I didn't like this. I felt angry and I wanted to go back to Libyan schools so that everyone is like me (P-9) it's only P-8 and P-5 who are not from South Africa who came to me and they wanted to be my friends and we made cards. ✓ It was hard to make contact with the local children. The local learners said I shouldn't speak their language because they don't know my language, it made me feel uncomfortable, then I just ignored them then they said why ignoring us, (p-8) ✓ a friendly boy helped me because he was here first and he is from Congo and he helped me to do Maths. When I came outside the other children were playing. I didn't know who to play with but the friend came with other friends (P2). ✓ When I first came to this school they were thinking I'm South African. They were talking to me in Xhosa then I say I don't understand then they will say 'suka' you come to do nothing (P-6). ✓ The first person who came to me was P-8, a Zimbabwean. She welcomed me and made me feel comfortable. I play with other foreigners because we understand each other better because from other country when we are here in South Africa being with South Africans they don't feel that comfortable because they want this while we don't want that. (P-5). ✓ When I came to this school I did not have friends and some learners were looking at me as if they have never seen a Namibian. There was another boy called XXXX who also didn't have a friend and it was his first time here..(P-2) **accent** ✓ I am uncomfortable in South Africa mainly because of the students at school, the way they talk to me and even if you say something once, like talking to the teacher they start laughing and it make me feel uncomfortable. They only do this to foreigners (P-8). ✓ Sometimes my teacher does not understand me so the other learners understand how I speak then they
	Language	

		explain to the teacher how I said it and at times they laugh at me and say this word must be like this, In Tanzania I knew my Swahili very well so here even if I want to say a word or feel to say an answer I won't because I think they will laugh at me if I don't say it well, because there is one day I spoke a word and they started to laugh at me. (P-2 and P-6)
		✓ In Nigeria we were taught in English but the way they speak here is different and it was difficult to understand.(P-5)
		Incompetence
		✓ When I was in Tanzania when I talk in my language I talk you could see it makes sense but now that I speak English always I can't speak Swahili from morning to evening I now mix and I am forgetting some of the words. I like myself now because I know a lot of languages but in Tanzania I didn't know much (P-2).
		New language
		✓ I was not able to speak English in Libya, I only spoke Arabic (P-9)
		✓ I couldn't speak English but after 2 weeks I could understand a little bit better (P-7)
		Physical
		✓ I am the class captain. If I write their names when they are talking they will beat me and say why did you write my name, (P-2).
	Bullying	✓ they must give punishment to those who are not treating me well because there are grade 7s who are bullying those who are coming from other countries…. They took my lunch box that is why I was crying.(P-2
		✓ The children here bully other children. If you hit one of them let's say you hit one of the coloured kids they then go call their brothers and stuff they walk at night some of them and then you will be in trouble (P-4).
		✓ Not all children are nice like when you play soccer if you score and they don't want you to score they beat you (P-6).
		Verbal
		✓ When I'm passing they start to talk about me and pointing fingers at me…Some they talk nonsense about me but sometimes, and some when I'm sitting alone they will come and beat me up and say bad

		words about my mum or sometimes they come and say I'm 'pambena' which means I'm crazy (P 2).
		
		Emotional
		  ✓ When I first came here I was quiet the other time in class I didn't say anything but now I'm not quite like how I was before, I think my character has changed because I am getting used to South Africa and developing ways of doing things (P-5).
		  ✓ they said bad things about me, saying that I look like a boy and they called me names. It makes me uncomfortable because the local children are always saying bad things about me like the way I tie my hair they say it looks like a micro phone and they say that I look like mickey mouse……(P-8)
		  ✓ My attitude and behaviour has changed a lot when they talk bad about me I reply back (P-8)
		  ✓ Yes I am quite these days, I used to be talkative when I was in Tanzania (P-2).

	Character change	

PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES AND ADJUSTMENT	Self-confidence	✓ I am confident now in South Africa compared to when I am in Libya because I can speak English now (P-9)
		  ✓ I was confident before I came to South Africa. In class in Zimbabwe I was sure of what I wanted to say. (P-8)
		  ✓ I like myself now because I know a lot of languages but in Tanzania I didn't know much (P-2).
		  ✓ My confidence has changed. I am not as confident as I was in Namibia because I knew a lot of people at home, I didn't have problems like trying to understand every one, I just understood everyone but now in South Africa I don't know a lot of people here, it's just like when I pass people I greet them then they greet me back in Afrikaans, when I'm thinking in my mind I'm thinking about swearing (P 4)
		  ✓ I was more confident in Nigeria because in Nigeria we had orals like debate even on prize giving day and everyone will be quiet and listening but here they would laugh making you lose confidence (P-5).
		  ✓ I am no longer sure of myself because of language. Sometimes when I speak I mix words, everyone can

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>make a mistake, because at times you want to say something and your tongue slide so you can say something wrong instead of what you wanted to say even my mother does that she want to say a word that is right and say it wrongly, so sometime tongue slide you can't control it properly so you say another word so you have to repeat it again (P-2)

✓ Zimbabwe I was sure of what I wanted to say. (P-8)</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Self-esteem</td><td>✓ I like myself now because I know a lot of languages but in Tanzania I didn't know much (P-2).

✓ My confidence has changed. I am not as confident as I was in Namibia because I knew a lot of people at home, I didn't have problems like trying to understand every one, I just understood everyone but now in South Africa I don't know a lot of people here, it's just like when I pass people I greet them then they greet me back in Afrikaans, when I'm thinking in my mind I'm thinking about swearing (P 4)

✓ I was more confident in Nigeria because in Nigeria we had orals like debate even on prize giving day and everyone will be quiet and listening but here they would laugh making you lose confidence (P-5).

