

**METHAMPHETAMINE ADDICTION: TOWARDS A PREVENTION STRATEGY IN A  
MINISTERIAL APPROACH TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE DURING MID-ADOLESCENCE  
WITHIN THE LAVENDER HILL SETTING**

by  
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at  
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Promoter: Prof. Daniël J. Louw

April, 2014

## **Declaration**

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

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## **Abstract**

Motivated by the observation that children living in the Western Cape face challenges relating to methamphetamine (*tik*) abuse, this research attempts to develop and propose a strategy that can be used in preventing mid-adolescents from engaging in *tik* use. To develop this strategy, a contextual analysis and hermeneutical process of the life of mid-adolescents and the environment in which *tik* abuse is occurring was initially undertaken. Through a contextual analysis of children living in Lavender Hill and surrounding areas, it was discovered that most children were attracted to *tik* due to the influence of modern technology, rampant poverty, the cheap cost of the drug, dysfunctionality of families, influence of gangs and lack of recreation facilities.

Acknowledging that adolescence is an important stage in the formation of the character of any individual, this research attests that adolescents who use and abuse *tik* are those who do not have an enabling family and societal environment. It is suggested in this research that the Church can play a pivotal role in creating a socio-spiritual environment that would enable adolescents to develop themselves in such a manner that they do not need to use *tik*, or any other drug for that matter.

This research thus develops a prevention strategy for dealing with *tik* abuse during mid-adolescence. This preventive strategy centres on the Church being of service to others. Based on a literature research conducted on the Lavender Hill community of the Cape Flats, this research proposes practical recommendations that could help different Christian churches in the fight against methamphetamine use by mid-adolescents. These recommendations attempt to involve different members of the community in the spirit that John Mbiti encapsulates in the proverb “We are therefore I am”. In this all-inclusive endeavour, this research supposes that if a community is properly functioning, it is possible for it to weed out unwanted elements in a manner that protects all its members, particularly the young.

## **Key words**

Methamphetamine, substance abuse, addiction, gangsters, mid-adolescents, hermeneutics, Church, initiation, identity, human dignity

## Opsomming

Die studie fokus op die vraagstuk van Metamfetamien-verslawing onder jeuggroepe binne die konteks van die Kaapse Vlakte met 'n besondere fokus op die Lavender Hill-area. Daar is besluit om op middel-adolessensie te fokus omdat dit die fase is waarin jongmense uiters broos is en veral vatbaar is vir buite-invloede. Dit is ook die fase waarin vaste gedragspatrone binne identiteitsvorming vasgelê word. Die oogmerk was om veral op voorkomingstrategieë binne gemeentelike verband te fokus ten einde die pastorale bediening van die problematiek bewus te maak.

Omdat verslawing ingebed is binne plaaslike kultuurkontekste, is besluit om aan te sluit by 'n sosiaal-kontekstuele analise. Metamfetamien (of tik) raak betekenisraamwerke asook die mens se soeke na erkenning en aanvaarding. Vandaar die keuse vir 'n kwalitatiewe benadering in aansluiting by 'n pastoraal-hermeneutiese metodologie.

Die sosiaal-kontekstuele analise in die Lavender Hill-area het aangetoon dat veral die sosiale media en tegnologie 'n groot rol speel in die gebruik van tik onder kinders. Binne 'n armoedekultuur en die impak van gesinsverbrokkeling op jongmense se identiteitsontwikkeling, veral binne die bruingemeenskap, word 'n teelaarde vir dwelmisbruik geskep. Tik is bekostigbaar en die situasie word deur bendes (gangsters) uitgebuit. Daar is ook bevind dat omgewingsfaktore 'n bydraende rol speel, veral die gebrek aan doeltreffende ontspanningsgeriewe.

As gevolg van die gebrek aan voldoende sosiale en familiale ondersteuningstrukture, word persoonlikheidsontwikkeling en karaktervorming hierdeur nadelig beïnvloed. Teen hierdie agtergrond stel die studie voor dat die kerk binne gemeenteverband as 'n soort 'familie' gestruktureer moet word. Die kerk is die skakel tussen die sosiale dimensie en spirituele raamwerke. Die gemeentelike bediening moet derhalwe by identiteitsontwikkeling betrokke wees ten einde voorkomend op te tree. Kerklike voorkomingstrategieë moet gekoppel wees aan die ekklesiale modus van diakonale uitreik ondanks religieuse and kulturele grense. In dié verband moet verskillende denomenasies hande vat en ook intensief saamwerk met plaaslike gemeenskapsleiers. Dit is hier waar die Afrika-spiritualiteit, soos onder andere deur John Mbiti geformuleer, 'n deurslaggewende rol kan speel, naamlik: ons bestaan vir mekaar, daarom leef ek as individu en bestaan ek as mens. Hierdeur word 'n inklusiewe benadering geprofileer wat die gemeenskap inskakel ten einde die euwel van tik doeltreffend te bestry.

## Sleutelwoorde

Metamfetamien, substansafhanklikheid, verslawing, bendegeweld/gangsterisme, middel-adolessensie, hermeneutiek, kerk, identiteit, menswaardigheid.

## **Dedication**

This work is dedicated to the memory of my loving parents Ian Raymond Tex M'buka and Ellen M'buka who went to be with the Lord on 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2007 and 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 1999 respectively. Without your godly counsel and guidance, I couldn't have reached this far. May your souls continue resting in God's eternal peace.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## Problem identification and outline of research

### 1.1. Motivation

Methamphetamine<sup>1</sup> has robbed a considerable number of mid-adolescents of their God-given dignity. Despite being fully aware of the dangers associated with the use of this drug, many mid-adolescents continue to use it. This behaviour is characteristic of this age in which one rejects authority and asserts his/her own beliefs and individuality. According to Leggett (2001:7) “becoming an adult means asserting one's independence and forming one's own opinions, and this is usually done by seeking out flaws in the ideas and values of authority figures”. Therefore, in spite of the education that children may receive as to the dangers of drug abuse, they often ignore such instruction. It is a result of this kind of behaviour that most communities on the Cape Flats are struggling with the effects of methamphetamine and even though there are efforts to remedy this situation, it is progressively becoming even worse.

The present research was principally motivated by the incessant articles and reports<sup>2</sup>, in both print and electronic media, on the alarming challenges that South Africa was facing with regards to the abuse of Methamphetamine. It was particularly the story of Ellen Pakkies, a woman from Lavender Hill which struck the attention of the researcher. The story, written by Sylvia Walker, chronicles the manner in which Pakkies struggled to contain her son's addiction to this drug. Having tried to cope with her son's unbecoming behaviour, Pakkies strangle the boy to death as she was convinced that killing the boy was the only way she could find rest from the stressful hardship that the boy had caused (Walker 2009).