✓ I am no longer sure of myself because of language. Sometimes when I speak I mix words, everyone can make a mistake, because at times you want to say something and your tongue slide so you can say something wrong instead of what you wanted to say even my mother does that she want to say a word that is right and say it wrongly, so sometime tongue slide you can't control it properly so you say another word so you have to repeat it again (P-2)

✓ can say what I have said so it discourages me.(P-2)

✓ In South Africa, I don't feel comfortable talking in front of people, but when it comes to orals I don't look at people because they will be showing funny faces and I don't care about what they say because I will lose a point so I just look at the teacher (P-8)

✓ I can't speak my language well and I'm behaving like a South African. In Zimbabwe I was like someone who was a prefect someone who will encourage others but here I feel like someone like a looser. The South Africans always say bad things about me but I try to talk to them like let's do this than to fight but they don't listen. My attitude and behaviour has changed a lot when they talk bad about</td></tr>
</table>

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	Self-efficacy	me I reply back. This happens to most foreign students because they always say foreigners we don't like you go back maybe it's because we are poor in Zimbabwe and we taking away the money from here. In Zimbabwe I used to have a lot of respect but here I no longer have that respect I don't like it if I say something and my teacher just looks at me I get nervous and like last year my teacher said bad things about my country I just kept quiet and started crying I never said anything. ✓ When I was in Tanzania when I talk in my language I talk you could see it makes sense but now that I speak English always I can't speak Swahili from morning to evening I now mix and I am forgetting some of the words (P2). ✓ I can speak English well (P-9)

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to uncover the psychosocial experiences of middle childhood immigrant learners, that is, learners between six and twelve years of age. In order to engage with the first-hand experiences of the learners, a qualitative research design in an interpretive paradigm was employed. As discussed in Chapter three on the methodology of the research, interviews were conducted and transcribed and the results in the form of themes and subthemes have been presented in the preceding section. The underlying patterns and meaning emanating from the interviews are discussed in this chapter in accordance with Erikson's psychosocial theory of development, with particular focus on the industry versus inferiority stage, and Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model. The common theme underlying the various features of Erikson's theory is the search for identity, or the acceptance of both self and one's society (Bukatko & Dehler, 2004). Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological model points out the importance of interconnection between nested contexts such as how circumstances in one context of an immigrant learner can moderate the impact of another context.

5.2   INITIAL EMOTIONAL RESPONSES TO IMMIGRATION

For most of the immigrant learners, the intention to emigrate was met with some elated feelings of happiness. The happiness was even amplified by the feeling of flying to South Africa for some of the participants. One participant commented that:

It was my first time to travel so I thought it was going to be lots of fun.

...but was happy when we arrived. (P-8)

However, feelings of happiness were down-played by thoughts of having to leave some loved ones and friends behind. One of the participants explained his drawing by reckoning that:

from the draw-tell; I drew my friends I saw that they were feeling sad and

Zimbabwe was also sad, my friends were sad because we were very close, I

drew Zimbabwean flag because I like it, Zimbabwe was sad because I was

leaving it. (P-3)

The afore-mentioned scenarios depict the eventual state of emotions experienced by the learners as they weighed the advantages and disadvantages of emigration, creating mixed feelings towards the whole immigration process. This finding is consistent with Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco's (2001) finding that the initial phase of the migration is often accompanied by a variety of psychological problems such as mild sadness, depression and perpetual mourning due to the loss of loved ones and familiar contexts.

5.2.1   Immigration preparedness

In terms of immigration preparedness, all the participants indicated that the decision to emigrate was single-handedly made by their parental subsystem of the family. As expected in most African traditional cultures, the children are normally required to show respect to the parents by following their parents' orders. In fortunate situations, the children were informed beforehand of the impending emigration. Participants P-2, P-3, P-5, P-6 and P-9 were aware of the journey and managed to say goodbye to a few friends and relatives. However, in an unfortunate situation one participant commented that:

I didn't say bye to some of my friends we left in a rush. (P-1)

Although participant P-8 had been informed, there was no time to say goodbye, besides, the father warned the participant not to tell anyone:

Aah well my father was talking to us and he told us that we were going to

South Africa then I were not to tell my friends I was very happy because 7

o'clock in the morning we were supposed to leave. (P-8)

The warning from the participant's father is true of some African societies in which there is a fear of witch-craft. Informing other people about an impending journey may result in misfortune due to witchcraft.

5.3   SOCIAL EXPERIENCES

5.3.1   Friendships

As presented in the results section, immigrant learners preferred socialising with learners from their own countries. Learners from other foreign countries are also preferred to learners from the host country, as they did not trust the South African learners.

> *The first person who came to me was P-8, a Zimbabwean. She welcomed me and made me feel comfortable. I play with other foreigners because we understand each other better because from other country when we are here in South Africa being with South Africans they don't feel that comfortable because they want this while we don't want that.*

Socialisation with South Africans took place on a limited scale. This is in line with Tsai's (2006) findings that it was not unusual for the youth to be "spending most of their time with those who were racially or ethnically similar to them". However, there are some host learners who were willing to extend a hand of 'comradeship' to their fellow learners. One participant commented:

> *It was easy to make friends because some of my friends, like the one I said he is the headboy now, he is also in my class and he showed me a lot of places, he showed me around the places, he told me the name of the streets and everything. (P-4)*

This would be expected considering that the friendly student is the headboy, who is in a position of authority and is expected to lead by example.

However, after some time immigrant learners start to initiate friendships although some friendly advances are met with resistance. Some have to buy friendship, as in the case of P-5, who had to bring presents and cards to lure friendship from host learners. This may also have been due to P-5's soccer skills, which could create a common ground for friendship. For some, despite having stayed in the host country for more than a year, having host nationality friends has proved not to be easy.