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<sup>1</sup> The term Methamphetamine and Tik will be used interchangeably throughout the research.

<sup>2</sup> Some of the articles that the researcher came across are: 1. 'Tik' is Killing Communities ([www.ngopulse.org](http://www.ngopulse.org) June 3, 2009). 2. South Africa: battling Cape Town's drug epidemic (Jonathan Miller, Channel 4 News. 1st June, 2010) 3. 'Youths given tik and R60 to kill Somalis' (Tshego Lepule. [www.iol.co.za](http://www.iol.co.za). 29th June, 2010). 4. Tik – Know the facts (Craig Pedersen. [www.crime-watch.co.za](http://www.crime-watch.co.za). 4th October, 2010). 5. Tik, Tik, Tik: Methamphetamine Rage in Cape Town's Suburbs ([www.transculturations.org](http://www.transculturations.org) 4th October, 2010).

Even though a plethora of studies have been previously conducted on the use (or abuse) of *tik*, little has been written on how the church can positively engage in helping children to refrain from indulging in the use and abuse of this drug.

An investigation into the challenges facing those living in the Cape Flats relating to the impact of methamphetamine on this community, makes one to pause and muse, as did De Gruchy (2006: 31), on whether the church<sup>3</sup> has played its expected role towards humanity:

The Christian Church is called to be a sign of the 'new humanity' God has brought into being through the death and resurrection of Christ and... to live, act and hope in ways that contribute to human well-being in all dimensions.

Echoing De Gruchy's sentiments, Monsma (2006: 57-58) argues that Christians are citizens of the heavenly kingdom as well as the earthly kingdom which they presently inhabit. Monsma (ibid.) explains that in view of the fact that they belong to the two aforementioned kingdoms, Christians have a responsibility of seeing to it that they "be an influence for good in the nations and communities where God has placed them". In view of De Gruchy's and Monsma's observations, it can be deduced that the Church has to contribute to strategies for preventing mid-adolescents from getting addicted to methamphetamine if it (the Church) is to promote human dignity and make an impact in its communities. Preventive strategies can certainly help in protecting human dignity of the children and families living in areas that are currently encroached by methamphetamine.

In order to achieve this, a research was conducted based on what has previously been written on problems of drugs and how they affect both the users and non-users alike particularly against the background of an influx of these drugs.

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<sup>3</sup> In an interview with Erin Clark (s.d.) conducted two years after the end of her murder trial, Ellen Pakkies had this to say about her view of the church in Lavender Hill: "Sometimes it feels like, as far as my experience, that the Church is there, but not the people" (vice.com). This statement by Ellen therefore makes one to conclude that the Church as a community is not available in Lavender Hill; the only Church that is available in this community is the Church as an institution or a dormant organisation.

## 1.2. Problem statement

Mid-adolescence is an important stage in human development, a stage in which the growing person displays “the promise of adult forms and contours” and also exhibits the “emerging adult capacities for knowing and for thought” (Fowler in Fowler et.al 1996:16). It is a stage in which children’s potential is exposed and their bodies mature and their emotions become activated (ibid.). During this stage of development, mid-adolescents often find themselves in situations that expose them to a multitude of dangers, which if not handled properly and with due care; can lead them into physical as well as psychological calamities. As it is the case with most children all over the world, things are not different with children living in Southern Africa.

Studies<sup>4</sup> have revealed that many mid-adolescents in Southern Africa are being exposed to the use of dangerous drugs (both prescribed and illegal), of which *tik* is the most abused drug in South Africa’s Western Cape Province where 98 per cent of abusers of the drug are found. Most mid-adolescents abuse *tik* because, it gives them “what they don’t have: confidence, power and heightened sexual levels and the feeling of being on top of the world” (*UCT Monday Paper* volume 24.11: 23 May, 2005). Some young first time drug users and non-typical drug takers can be attracted to *tik* as a response to the image projected in public that by using *tik*, there are some advantages for the user. According to Prince (s.d.) there is a belief that *tik* helps its users to manage weight problems thus it has become popular among many young women who would not have taken drugs in normal circumstances. The other reason that makes *tik* popular is that, “it is cheap and widely available, as it is easy to make, due to the fact that the recipe is on the Internet, a thing that makes it possible to have a lot of small operations making it” (ibid.). Gossop (1998:18) says that most of those involved in drugs find themselves in their situation due to psychological and social influences generated by the users themselves. This result from what they (the drug users) hear from others, and the

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<sup>4</sup> Some of the studies concerning exposure to drugs by mid-adolescents are: The SBHSQ Report : A day in the life of an American adolescent: Substance use facts update (August 29,2013); Economic and cultural correlates of cannabis use among mid-adolescents in 31 countries. NicGabhainn ter Bogt T, Schmid H. Nic Gabhainn S, Fotiou A, and Vollebergh W (2006); Peak risk about 16 years old for teens misusing prescription drugs. Michigan State University.; Extramedical use of prescription pain relievers by youth aged 12 to 21 years in the United States: National estimates by age and by year. Elizabeth A. Meier, Jonathan P. Troost, & James C. Anthony (2012). American Medical Association.

immediate social circumstances in which the drug is consumed. According to Magamdela (2009) The Medical Research Council of South Africa indicates that the average age of patients who reported *tik* as their primary substance of abuse in the second half of 2008 was 24 and some of the abusers were boys in early teen years. Sussman and Ames (2001:28) observe that most drug abusers have ended up engaging in criminal activities so as to sustain their drug use. They (Sussman and Ames *ibid.*) also attest that unremitting use of drugs may result in mental and other physiological problems.

Media reports indicate that most of those who seek help at drug counselling institutions in Cape Town are, “adolescents with a history of criminal activities and violent behaviour”.

In brief, the core problems of this research are:

- (a) To identify the social and contextual factors that play a decisive role in *tik*-abuse among youth (mid-adolescents) on the Cape Flats.
- (b) To probe into a kind of community-oriented ecclesiology, i.e. how the local communities of faith in Lavender Hill should respond to substance abuse and what a prevention strategy in youth ministry should entail.

### **1.3. Research questions**

The following broad and overarching questions will guide the following research:

- What challenges are faced by pastoral ministry in as far as substance abuse is concerned and what is the potential impact of Christian spirituality on youth culture and identity formation?
  - Can the context in which mid-adolescents find themselves have an influence on their life and their involvement in self-destructive behaviours like the use of *tik*?
  - What is the interplay between substance abuse and the structures of the social environment?



- What is the effect of methamphetamine on identity-formation during mid-adolescence?
- What are the effects of *tik* on mid-adolescents and communities living on the Cape Flats?

## 1.4. Goals

- To investigate the effect(s) of *tik* abuse on identity formation of mid-adolescents.
- To investigate the role of faith communities in coming up with prevention strategies that create links with community leaders and structures.

## 1.5. Methodology

Methodologically, the present research brings into conversation the contextual analysis<sup>5</sup> method that is proposed by the studies of Hendriks (2004), and hermeneutical method<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Contextual analysis is a methodology used in studying groups of people. This kind of research is done by either studying the “the functions and dynamics” of a group or by studying the “impact” a particular group may have on its members (Iversen 1991:3). According to Iversen (ibid.), when studying the impact of the group on its members, the researcher focuses “on the group as a context for the individuals belonging to the group under study”. The reason for focusing on the group as a context for individuals is the assumption that “the actions and attitudes” of individuals are a result of the impact their group has on them (ibid.). Echoing Iversen above, Babbie & Mouton (2009:272) explain that understanding events in the context where they take place is very important in research due to the fact that, it helps the researcher to get a true meaning of the events affecting the group under study. This researcher chose contextual analysis above other research methods because he believes in what Hendriks (2004:69) says regarding use of contextual analysis in doing theological research. According to Hendriks (ibid.) contextual analysis is used in situations where congregations (church) seem to concentrate on its own welfare at the expense of the community in which it is located. He (Hendriks ibid.) further argues that when the church reaches this point where it seems to ignore/be unaware of the plight of those living in its community, the church may come to a point where it dies spiritually. This death according to Hendriks (ibid.) comes about because a living church is supposed to focus on God and be able to recognize the “anguish and pain of its neighbour” thereby living to the true meaning of “sacrificial love”. Therefore, contextual analysis is aimed at healing the sickness of “an ingrown church” (Hendriks ibid.).

<sup>6</sup> Babbie & Mouton (2001:30-31) explain that hermeneutics is a research method that was popularised by German scholars Wilhelm Dilthey and Max Weber, who argued for the “subjective understanding or interpretation of human action”. McLeod (2003:7) postulates that this method originated from the way Bible scholars “interpreted the meaning of incomplete fragments of Scripture”.

offered by Louw (1999). Contextual analysis method was chosen over other research methods because as Hendriks (2004:27) argues, Christianity has to challenge believers to give special consideration, to the context in which they are rooted. This means that Christianity has to understand the setting(s) in which particular things happen, and when it does that, it will be able to get answers to the problems being faced in that particular socio-cultural milieu. In agreement with Hendriks, Capps (1993:5) calls upon counsellors to go for a deeper understanding of people's problems because "in everyday human existence, there is always far more there than meets the eye." The present research therefore sought to examine the setting in order to better understand the context<sup>7</sup> in which methamphetamine abuse is taking place.

In addition to contextual analysis, this research also makes use of hermeneutics. The hermeneutical method was chosen because of its importance in conducting pastoral counselling, as suggested by the studies of Louw (1999). It is an important method for doing research in pastoral counselling as the studies of Louw (1999) suggest. Louw (1999:7) contends that, hermeneutics as a way of doing research in pastoral counselling "is about religious experiences which give an indication of believers' perception of God and their interpretation of the significance of their existence." Considering the fact that this research aspires to come up with a pastoral strategy for counselling mid-adolescents against involvement in use of methamphetamine; hermeneutics will be employed to deal with the question of identity in youth. As an analytical tool, hermeneutics will help in addressing the quest for meaning in youth culture. Its chief importance will be to help in interpreting the behaviour of mid-adolescents and the reasons that lead them to using (and often times abusing) methamphetamine. With proper interpretation of youth behaviours and the reasons for taking the drug, chances are that more meaning and a positive faith development will take place in the lives of the affected youth thus achieving the aim of pastoral hermeneutics. Louw (1999:242) explains: "pastoral hermeneutics attempts to clarify the significance and existential implications of the encounter<sup>8</sup> between God and humankind, thereby focusing its

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<sup>7</sup> This context covers the stage of development in which mid-adolescents are, the environment in which they are living and things that they are facing in their daily life.

<sup>8</sup> Van Deusen Hunsinger (1995:65 in Louw 1998:108) explains that there is a "correlative unity of co-existence" between God and human beings through their encounter. Louw (1998:108) assents to this and explains that this

attention on the discovery of meaning and on fostering the growth of faith". A proper faith development will thus result in a positive self-image, which is a recipe for one to stand against the temptation of using drugs. Apart from the above reasons, the other reasons which made the researcher to use hermeneutics are the following:

- Methamphetamine and its abuse are closely linked to social and contextual issues. Hermeneutics as the art of interpretation deals with the interplay between text and context. So with hermeneutics it will not be difficult to analyse the impact of the social context on both youth and the understanding of faith within a prevention strategy.
- Hermeneutics evaluate concepts and life issues within local settings and deals inter alia with the relationship between identity and schemata of interpretation.
- Hermeneutics is engaged in the assessment of meaning. The assumption of the research is that *tik*-abuse is closely related to attitude, life with convictions, commitments and belief systems. Due to the human quest for meaning, the research wants to investigate the link between meaning and human behaviours.

The research is a **literature research** which was done by looking at existing literature on the world of mid-adolescents in particular, and the history of drug abuse and current strategies being used by communities in preventing mid-adolescents from getting addicted to Methamphetamine. The literature was extracted from books, newspapers, periodicals, academic journals, and the internet. The extracted data was then **critically analysed** and the results were written down using **logical argumentation**. The data collected is not only from the field of pastoral care but it includes information from other disciplines of study because as Louw (1998:25) puts it, "pastoral care cannot be done outside scientific knowledge due to the fact that scientific knowledge considers the psyche and social context as important resources for knowledge."

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co-existence is what should make pastoral counselling researchers engage with human science methods in their research because even though the human sciences and theology are different fields of study, "they have an 'inseparable unity'". Despite arguing that the two cannot be separated from each other, Louw (ibid.) warns that "in pastoral theology, care should be taken not to translate theological into psychological categories, or vice versa". The two should always be "conceived as existing on different levels."

The main premise taken by this research is that “all truth belongs to God” and therefore we cannot avoid tapping knowledge from other fields on the pretext of that knowledge being unchristian.

### **1.6. Value of research for the discipline of Practical theology**

According to Osmer (2008:4) Practical Theology is a field of theology which aims at interpreting various situations, by considering things that are happening, why the things are happening, what ought to be happening and how people might respond. Osmer’s argument above had earlier on been expressed by Poling & Miller (1985:64) who argued that the task of practical theology is not just about discovering truths to which “communities must conform their lives”, but it is about finding more and sufficient ways through which we can articulate “the depth, richness, and possibilities of life as they are found in concrete communities”. As practical theologians we have the responsibility of interpreting the good news of the Kingdom of God and salvation in terms of human experience/reality and social context “so that the substance of our Christian faith may contribute to a life of meaning and quality” (Louw 1998:1). With these views in mind, this research aims at providing pro-active care to mid-adolescents living in areas exposed to methamphetamine abuse. It is therefore, the hope of this research that the results of the research will help us to stop being involved in re-active care, as it is currently the case with pastoral care givers. It is the belief of the researcher that the results of this research will provide Practical Theologians and communities affected by methamphetamine abuse, with knowledge and skills for use in preventing mid-adolescents from getting addicted to methamphetamine.