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According to Bronfenbrenner, child development occurs when there is a direct or indirect influence on a child's life or reciprocal interaction amongst the ecological systems in which the child operates (referring to the many levels of contexts (microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem) or environment). This is possible, depending on the personal characteristics of the child (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). Some participants (P-5, P7 and P-9) live far from school; as a result, time to socialise and develop friendship is confined to school time. Some learners, like P-9, are compelled to go home soon after school due to the nature of the parent's job. In the case of P-7 and P-5, the parents have to pay for transport by a community bus which, again, has to pick them up as soon as school is finished. It can therefore be concluded that the relationship at the micro level is being impacted by the influences of the mesosystem. Furthermore, there is lack of communication and understanding of the experiences of these immigrant children in the mesosystem, which is the linkage and process taking place between two or more of the micro settings, and the parents and teachers may not be aware of the effects of limited socialisation that these immigrant learners are experiencing. As most immigrant learners view the host nation as violent and as having a high crime rate, children cannot take the risk of walking home later. They would rather remain loners than risk their lives. The macrosystem is letting the immigrant learners down, as they do not have time to socialise.

5.3.2 Language

It can be deduced from the aforementioned studies that issues pertaining to language are very sensitive to the acculturation process and the 'belongingness' of immigrants at school (Soto, 1997; Wang & Phillion, 2007). Language acquisition and command of a second or foreign language is a factor which influences pupils' general school achievement.

Language has been documented in the literature on immigration and acculturation as a critical factor that plays a pivotal role in the adjustment of immigrant learners (Soto, 1997; Von Grünigen, Kochenderfer-Ladd, Perren & Alsaker, 2012; Wang & Phillion, 2007). Most people would probably expect that immigrant learners disliked the English language because they could not speak it and that the ability to speak a foreign second language is still underdeveloped; immigrant learners, however, displayed some mastery of the English language. The immigrant learners indicated that, when they came to South Africa, they already had some English language

background. Participants P-2, P-3, P-4, P-5, P-6, P-7 and P-8 had been exposed to English at the schools they attended before coming. None of the immigrant learners were opposed to being taught through the medium of English. The popular proverb that "where there is a will, there is a way" was true in the case of P-9 who came from Libya and could not speak English, but spoke Arabic. The participant had to learn the language with the assistance of her father and is now speaking the language with utmost fluency and confidence.

The most recurring challenge encountered by the learners was the accent of the host teachers and learners. Although the teachers tried to stick to the use of the English language as the medium of instruction, the learners and the teachers experienced difficulties in understanding each other's accent or tones. Participant P-5 commented that:

> *In Nigeria we were taught in English but the way they speak here is different and*
> *it was difficult to understand. (P-5)*

Participant P-2 also commented that:

> *Sometimes my teacher does not understand me so the other learners understand*
> *how I speak then they explain to the teacher how I said it and at times they laugh*
> *at me and say this word must be like this….*

The language accent challenge is one of the stresses experienced between members of the host country and immigrants during the acculturation process when the two parties learn to adapt and understand each other better.

Although the learners were now conversing in English most of the time, they still treasure their mother tongue. P-2 commented that:

> *When I was in Tanzania when I talk in my language I talk you could see it makes*
> *sense but now that I speak English always I can't speak Swahili from morning to*
> *evening I now mix and I am forgetting some of the words. I like myself now*
> *because I know a lot of languages but in Tanzania I didn't know much (P-2).*

Xenophobic tendencies emerged because of the pronunciation of English words by immigrant learners. South African learners humiliated and laughed at them because of their accents.

> *In Tanzania I knew my Swahili very well so here even if I want to say a word or feel to say an answer I won't because I think they will laugh at me if I don't say it well, because there is one day I spoke a word and they started to laugh at me. (P-2)*

Another participant commented that:

> *When I first came to this school they were thinking I'm South African. They were talking to me in Xhosa then I say I don't understand then they will say 'suka' you come to do nothing. (P-6)*

This caused hurt and pain to immigrant learners, as they felt further alienated. This probably explains why the immigrant learners appear to be comfortable in the company of other foreign learners. The opposite is probably true that the host learners may also avoid the immigrant learners because of English language incompetence. Tsai (2006) reported that the youth keep a distance from English-speaking peers to avoid nervousness and embarrassment. This is also consistent with Osman's (2009) report that limited English proficiency increases segregation.

5.3.3   Bullying

All the participants in the present study reported some type of bullying which was either verbal or physical. Participants P-2, P-4, P-5, P-6, P-7 and P-8 indicated that they have been laughed at more than twice in class when they attempted to participate in class. To counter this, the immigrant learners have resorted to playing a passive role to avoid the humiliation of being laughed at. Participant P-2 remarked that:

> *When I'm passing they start to talk about me and pointing fingers at me…Some they talk nonsense about me but sometimes, and some when I'm sitting alone they will come and beat me up and say bad words about my mum or sometimes they come and say I'm 'pambena' which means I'm crazy. (P 2)*

With regards to serious cases of bullying, some of the learners reported bullying incidents which ranged from having a lunch box taken and the contents eaten while some were physically beaten for various 'offences'.

> *Not all children are nice like when you play soccer if you score and they don't want you to score they beat you. (P-6)*

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> *I am the class captain. If I write their names when they are talking they will beat me and*
> *say why you wrote my name. (P-2)*

The occurrence of both physical and verbal bullying levelled against the immigrant learners is not new in South Africa. These findings are reinforced by Sookrajh, Gopal and Maharaj (2005) who state that immigrant learners continue to feel unwelcome because they are referred to as "*makwerekwere*". The derogatory term invokes some form of marginalisation.

5.4 PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES AND ADJUSTMENT

In terms of self-confidence, most of the participants indicated that they are no longer as confident as they used to be in their countries of origin before coming to South Africa. One participant commented:

> *I was more confident in Nigeria because in Nigeria we had orals like debate even on*
> *prize giving day and everyone will be quiet and listening but here they would laugh*
> *making you lose confidence. (P-5)*

This is probably due to some of the emigration challenges such as failure to understand the teachers' English language accent; the challenges of acculturation, especially the need to adapt to an environment in which the host learners are not very welcoming; and possibly the change in curriculum. Some of the learners indicated that they used to start school at 2 o'clock in the afternoon and finish at 5 o'clock in the evening. Other immigrant learners indicated that they used to play other sporting activities such as basket ball and volley ball which are not common to South Africa. The absence of these sporting activities may affect the learner in the sense that they will not benefit from the crucial socialisation provided by participating in sporting activities. The mixing of the host and immigrant learners in sporting activities under the guidance of a sports supervisor or teacher may introduce a super-ordinate goal that the team members may strive to work towards and in the process help to water down their differences.

The participants also indicated that their self-efficacy and self-esteem have also changed (negatively), possibly due to the new demands of the curriculum and the difficulties experienced in trying to adapt to the various psychological and social consequences of the immigration and acculturation processes. Previous research studies have documented that migration appears to

somehow affect the self-esteem of foreign students as this tends to be quite low (Giavrimis *et al.*, 2003; Hatzichristou & Hopf, 1992, 1993; Palaiologou, 2007).

The participants also indicated that their personal character has change significantly. Participant P-8 stated that:

> *My attitude and behaviour has changed a lot when they talk bad about me I reply back. This happens to most foreign students because they always say foreigners we don't like you go back maybe it's because we are poor in Zimbabwe and we taking away the money from here. In Zimbabwe I used to have a lot of respect but here I no longer have that respect I don't like it if I say something and my teacher just looks at me I get nervous and like last year my teacher said bad things about my country I just kept quiet and started crying I never said anything.*

> *Yes I am quiet these days, I used to be talkative when I was in Tanzania. I feel so ashamed to speak loud to the class to answer a question, and at times I can raise my hand to answer a question but the teacher cannot hear it so the person next to me can say what I have said so it discourages me. (P-2)*

5.4.1   Industry versus inferiority in relation to findings

The participants in the study are comparable to their peers. This is consistent with what Erikson reported, namely that the child compares him- or herself with peers. Children who feel inferior to their peers develop a sense of inferiority, and those who achieve and develop confidence about what they can achieve, become industrious (Ntshangase, 2006).

Through social interaction, children begin to develop a sense of pride in their accomplishments and abilities. Children who are encouraged and commended even by peers develop a feeling of competence and belief in their skills. Those who receive little or no encouragement from parents, teachers, or peers will doubt their ability to be successful. To immigrant learners in this study, the encouragement they get from fellow immigrant learners keeps them going. They have developed the tendency to ignore the host nation peers as a defence mechanism so that they do not feel inferior. However, being laughed at, coupled with the feeling of being excluded by

peers, has impacted on immigrant learners. According to Erikson, this stage, on the one hand, is the time when a child must master important social and educational skills; the inferiority complex is experienced when it comes to language as they cannot speak with the same accent as the host peers. This was further complicated by the fact that the teachers also fail to understand them when they speak and hence ask fellow host learners to interpret on the behalf of immigrant learners. This has negative outcomes and also leads to a sense of failure and feelings of inferiority. During this stage, teachers and peers are significant environmental and social agents (Goldstein, 1994; Shaffer, 2002).

Against immigrant learners who try to fit in and learn the local language, the negative attitude of locals discouraging them from imitating their language has made P-8 lose the close relationship with the peers of the host nation. This had made her view herself as inferior.

Despite Erikson's suggestion that the individual must actually experience both sides of the conflict (feeling of industry versus inferiority) and must learn to subsume them into higher synthesis, as illustrated in Figure 5.1, which presents Erikson's psychosocial theory, the study has shown that the experiences of immigrant learners are not at extremes of either feelings of industry or of inferiority. They have come to terms with the treatment meted out by their host counterparts and have found solace in one another, and this has made them strive for better psychological and social experiences in the host nation.

Erik Erikson - Psychosocial theory
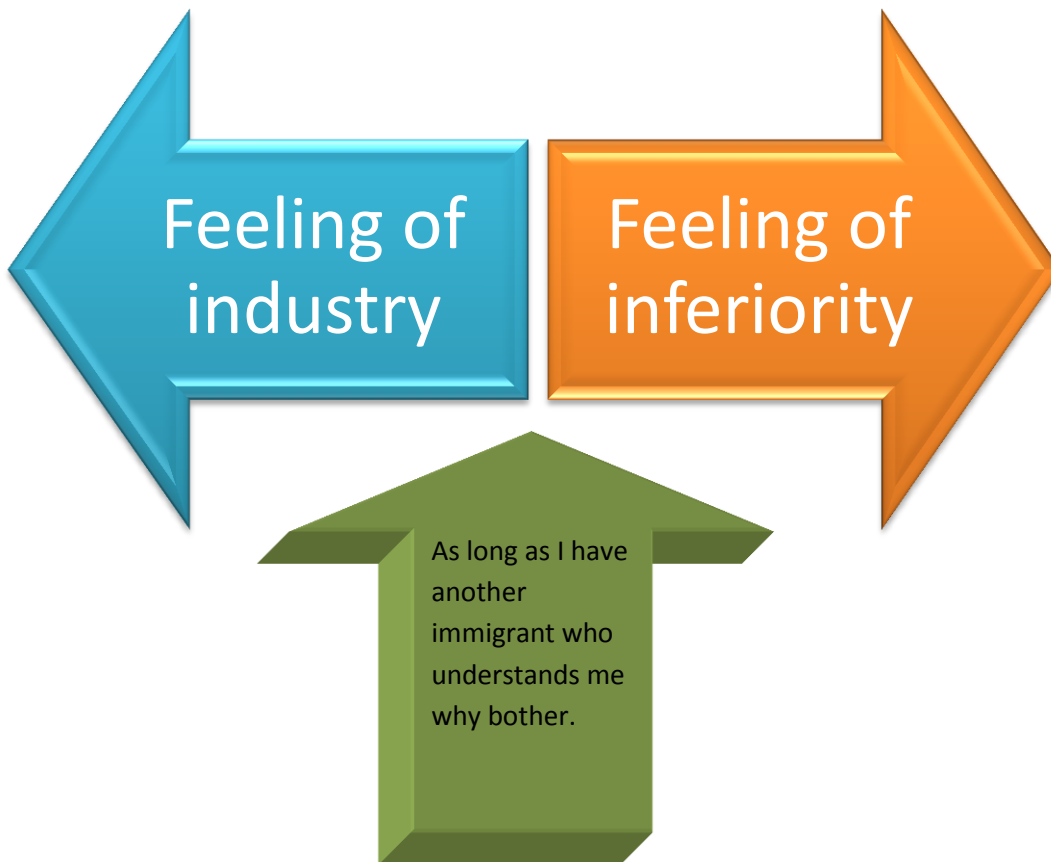
Figure 5.1: Schematic depiction of Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory

Although immigrant children have neither the feeling of industry nor the feeling of inferiority, the findings indicate that there is no healthy interaction within the microsystem where these children operate. Bronfenbrenner postulates that support for the children's feelings of belonging, love at the microsystem level, serves as a protective factor (Swart & Pettipher, 2011). For these children there is no linkage within the systems at mesosystem level – the linkage and process taking place between two or more of the micro settings Donald *et al.,* cited (2011). Immigrant learners acknowledge the acceptance they receive from teachers but they view themselves on the one end and host learners on the other. The sense of teachers being there for them was noted, but

immigrant learners also have the perception that teachers are either with them or with the host learners. This is illustrated in Figure 5.2.
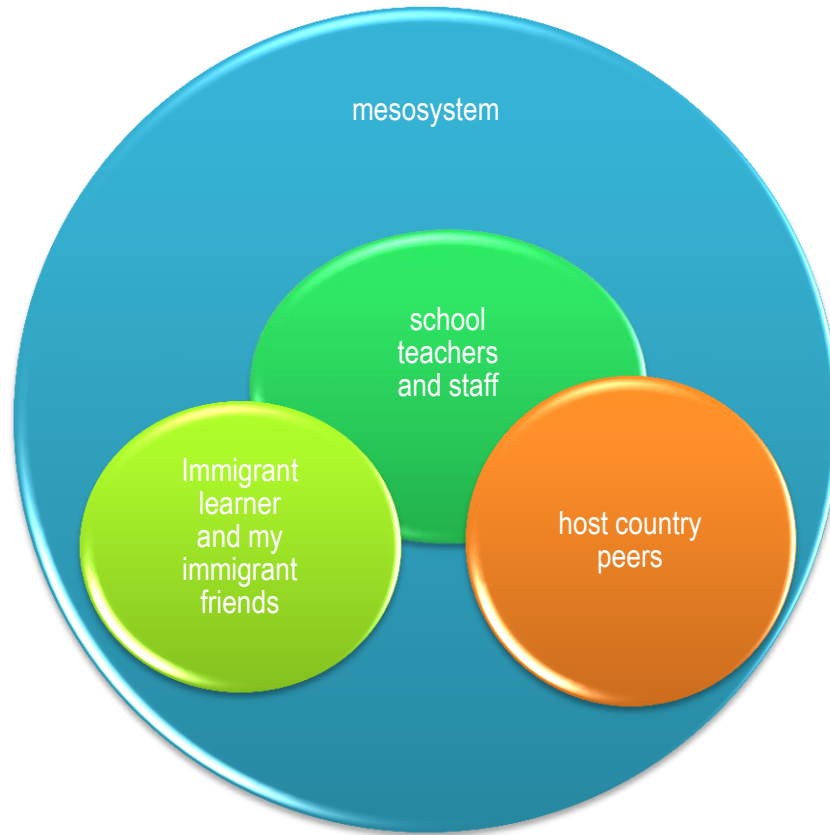
Figure 5.2: Schematic depiction of Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological theory – the meso system

5.5   ACCULTURATION

Although some of the immigrant children who participated have already spent more than two years in South Africa, they still identify themselves with their native countries. In most pictures drawn by them, they included either their national flags or the map of their countries. There is a sense of us-them cultural relationship. In socio-ethical and cultural terms, the 'others' reflect the social and/or psychological ways which host learners have adopted, either consciously or unconscious tendency to exclude or marginalise immigrant learners. Constructing peers as the 'other' is to concentrate on what makes them dissimilar from the 'dominant' group (Johnson,

2002; Moss & Pence, 1994). The fact that the learners still identify with their country of origin shows that the acculturation process takes long. At the moment the learners are trying to adapt to the new environment. The occurrence of bullying and ridicule the immigrant learners receive in the classroom especially the laughing at their tones behaviour is likely to impede the process of adaptation.

5.6   LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

The major weakness of the study is that the findings derived from this study are limited to the selected sample since the qualitative research design was used. This means that the findings cannot be used to generalise to all schools in the Western Cape Province or for the different provinces. McMillan and Schumacher (2001) maintain that an extension of the findings will enable others to understand similar situations and to apply these findings in subsequent research. The sample was limited to learners between six and twelve years of age. Although the themes derived from the data collection process are varied, it is assumed that a larger sample could have offered more diversity.

It was a bit problematic to measure psychological attributes through qualitative research designs as their measurement often requires the use of Likert scales. Quantitative studies would also enable researchers to determine the influence of other variables, such as gender, on adaptation.

5.7   STRENGTHS OF THE STUDY

Due to the nature and structure of the research design, this study provides some in-depth insight into the psycho-social experiences of immigrant learners within the middle childhood developmental stage with regard to how they perceive their reception in the host country, South Africa. This insight is important as it can provide important information which can be used to support immigrant children in host nations. It can direct policy and support from the Department of Education on how to cater for immigrant children and educate learners to embrace diversity.

The study was more objective in the sense that only people who were going through the experiences were selected to report how they found the situation.