### **1.7. Ethical considerations**

Considering the fact that every person has rights that have to be protected and respected, the researcher followed guidelines outlined by the Stellenbosch University's Research Ethics Committee regarding ways of conducting research in the humanities. This was done considering the sensitivity of the research as it touches on issues, which have to do with the dignity (a person's value or worthiness) of children. As a result of the fact that the research was based primarily on literature research, the researcher has given credit of the information gained to the copyright holders of such information. The researcher has also tried as much as possible to present all the information gathered

with much accuracy. This, was done because as Søggaard (1996:22) argues, “it is our obligation (researchers) to treat the information we gather correctly and protect the respondent from public misrepresentation or exploitation.” The researcher also tried his best to avoid using the research as a means of evangelizing people because as Søggaard (ibid.) says “research must not be used to trick a person in order to sell a product including a religious product or faith.”

## **1.8. Focus area of Research**

Despite the fact that methamphetamine abuse is rampant all over Cape Flats, the research will put a special focus on Lavender Hill as it is the hardest hit of the Cape Flats areas affected by the epidemic of methamphetamine. Lavender Hill has been nicknamed “Gangland” and is “the most dangerous place on the Cape Flats” (Calix s.d.). Lavender Hill was chosen as the focus area for this research because of the rampant gangsterism taking place in the area and because according to MacMaster (2010: 58) drugs cannot be divorced from gangs as the two are synonymous all over the world.

Lavender Hill is a predominantly coloured community, which is located 30 km from the Cape Town city centre, on the Cape Flats. Lavender Hill has an estimated population of 100, 000 people, 60% of whom are unemployed (Brittijn 2013:51). The population is mostly composed of women the majority of whom are unemployed single mothers.

The research will focus on mid-adolescence stage of development because this is the stage in which people’s future is defined. It is a stage in which children embrace behaviours and values that will determine their future. In Lavender Hill, as is certainly the case elsewhere in the world, it is at this stage of development that most people begin to experiment with drugs and even begin to use them.

### **1.8.1. Historical background**

Lavender Hill existed as Hardevlei before the forced removals and was bordered by Rondevlei (now Vrygrond) and the current areas of Grassy Park, Steenberg/Retreat and Capricorn Business Park. It became a relocation area (in line with the Group Areas Act of 1950) for people removed from the ‘white areas’ of Lower Claremont, Windermere, Newlands, Plumstead, Simons Town, Tramway Road and District six. The area became a dumping ground for people of colour (non-whites) after Cape Town City authorities,

forcefully purchased land from its original owners in 1967 and 1974, despite protests from the landowners who were not amused with the low prices offered by the City authorities for their land. After purchasing the land, the City Council constructed low cost double and triple story flats which became homes for those forcefully removed from such places as Lower Claremont, District six, Newlands and Plumstead (Bowers 2005:144-146).

### **1.8.2. Economic activities**

Despite the fact that the majority of the people living in the area have no employment; those who are employed are mostly working in clothing industries. Most of those who cannot find jobs and even some who have jobs but do not earn enough money to sustain their living; earn some money through taking in relatives and friends to help pay rent. Some of the residents earn their living by involving themselves in what is locally called “*smokkelling vir die pot*”<sup>9</sup> (Bowers 2005:148-149).

### **1.8.3. Literacy**

It cannot be disputed that education is of prime importance in transformation of any community because it helps those belonging to the communities have an understanding of things taking place in their community, as well as to participate positively in developmental issues concerning their communities. With good education, people can help their children with their school work/homework thereby helping in development of children’s chances of succeeding in their education. Despite the fact that parents do not have time to help their children with homework<sup>10</sup>, some of the children from the Lavender Hill make it to high school. Most of those who do reach high school level of education do not succeed in their studies as it can be seen in the following information sourced from the website of Lavender Hill High School: The High School itself, “which is a microcosm of the community”, registers an annual dropout rate of 70%

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<sup>9</sup> “*Smokkelling vir die pot*” involves operation of shebeens (unregistered liquor stores) and dealing in drugs (Bowers 2005:149).

<sup>10</sup> It has to be noted that despite the fact most Lavender Hill parents are unemployed and may be present at home for most part of the day; they may not be available in the life of children in as far as helping with school work is concerned. Their being unavailable in the life of children is not physical absence but rather, absence as a result of the parents having low levels of literacy.

(lavenderhillss.org). This information is supported by Calix (2013:104) who postulates that according to education statistics released by the Western Cape Government in 2011, out of 339 learners that entered grade 8 at Lavender Hill High School in 2007, only 70 reached Grade 12 “and only 45 of these learners wrote the matriculation examination”. The school’s website further explains that the school’s challenges arise from the fact that most students in the school have “poor self-image, bubbling outbursts of anger and violence”, they are involved in truancy and Vandalism; the school registers a lot of teenage pregnancies; the school’s parent body has a “limited education and few fund raising and management skills” (lavenderhillss.org).

#### **1.8.4. Recreation Facilities**

Stress can be induced by a plethora of stimuli, and participation in recreational activities is important in order to keep stress under check. Despite the fact that recreational activities are very important in reducing stress levels in adults as well as in development of children, not many places are equipped with such facilities. According to Bowers (2005:156), Lavender Hill is one such place, which lacks in recreational facilities. Feldman 2004:2 in Bowers (ibid.) explains that for a long time Lavender Hill had no recreational facilities such as parks, playgrounds, community halls, swimming pools and Libraries. The area currently has one paved Park and a sports field but these facilities are unsafe for use by children because gangsters populate them.

#### **1.8.5. Gangsterism**

In 2010 Llewellyn MacMaster, then a doctoral student in the department of practical theology and missiology at the Stellenbosch University’s faculty of theology conducted a research on gangsterism. The research sought to analyse gangsterism in the Cape Flats. This research confirmed what previous studies in other parts of the world had shown: that gangsterism is rampant in highly impoverished communities, such as those found on the Cape Flats where our focus area of research is located. In a most recent research, Calix (2013:109) discovered that in Lavender Hill gang leaders take advantage

of the poverty and “difficult social circumstances<sup>11</sup>” in which most of the youth from the area find themselves in and use it to persuade them to join gang activities.