5.8   RECOMMENDATIONS

Schools should devise school policies which promote the acknowledgement and acceptance of diversity within the school. There is need to have activities that accommodate diverse learners within the school. Learners need to be helped share and enlighten each other about their cultural values and morals. Activities may involve role-plays at assembly, assigning different weeks for commemorating or celebrating the different cultures of different learners within the school. Host learners also need to participate in these activities.

Adopting the Circle of Courage philosophy, which focuses on sense of belonging, respect, generosity and industry, should be the starting point for the school and all learners. Bringing the circle of courage into play could assist the whole school in accepting and understanding one another. The Circle of Courage, is a model of empowerment; it is a philosophy in support of 'reclaiming environments' for learners (Supporting, 2009). It can be a much more versatile tool than that. This model encompasses values such as **belonging**, which involves the need to feel valued and important; **mastery, for** developing competence: **independence**, for taking responsibility for oneself; and **generosity** as a genuine desire to help others. This can be employed at a school for the benefit of all students, host learners and immigrant learners alike. The central theme of this model is that a set of shared values must exist in any community to create environments that ultimately benefit all. All children need opportunities to experience some belongingness, mastery, independence and generosity (Brendto, Brokenleg & Van Bockern, 2002).

The circle is not a set of rules or a strategy; it is a paradigm shift in teaching social obligation and self-awareness. Implementation then has more to do with creating the environment were learners shift perceptions and expectations of fellow learners regardless of nationality, than it does with

creating rules and strategies which are a product of perceptions and expectations. The perceptions and expectations revolve around the circle's four principles.

All the four parts of an individual's 'circle' must be intact in order to have a secure, pro-social approach to life. A lack of strength in any of the four areas of development results in emotional and behavioural difficulties. The most important component, upon which the other three are based, is a well-developed sense of belonging. As Maslow (1943) pointed out in his 'hierarchy of needs' model, after guaranteeing that physiological needs (e.g., minimal levels of food and water) are met, 'love and belonging' needs are the next important. Immigrant learners, like other humans, have a primal need to feel valued, important, and protected, and at school level, by teachers and peers, so as to feel comfortable and welcomed. In a way this motivates immigrant learners to affiliate and form social bonds and this will make them feel appreciated. "The ultimate test of Kinship was behaviour, not blood: You belonged if you acted like you belonged" (Brendtro *et al*., 2002). This means that immigrant learners do not need to assimilate or adopt the behaviours of the host learners so as to feel accepted.

The principle of mastery obligates the school community to help all learners reach their full potential, and we are held to a very high standard of accountability as a result. New ways of welcoming immigrant learners are necessary in this case. The school may have days where they engage or display their cultural activities. This, in a way, may give all learners the opportunity to solve problems such as disagreements due to wrong perceptions of one's behaviour or actions. In a way it may motivate hard work.

Independence may develop if learners from different cultures and backgrounds and nationalities are given the opportunity to perform their skills without being judged. This can only happen if a sense of generosity is indoctrinated in all learners. A sense of generosity incorporates the opportunity to show respect and concern. This may build a sense of having purpose in life and motivation to help and be of service to others.

The Circle of Courage redefines learners who experience difficulties as members of the school community. It equates all learners despite their nationality, ethnic group or race. While the Circle of Courage comprises an overarching philosophy, reclaiming is the method for reaching out to disempowered learners and finding ways of ensuring power and value for them in their own cultural context whilst at a foreign school. Many have noted that the power of the Circle of Courage is that it is simple without being simplistic. The human brain prefers ideas that can be understood and shared. These principles transcend professional disciplines and treatment models. Perhaps, most uniquely, these beliefs are also embraced by young people (Brendtro *et al*., 2002). This can be the foundation for a healthy school community as it balances reciprocation of respect for one's autonomy and acting to help to develop confidence and competence in life. It reduces social isolation and promotes the foundation for accountability, which is a sense of obligation to the school community. Engagement in the Circle of Courage teaches all learners to perceive one another as rooted in the community and seen as having a right to belong; that they are responsible for one another; that the goal is mastery of oneself and generosity to one's peers; and to recognise independence and the right to be respected as unique. The circle encourages behaviour that benefits ones school community and does not judge or discriminate.

It is essential that every school has a clear statement of values and that the staff members are trained in how to implement it in their teaching and the ethos of the school. Educators need to be made aware of the immigrant learners in their classes and should be trained to identify the needs of the immigrant learner. Educators should also be equipped with the skills to integrate the learner into classroom activities.

The Department of Education should promote the teaching of skills of co-existence and living together to learners regardless of their cultural or racial background. In other words, there is a need to teach young learners to embrace diversity and use it to their advantage. The Department of Education needs to develop policy regarding diversity management education as part of the life orientation curriculum to bring about a paradigm shift so that the next generation may be free from xenophobic and related intolerance. Programmes especially designed to be instrumental in addressing violence, xenophobia and intolerance, need to be included in the academic curriculum.

5.9 FURTHER RESEARCH POSSIBILITIES

Future studies should explore the experiences of host learners concerning how they perceive immigrant peers. This may give insight into their behaviour towards immigrant learners. There also is a need for a study on how immigrant parents perceive the psycho-social experiences of their children as it may provide parents with insight into how their children experience the idea of immigrating. Investigating the psycho-social experiences of immigrant learners using a quantitative approach and standard instruments for the measurement of the psychological attributes may also be undertaken.

5.10 CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present study was to uncover the psychosocial experiences of middle childhood immigrant learners, that is, of learners between six and twelve years of age. The recurring themes derived from the study indicate that immigrant learners experience psycho-social challenges that involve the accent of the English language, establishment of friendships and bullying. These challenges have had a negative impact on their self-confidence, self-efficacy and self-esteem and have resulted in character change due to trying to adapt to environmental demands.