According to information gathered from British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) website (Harding 2012), gangs have turned Lavender Hill into an area resembling a battlefield (Harding 2012). Gangs have taken total control of the area and almost no day passes without hearing stories of a gang member gunning down a member of a rival gang. An article posted on Sozo Foundation website echoes Harding’s report above and explains that in Lavender Hill, “gangs have largely replaced council authority and filled the vacuum left by absent fathers and by the lack of jobs, social services and recreation facilities” (Lavender Hill, [s.a]). According to MacMaster (2010:58-60) there is a big connection between gangsterism and drugs like *tik*. It is therefore in view of this connection between gangsterism and drugs that the researcher decided to explore into the challenge of drugs, *tik* in particular, among the youth of Lavender Hill. *Tik* was chosen because Lavender Hill is a coloured township and also because *tik* is the drug of choice for the majority of drug users in most Coloured communities (c.f. page 93).

## 1.9. Definition of key terms:

In this research, a number of terms have been used to mean different things in a way that may be different from how some sectors of society and academia may understand the same terms. This section of the research then gives the meaning of the following terms in relation to this research.

1. **Adolescence/adolescent:** Defining the concept adolescent is not an easy thing as it expressed in different ways by different commentators. In order to give a clear understanding of the concept, we will first look at the historical background to the term. According to Steffoff (1990:15) for a very long time in history, adolescence was not taken as “a distinct stage of human life, in part because prehistoric and ancient civilizations did

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<sup>11</sup> According to Clix (2013:112-113) gangs target young high school students because they are at a point where they have a lot of stress “provided by the anxieties of adjusting to high school curriculum, workload and social tensions”. Clix (ibid.) goes on to say that the gangs exploit the children’s “fear, their insecurity, and their need to belong...they search out the ones that won’t make it and the offer them an alternative, a ‘home’, a community.”



not think that individuals developed through a number of stages". To those living in ancient times, one was either a child or an adult. Steffoff (ibid.) goes on to explain that:

People were either children or adults, and children were regarded as small, incomplete adults, not as beings with ways of thinking and feeling that were unlike those of older people. Once children were able to support themselves, to have their own children, or to carry out some other task of adult society, they were simply considered to be adults, with adult responsibilities and privileges.

It was later on, during "the classical Greek and Roman civilizations" that the stage of adolescence was recognized as forming part of human development, and according to Steffoff (1990:16) the term adolescence came from "the Latin verb *adolescere*", which means "to grow up". According to (Steffoff ibid.) not every adolescent had the privilege of attaining adolescence because the stage was reserved for a specific group of children. This group of children were children of wealth Greeks. To attain this status meant that one had the privilege of having some of their adult responsibilities postponed so that they could receive "extended education or training in philosophy, the arts, religion, or other areas" (Steffoff ibid.). According to Steffoff (ibid.) the word adolescent found a place in the English language after it was used by "the English poet, John Lydgate" who used it in one of the poems he published in 1430. Later on, in 1762, the French philosopher and writer Jean-Jacques Rousseau published an influential book on Education in which he wrote about the adolescence of his main character (a boy named Emile). This was the first time ever in history that adolescence was presented "as a distinct stage of life and state of mind".

We have looked at a brief history of adolescence and how the term found itself in the world of human development, but the big question would thus be; what is adolescence and when does it occur? To answer these questions, we shall look at what some psychologists give as the definition of the term and their explanation as to when adolescence occurs in children. Balk (1995:5) and Jackson & Abosi (2006:86) explain that adolescence<sup>12</sup> is mainly considered to be the stage in a person's life which starts at

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<sup>12</sup> Steffoff (1990:22) says that this period runs from the age of 10 to 21, however this argument is counter argued by Balk (1995:5-7) who despite agreeing that adolescence starts at the age of 10, explains that adolescence runs to the years beyond the age of 21. According to Balk, (ibid. 7) adolescent years can go to the age of 40 in some people. Balk (ibid.) explains that the delay in the end of adolescence depends on one's "ambivalence towards responsibility, identity, and interpersonal maturity".

the onset of puberty, or the beginning of sexual maturity. The period acts as a transition stage from childhood to adulthood. According to Balk (1995:5-7), Olson (1984:25) and Olson (1987:23) adolescence period takes place in the following three stages:

- a. **Early Adolescence:** This stage takes place between the ages of 10 and 14 and it is a period in which individuals go through some changes like moving from primary school to secondary school. This move to a different school may result in bringing anxiety into the life of the individual as they may have to live in a new environment and have to make new friends (Balk 1995:5-7). This is supported by Olson (1984:25) who adds that during this time boys and girls experience sexual maturation, with boys having their “first ejaculations and a sharp increase in the frequency of erections” while girls “experience menarche (onset of menses)”. Olson (ibid.) goes on to say that it is also during this stage that both girls and boys “develop secondary sex characteristics including increase in body hair, growth and breast development”. This is also the stage in life when children’s behaviours and actions “become far motivated by peer pressure than by parental pressure” (Olson ibid.).
- b. **Mid-Adolescence:** This stage spans from the ages 15 to 17 and it takes place during high school/secondary school years. According to Balk (ibid. 6), these years result in the young person becoming more independent as they spend most of their time at school “away from home and with peers<sup>13</sup>”. Echoing Balk above, (Olson 1987:23) adds that during this stage, the young person starts having interest in members of the opposite sex thereby developing his/her sexual identity. Olson (ibid.) further says that this ability to interact with members of the opposite sex leads to appoint where the youth builds self-confidence which is important for his/her being able to “establish stable marriage relationships in

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<sup>13</sup> Steffoff (1990:59) explains that peer groups are very important in the life of adolescents despite them (adolescents) being at a stage in life where separation from family seems important, they still have the desire for being close to someone as they miss “the sense of closeness and belonging that they experienced as younger children in the family”. The other reasons for joining peer groups, is to connect to “romantic or sexual attachments” which they find through their participation in group activities. Adolescents may also join peer groups to experiment with certain values, habits, and customs that may in future become part of their identity. According to (Olson 1984:25) these value, habits, and customs may not necessarily be those that are acceptable to the child’s family or church and they may therefore make the child to move even further away from parents and church.

future". According to Olson (1984:25) as the youth who are in this stage of development move away from home, they also "move away from parental influence" and this movement results in them "adhering to the norms and values of groups and organizations that are on the parents' non-approval list."

- c. **Late Adolescence:** This is the final stage of adolescence and it spans from the ages of 18 to 22 when the adolescent gains more independence from parents and contemplates leaving the family home so as to go and live on their own. According to Balk (1995: 6) the independence which is achieved during this stage may in some cases be delayed due to the fact that these days, many children "enter college and remain dependent on parental support". During this stage, children spend their energies focusing on the kind of future they want to live like, the kind of profession one wants to pursue, the kind of family they want to have and what kind of things they need to get rid of in order to have a better future. The other thing that happens in this stage is that the adolescent starts "feeling more comfortable living within his or her 'new' body" (Olson 1984:25). Although it has been argued that finishing college marks the end of adolescence in some people, there are some people who have finished college but they still have not come to a point where the stage has come to an end. According to Balk (1995:6.) one can still be an adolescent even in their 30s and 40s because adolescence does not only end with physical maturity but with the attainment of responsible living.