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APPENDIX A: PERMISSION FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Western Cape Government

Education

Audrey.wyngaard2@pgwc.gov.za

Tel: +27 021 476 9272
Fax: 0865902282
Private Bag x9114, Cape Town, 8000
wced.wcape.gov.za

REFERENCE: 20120322-0017

ENQUIRIES: Dr A T Wyngaard

Mrs Mercy Mahembe
1 Schoongezicht
Dennisig Street
Stellenbosch

Dear Mrs Mercy Mahembe

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: THE PSYCHO-SOCIAL EXPERIENCES OF IMMIGRANT LEARNERS AT A WESTERN CAPE PRIMARY SCHOOL
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.   Approval for projects should be conveyed to the District Director of the schools where the project will be conducted.
5.   Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
6.   The Study is to be conducted from **30 May 2012 till 28 September 2012**
7.   No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
8.   Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
9.   A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
10.   Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
11.   A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
12.   The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:
 The Director: Research Services
Western Cape Education Department
Private Bag X9114
CAPE TOWN
8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.
Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard
for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**
DATE: 15 May 2012

APPENDIX B: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN STUDY

UNIVERSITEIT·STELLENBOSCH·UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

The psycho-social experiences of immigrant learners at a Western Cape primary school.

Dear parent

Your child is asked to participate in a research study conducted by Mercy Mahembe (B.Ed Hons Psychology, B.Sc Psychology, Diploma In Teacher Education), from the Department of Educational Psychology at Stellenbosch University. Information gathered from this study will contribute to a master's degree thesis and possibly a research paper. Your child has been selected because he/she immigrated to the host country, South Africa, after attaining at least the lower grade level of primary school education and is aged between eight and twelve.

1. **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The aim of the study is to gain insight into the lived psycho-social experiences of immigrant learners who have had prior socialization in their native countries before they came to the host country South Africa. Psychosocial refers to psychological and social that affects an individual's adjustment and behaviour. Psychological factors for instance (self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-concept and cultural accommodation) relates to the way that an individual's mind works and how it subsequently affects their behaviour while social factors have to do with the determinants of the quality of people's lives such as how language, culture affects people's living patterns, livelihoods and adjustments within groups.

2. **PROCEDURES**

If you permit your child to participate in this study, I would ask him/her to do the following things:

- He/she will partake in few interviews (individual and group). I will ask him/her questions about his/her psychosocial experiences of schooling in South Africa both within and outside of the school.
- He/she will be asked to do some drawings to illustrate his/her psychosocial experiences and write or explain the drawings to me in a secure environment. The writing will help me to get some insight into your child's inner world if spoken language may prove to be a challenge for him/her.
- Observations of him/her in the classroom context as well as break-time or home-time will be done. I will sit in the classroom and observe teaching, learning and social interaction within the classroom.
All interviews will take place after school at an appropriate time slot to be determined by the principal. Hence appointments will be made according to the principal's time allocation decision. The learning times of your child will be respected.

3. **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

The study may have some risks in that it may affect your child emotionally as we will be discussing about his/her experience in the new environment. This may happen especially when the child has had some traumatic experiences.

If there is a need for counselling I will provide the counselling under the supervision of my supervisor or will refer your child to the Department of Educational Psychology Practicum Unit for counselling sessions at University of Stellenbosch.

4. **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

It is anticipated that the findings of the study will enhance the development of meaningful support strategies for immigrant learners

5. **PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

Participation in this study is voluntary. No payment will be done and participants will not therefore be forced.

6. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Anonymity will be maintained by means of not using the school's and the child's name in the study. Pseudonyms (alternative names) will be used. The information received will be kept safely at my home on my computer and is password protected.

All the information gathered in my conversations with your child in connection with this study will be kept strictly confidential. All interviews will be recorded using a digital voice recorder. The interviews will be transcribed. Once the interviews have been transcribed, the recorded files will be deleted. No information will be disclosed in the public domain without your permission as required by law.

If abstracts from our interview are used in the research report, a pseudonym will be assigned for your child. All the identifying information in the research report will be taken out or changed in order to protect your privacy and identity (should you prefer). The information gained from this study will not be divulged to the teachers and other students. Only the summary of the findings will be provided to the school. The data of the study, in its original form, will however, be available to the supervisor of this study, for verification purposes.

7. **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

The child can choose whether to be in this study or not. If the child volunteers to be in this study, he/she may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. He/she may also refuse to answer any questions he/she doesn't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw the child from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

Mrs Mercy Mahembe* - Postgraduate Student
Dept of Educational Psychology
University of Stellenbosch

Mrs Lynette Collair* Lecturer and researcher
Dept of Educational Psychology
University of Stellenbosch

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Prof R.L.Carolissen   -   Head of Department

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University of Stellenbosch

(*to whom all correspondence should be sent)

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e-mail (1): 15240398@sun.ac.za e-mail (2): lyncol@sun.ac.za

8.   RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and your child may discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your child participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to parent/guardian of the participant by Mercy Mahembe in English and I the parent/guardian have a good command of this language. I the parent/guardian of the participant was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent that the child may participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____

Name of parent/guardian

_____

_____   _____

Signature of parent/guardian   **Date**

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ [*name of the parent/guardian]. [H*e/she] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English and no translator was used.
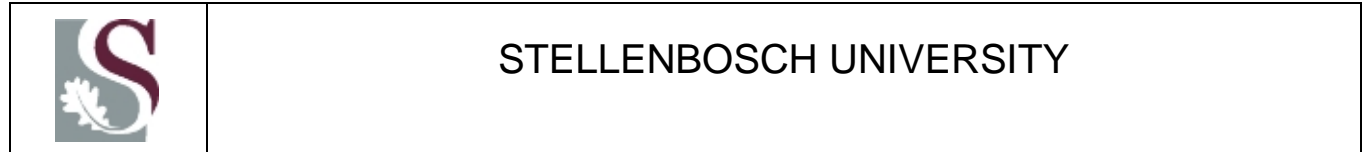
_____   _____

Signature of Investigator   **Date**

APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND ASSENT FORM

	# STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND ASSENT FORM

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:

The psycho-social experiences of immigrant learners at a Western Cape primary school.