As is observable from this description of the term adolescence, the stage of adolescence covers different periods in a human development starting from the age of about 10 to 40 in some cases (Balk *ibid.*). Considering this fact, we will not be right to ascribe the term to children only and it is in view of this that all statements on adolescents in this research will ascribe to those that belong to the stage of mid-adolescence. For the purposes of the present research the term adolescence will be used to refer to the mid-adolescence which as shown above is characterised by a strong desire for attainment of independence from parents, as they spend most of their time in school away from parents; this is also the time when they achieve self-confidence.

The research will focus on mid-adolescence stage of development because this is the stage in which people's future is defined. It is a stage in which children embrace behaviours and values that will determine their future. During this stage in life, most of the decisions made by children are motivated by those they consider to be significant others or role-models in their life.

**1.9.2. Church:** Smit in Bediako et.al (2004:135) affirms that the term Church does not have a single meaning as it "can mean different things to different people and can refer to different realities." A general consideration of the diverse meanings of the term will be proposed so as to arrive at a definition that informs the present research.

- a) An institution: According to Guder (1985:66) the Church is an institution which was established during the time of apostles. This institution was established by Jesus Christ through the manner in which he interacted with his disciples which according to Guder (ibid.) shows that Christ was preparing them for "a special kind of institution". Guder (ibid.) argues that this institution "was to be very different from other institutions, having radically contrasting concepts of authority, leadership, service, and decision making, as well as a unique mission in the world". Guder's idea of the Church being an institution is supported by Koopman in Van der Walt (2005:136-138) who argues that the idea of the Church being an institution should be looked at basing on practices of the Church. He says that the ideology of an institution is found in a number of activities that are conducted by the Church such as worship service, practices of congregations, denominations and ecumenical bodies, and individual Christians in their normal daily roles and in voluntary organizations. Koopman (ibid.) argues that services of worship help those participating in the worship to "see alternative realities that are in conflict to the prior realities of a world where injustice reigns supreme..." When the participants see these alternative realities, they come to a point where their lives get transformed leading them to a point where they start participating in "the building" of those "alternative realities" (ibid.). Continuing his reflection of the Church as an institution, Koopman (ibid.) contends that the Church does not just depend on worship service alone but also on practices of congregations. He says that the practice of congregations for example the sharing of the

Eucharist/communion, leads the congregants to the point where they see the importance of sharing meals with the less fortunate in their neighbourhood. He argues that this spirit of sharing is what makes the congregation to stand as a witness for Christ in the world, thereby making the world feel the presence of Christ. In his final argument for the idea of the Church being an institution, Koopman (ibid.) explains that as an institution, the Church puts its role of being a priest into practice. The Church engages in reaching out (in solidarity) “with the marginalised and the wronged”. This is done through various services that the Church may provide to the hurting, and the services are done in conjunction with various “role players in other spheres of society” who may include the government, business people, and civil rights activists. Ultimately, Koopman explains that the Church as an institution moves individual Christians in their normal daily roles and in voluntary organizations, to a point where they participate in helping communities to achieve social and economic justice. This involvement in the life of communities comes into individual Church members after being equipped by the Church “with regard to moral decision-making” (ibid.). The Church is not only an institution, but it is also a community.

- b) A community: Bosch (1991:165-166), explains that the idea of community stems from the Greek term *ekklesia* which early believers used as a translation for the “Hebrew *kahal*”. According to Bosch (ibid.), in contemporary Greek, the term *ekklesia* “referred to the town meeting of free male citizens of a city of Greek constitution”. He (Bosch ibid. quoting Beker 1980:306) continues to say that the term found its place in the Church when the early Christians, probably those from Antioch, started applying it to “themselves”. It was effectively the apostle Paul who popularized the term as he took it wherever he went in his missionary journeys (Bosch ibid.). According to Bosch (ibid.) if one takes a closer look at how the Church operated during the time of Paul, there is every indication to the point that it was a community. This community says Bosch (ibid.) was a special one in that it had to conduct itself in a way that expressed what the members were in Christ. The membership had to practice love and “a practical concern for the material needs of fellow-members” and even those needs for them that were not part of the community itself. According to Bosch (ibid.) we can conclude that when

Paul talks of *ekklesia*, he refers to a community of believers because of the way he addresses the members of the Church. Paul throughout his epistles calls the members of the Church as kins. This kinship is expressed in his regular use of the terms “father, child/children and brother/brethren” (ibid.). Finally Bosch (ibid.) argues that the concept of community is also present throughout the New Testament as God is presented as being nearer to His people, and those who belonged to God are also presented as being nearer to each other “than they are to the Jews and Greeks”. Concurring with Bosch above, Kalilombe (1999:46-47) argues that as community, the Church is a people called in a very special way by God who has saved them and made them members of his family “by assimilating them to his Son Jesus Christ through Baptism and the Spirit”. Jesus Christ is the community’s pastor and leads the community “safely towards the Father”. This community is not just another community but “a community of salvation” which is “like an open house ready to welcome any new members” and goes an extra mile to invite as many outsiders it possibly can to partake in “the Wedding Feast (Mt.22) since God’s call is universal” (ibid.)

- c) Individual Christians: According to Smit in Bediako et.al (2004:143), the term Church does not just refer to institutions or communities of believers, but it also refers to individual Christians within the parameters of the *koinonia*. He contends that when thinking about the Church we should think of it in “the form of Christians as believers, as the salt of the earth and the light of the world, each involved in their own daily ways of following Jesus Christ and confessing the faith through their lives and actions.” Smit (ibid.), goes on to elucidate that looking at the Church in terms of how individual Christians live their lives in public sphere means considering how individual Christians, whether alone or in conjunction with others, offer themselves to communities and how they help in tackling various challenges being faced by various communities.

In the present research, the term Church will be used to mean and refer to all of the three above-mentioned aspects. As such, the Church will simultaneously be considered as an institution, a community and individual Christians.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Faith and mid-adolescence: a developmental approach

#### 2.0. Introduction

This chapter seeks to examine faith and development in children during mid-adolescence. The aim of conducting this examination is to investigate whether the socio-cultural context of adolescents can have a negative impact on adolescents to the point that it leads them to a situation where they can engage in self-destructive behaviours<sup>14</sup>. To achieve this, the chapter examines the social reality of adolescents<sup>15</sup> context in order to have a clear understanding of challenges being faced by adolescents, so that we can appreciate the context of adolescents. The chapter looks at this context by considering issues of growth and development, as well as culture and faith. It is of prime importance that this chapter takes an in-depth exploration of such issues considering their impact on the lives of adolescents and their reaction to life. It is an open secret, that the issues discussed in this chapter are in most cases neglected, yet they contribute in a very great way to the way adolescents react to the challenges they face, and these challenges include matters of involving oneself in use and abuse of dangerous substances such as *tik*. According to Kinnes (2 s.d:) adolescents are involved in most of the things they do (whether negative or positive) due to the fact that they tend to internalize messages they get through various media and cultures they encounter in their day to day life. It is for this reason that the researcher decided to look at how

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<sup>14</sup> By self-destructive behaviours, the researcher means such behaviours as involving one-self in the use of dangerous substances as *tik*.

<sup>15</sup> In this chapter, the term adolescent will be used interchangeably with the term 'child/children'. This is because adolescents who belong to the early and middle/mid stages of adolescence are children. According to Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, children are those that are below the age of 18 (unicef.org).

growth/development, and faith affect the way mid-adolescents, respond to the challenge of living in an environment, which is under attack by the epidemic of *tik* abuse.

The importance of this chapter is that it attempts to offer information that will make it possible to easily appreciate and comprehend the behaviour of adolescents in the Lavender Hill area of the Cape Flats. As such, this chapter will offer invaluable background information on the behaviour of adolescents in general; and thereafter, try and examine if adolescents in Lavender Hill conform or divert from such characterisation of adolescent comportment.

### **2.1.0. Growth and development**

Every living thing has the potential to grow, and if it fails to grow those that are responsible for it will have every reason to worry. The same thing applies to human beings, as they are not different from other living things as such they also have to grow if they are to reach their full potential. This growth does not just come in an instant but gradually moves in stages, and it is the intention of this section of the research to make an investigation on the stages so that we can be able to understand human beings, in this case, adolescents better. Developing into a responsible person is a daunting challenge for mid-adolescents living in the world today. The challenge comes due to the negativity and hopelessness which those that are in mid-adolescence are facing in today's world. This observation is echoed by Fowler in Fowler; Maas; & Wuthnow (1996:7) who argues that:

...many of today's youth approach their world and their sense of the future with "holocaust eyes." They sense the loss of many of their contemporaries to death or to prison or to a marginal quality of life with a limited future. They have had hammered into them a profound sense of concern about the ecological endangerment of our globe due to global warming and the excessive release of pollutants. They feel the increased crowding and competitiveness of life space in our cities and in the world. They feel the gap between a parental generation's moral teachings and their actual behaviour and determinative values.

Fowler (ibid. 14) further develops that most of the problems faced by the adolescents today are a result of adults' lack of "genuine sustained and personal relationships" with



children<sup>16</sup>. According to him this has in the end resulted in an adult “superficial images of youth<sup>17</sup>” shaped by “the music, the art, and the sartorial styles that are compellingly presented through television, magazines, and youth’s own presentation of themselves.”

Looking at the context of today’s mid-adolescents as discussed above, it can be asked why they are facing these challenges, and how the challenges can be addressed if it is possible to have them addressed. In the guise of answering these pertinent questions, it is important to examine the physical development, cognitive development, personality development, social development as well as religious/spiritual development, as these are some of the issues, which if not properly handled, may negatively affect the development of the adolescent.

### **2.1.1. Physical development**

As children grow, they reach a time of rapid physical growth and sexual maturation which is called puberty. This period of development; “is triggered by a chain of hormonal effects that bring on visible physical changes” (Berger 2000:439). Malina, (1990) and Rutter, (1980) in Berger (2000:439) further explain that:

For girls, these visible changes include, in sequence, the onset of breast growth, the initial pubic hair, a peak growth spurt, widening of the hips, the first menstrual period, the completion of pubic-hair growth, and final breast development. For boys, the visible physical changes of puberty include, in approximate order, the initial pubic hair, growth of

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<sup>16</sup> Most children living on the Cape Flats come from broken homes where they live with a single parent who in most cases is busy trying to fend for the family. Due to the fact that the single parent is always busy, little time is spent between the parent and the children, resulting in the children spending much of their time with peers from broken homes as well and with other adults such as leaders of gangs who become significant models to the children. The IRIN In-Depth report (2007:71) explains that some children are involved in bad behaviours like drug abuse because they believe that being involved in drugs is part of their family history (they have modelled the behaviour after their parents). Ina Van der Merwe in Regency Foundation Networx (2008) explains that there are some adults who are involved in drug dealing who deliberately offer free drugs to schoolchildren so that they should become drug users and in turn start buying the drugs from them (the drug dealers). From this we can say, without contradicting ourselves, that children from the Cape Flats do not experience “genuine sustained and personal relationships” with adults from their community.

<sup>17</sup> Most adults have difficulties in understanding the youth as they feel that most of the things that the youth do are foreign and therefore not worthy to be practiced by normal people. This has resulted in a sharp strain in the generation gap between adults and children, leading to a point where none is ready to listen to as well as to respect the views of the other.

the testes, growth of the penis, the first ejaculation, a peak growth spurt, voice changes, beard development, and the completion of pubic-hair growth.

A considerable number of adolescents spend much of their time wondering as to what is happening with and to their bodies. This period of wondering often causes anxiety especially if there is no one to explain properly to them what is really happening to their bodies. To explain this, Berger (2000:440) affirms:

The biology of puberty begins with a hormonal signal from the *hypothalamus*, located at the base of the brain. This signal stimulates the *pituitary gland* (located next to the hypothalamus) to produce hormones that then stimulate the *adrenal glands* (two small glands near the kidneys at both sides of the torso) and the *gonads*, or sex glands (the *ovaries* and *testes* or *testicles*). One hormone in particular, *GnRH* (*gonad releasing hormone*), causes the gonads to dramatically increase the production of sex hormones, chiefly *estrogen* in girls and *testosterone* in boys. This increase, in turn, loops back to the hypothalamus and pituitary gland, causing them to produce more GH (growth hormone) as well as more GnRH, and this, in turn, causes the adrenal glands and gonads to produce more sex hormones.