RESEARCHERS NAME(S): Mercy Mahembe

ADDRESS: Department of Educational Psychology; Stellenbosch University; Private Bag X1; Matieland; Stellenbosch (7602).

What is RESEARCH?

Research is something we do to find new knowledge about the way things (and people) work. We use research projects or studies to help us find out more about for example, how immigrant learners are experiencing the new environment. Research also helps us to find better ways of helping and supporting immigrant learners.

What is this research project all about?

In this research I would like to find out from you, your experiences in this new country. This will help the parents of immigrant children and educators on developing better supporting ways for immigrant children.

Why have I been invited to take part in this research project?

You have been invited to take part in this study because you moved from your country of birth were you started schooling and came to South Africa. Having attended school in your home country and you proceeded in this new country makes you the best person for this project because you can narrate your experiences.

Who is doing the research?

My name is Mercy Mahembe and I am a student at Stellenbosch University. This project is a requirement of my university work.

What will happen to me in this study?

You will be asked to answer some questions on your experiences in South Africa. Some drawings and writings will be done in a way that illustrates your experiences.

All the information that I will gather in our conversations with you in connection with this study will be kept strictly confidential. All interviews will be recorded using a digital voice recorder. The recorded information will be transformed to writing (transcribed). Once the interviews have been transcribed, the recorded files will be deleted. No information will be disclosed in the public domain without your permission as required by law.

If abstracts from our interview are used in the research report, a pseudonym will be assigned for you. All the identifying information in the research report will be taken out or changed in order to protect your privacy and identity. The data (information) of the study, in its original form, will however, be available to the supervisor of this study, for verification purposes.

You are also going to be observed while you are in class, break time and home time and you will be aware of it. The interviews and drawings will be done in the school environment. The

interviews will take place after school at an appropriate time slot to be determined by the principal. Hence appointments will be made according to the principal's time allocation decision. The will not interfere with your daily learning.

Can anything bad happen to me?

The study does not cause any harm to you. Since we will be talking about your experiences in the new environment should you feel any discomfort feel free to inform me, your parents or your teacher and some counselling sessions will be provided to you.

Can anything good happen to me?

The study will help you express your experiences in South Africa freely and without being judged. The information you will give may help other immigrant children who are to come on what to expect, as well as help teachers and parents to be aware of your experiences so that they will be better able to support immigrant learners and it will help in improving immigrant children's lives in this country.

Will anyone know I am in the study?

Yes you're parents, the school teachers and some of the immigrant learners who will be participating in the study.

Who can I talk to about the study?

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me, Mercy Mahembe (cell: 0843604492), my teacher Mrs L Collair (tel) +27 21808 2104 or your principal and Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

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What if I do not want to do this?

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You may choose whether to be in this study or not. If you choose to be in the study you may withdraw at any time with no blame at all. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study.

Do you understand this research study and are you willing to take part in it?

YES   NO

Has the researcher answered all your questions?

YES   NO

Do you understand that you can pull out of the study at any time?

YES   NO

_____   _____

Signature of Child   Date

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Individual Interview Guide

Section A: Biographical information

Demographic Data

Please provide, for statistical purposes, the following information about yourself.

Q1. Gender

Boy	
Girl	

Q2. How old are you now?   _____

Q3. How old were you when first come to South Africa?

Q4. Home Language _____

Q4. Other languages you can speak_____

Q5. Nationality _____

Q7. Did you attend school in your country before coming to South Africa?

Q8. What grade were you when you left your country?

Q9. When you arrived in South Africa were you admitted into the same grade?

Q10. How long have you been in South Africa?

Q11. Religious Orientation

Christian (Catholic)	
Christian (Protestant)	
Islamic/Muslim	
Jewish	
African Traditional	
Hindu	
Buddhist	
Other (Specify)	

SECTION B:

1. How does it feel being a (*name of the native country*) in a South African school?

2. What was it like for you with regards to adjusting to the new environment?

3. Was it easy to make friends with your classmates when you first came?

4. How do you experience having to learn and speak English language all the time within the school environment?

5. How do you feel about your stay in South Africa?

6. If your life was a movie and we rewind it to when you were in your home country, how did you feel about yourself before you came to S.A and now?

7. In comparison to other children in your class do you think you do things in the same way as they do?

8. Was your character changed by the new environment?

9. May you explain how your treatment within the school is like?

10. May you describe a typical day with your family during the weekends and school holidays?

11. How is your confidence compared to when you first came to South Africa?

12. From what we have discussed do you have anything you would like to tell or ask me?

APPENDIX E: OBSERVATION GUIDE

In the class room

- Classroom seating arrangement
- Seating position of the observed
- Participation in class
- Participation in class group work

Break time or home time

- Associates
- Games played
- Role played
- Language used

APPENDIX F: DRAW-TELL-TECHNIQUE-GUIDE

Draw-tell-technique-guide

While learners are trapped in their helpless silence by their inability to communicate in the dominant language they experience the sheer joy of breaking their silence through silent speech of drawing and writing (Igoa 1995).

Image making instructions (will be done in a group)

First drawing: Their experience as they left their native country to the host country.

In the form of a film strip (Illustrated example of film strip) I want you to relax take a deep breath then draw the events that you still remember which happened when you were living your home country, write the thoughts you had and some of the words you said to anyone who was there. The film strip has to illustrate your departure and well as your experience when you arrived in South Africa.

Second drawings: Their experiences in the new school

In the form of a film strip (Illustrated example of film strip) I want you to relax take a deep breath then draw the events that you still remember which happened when you first attend school in South Africa, you can write the thoughts you had and some words you shared with anyone who was around.

Third drawings: Their day to day experiences in the school environment

In the form of a film strip (Illustrated example of film strip) I want you to relax, take a deep breath then draw the day to day events that you encounter in the school premises i.e. in the classroom, during break time, sporting time and home time, you can write the thoughts you always have and some words you share with anyone who is around.