Berger (2000:440-441) further explains that, as adolescents go through the period of puberty, they also experience changes in facial hair, voice quality and breast size though with differences in degree. According to her this occurs because during puberty, there is an increase in the levels of both testosterone and oestrogen in both boys and girls, despite the two hormones being male and female respectively. As they experience sexual development, children find themselves in situations where sexuality has been removed of its “mystery and power” as talks and images on sexuality are everywhere (Fowler in Fowler; Maas; & Wuthnow 1996:6). According to Fowler (*ibid.*) despite the fact that they are being exposed to sexuality issues, there is no need for parents to worry because most people are trying hard to exercise caution as regards to their involvement in sexual issues a thing which has resulted due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Apart from sexual development, the other physical development that takes place during early and middle adolescent years is the growth spurt. According to Berger (2000:445), the growth spurt is a period of “sudden, uneven, and somewhat unpredictable jump in the size of almost every part of the body.” Quoting Malina (1991) Berger (2000:445-446) explains that during this period:

The bones begin to lengthen, the child eats more and gains weight more rapidly than before, to provide energy for the many changes taking place. As a result, fat accumulates. Parents typically notice that their children are emptying their plates, cleaning out the refrigerator, and straining the seams of their clothes even before they

notice that their children are growing taller: By the end of middle childhood, usually between the ages of 10 and 12, all children become noticeably heavier; although exactly when, where and how much fat accumulates depends partly on heredity, partly on diet and exercise, and partly on gender. Females gain more fat overall, especially on their legs and hips, because evolution designed young adult females to have extra body fat to sustain pregnancy and lactation and designed young adult males to move swiftly in the hunt.

Burger (2000:446) further states that, “a height spurt follows soon after the start of the weight increase.” According to Louw & Louw (2007:283), the height/growth spurt starts at different ages in boys and girls. In boys, it starts between the ages 12 and 13 while in girls it starts between the ages 10 and 11. Louw & Louw (ibid.) continue to say that boys grow more rapidly than girls do despite the fact that the spurt starts two years earlier in girls than in boys. This relatively rapid growth of boys results in them being even taller than girls of the same age at the end of the growing phase.

### **2.1.2. Cognitive Development**

After having examined the physical development, we now look at cognitive development, which is another kind of development, which is experienced by children as they continue to development into adulthood.

Mishra (1997:145) explains that cognitive development refers to the development of the processes by which individuals gain and use knowledge. This includes processes like thinking, reasoning, recognition, labelling, analysis, categorization, and planning through which people understand their environment and gain successful adaptations to it. Cognitive development leads the growing person to the point where according to Fuller (1988:34) starts to think in abstract and hypothetical form. Fuller (ibid.) further argues that during this stage in a person’s life, one begins acting in a wide variety of ways to a wide variety of issues. Louw & Louw (2007:299) affirm that:

According to Piaget, children around the ages of 11 or 12 enter the formal operational stage of cognitive development. This is the last stage of cognitive development and extends into adulthood. During this stage, children develop the capacity for abstract, scientific thinking. Instead of thinking only about real things and actual occurrences as younger children do, adolescents are able to think about possible occurrences.

Considering Mishra and Louw & Louw’s explanation on cognitive development above, it would not be incorrect to affirm that children’s behaviours and attitudes are shaped by

the knowledge they gain and use in the environment in which they are raised. This environment includes their home, community and peer groups.

### 2.1.3. Personality Development

Personality development<sup>18</sup> takes place during mid-adolescence.

Parrott (1993:15) argues that: As mid-adolescents travel through the various stages of their lives, they come to a point where they begin to ask the question “who am I?”<sup>19</sup> He further states that, “while achievement of a meaningful answer to this question is a lifelong pursuit, it is the burning challenge of adolescence<sup>20</sup>” (1993:15). Parrott (ibid.) continues to say that it becomes a challenge because:

Without identities, awkward adolescents carry a “how’m-I-doing?” attitude that is always focused on their concern about impressions they are making on others. Without self-identities, they will be or do whatever they think others want. They will flounder from one way of acting to another, never able to step outside of a preoccupation with their own performance and genuinely ask others, “How are you doing?”

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<sup>18</sup> Personality development involves development of tasks which include, “establishing trust in an ideological view of the world; establishing autonomy; taking initiative and setting goals for what one might become; and taking responsibility for one’s own industry.” This process depends on how the above problems are integrated in the individual and social spheres (Butterworth & Harris 1994:236). These sentiments are reiterated by Louw (1998:203-205) who argues that development does not just involve “biologically-influenced changes or changes produced by shared experiences within a cultural or social context” but it also involves internal changes. He (Louw ibid.) further argues that development is about reaching a point where we are able to “face and cope with a set of dilemmas” that we may encounter “in our adult life”. According to Louw (ibid.) development takes place in ways that are similar irrespective of the culture to which one belongs and it (development) is a continuous “process” which goes all the way to the time of a person’s death.

<sup>19</sup> The question, “who am I?” is about a person’s identity which according to Louw (2005:21) if taken from its origin which is Latin *idem* is about “sameness and stability”. Louw (ibid.) explains that this stability “is not a fixed entity, but a quality which evokes trust within the dynamics of relationships”. In his book *Network of the human soul: On Identity, Dignity, Maturity and Life Skills*, Louw (2012:71) explains that identity is “a complex issue” which involves “trust and confidence despite the reality of doubt”. According to him identity has no end and it is not “one sided” and has to be pursued despite the doubts one may have. He argues that with identity a person may come to situations where they may have some doubts and fears of “loss and rejection” but in spite of all the uncertainties that go with it, one will always arrive at a point where they will reach “new avenues for transformation” of their life and “the anticipation of the transcendence” (ibid.). In his book *A Mature Faith: Spiritual Direction and Anthropology in a Theology of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, Louw (1999:163) argues that answering the question “Who am I?” is not an easy thing as it “depends on the quality of human reaction, and on the degree and quality of human responsibility”.

<sup>20</sup> For the sake of this research, the term adolescent will mean individuals in the stage of mid-adolescence. (cf. pages 12-16).

Where then do we get our personality<sup>21</sup>? Is it inborn or we can acquire it from somewhere?

According to Beckett and Taylor (2010:173) our personality is “deeply entwined with popular culture all our lives – where we choose to live, which newspapers we read, where we go on holiday.” This is a clear indication that the environment influences any person’s identity and how he/she reacts to that environment; meaning that if the environment is replete with negativity, those living in that milieu will look at life from a negative perspective. This is true because according to Jacobs (1987:104), “our actions and responses in life” are influenced by the way we interpret the things that affect our daily life. It is therefore imperative that children achieve an identity because as Parrott (1993:16) puts it; for those children who do not get an “integrated identity”:

...“all the world’s a stage.” In their adult years, they will play the part of human beings who change roles to please whoever happens to be watching. Their clothes, their language, their thoughts, and feelings are all a part of the script. Their purpose will be to receive approval from those they hope to impress. Life will become a charade, and players will never enjoy the security of personal identity or experience the strength that comes from a sense of self-worth.

The discussion on personality development will be based on three perspectives namely: (i) psychological perspective (ii) African/social perspective (iii) religious/spiritual perspective. One may wonder as to why we take the trouble to look at various perspectives of personality development, instead of just looking at the religious/spiritual perspective, which is our area of specialisation as people from the theological field. This will be done because, as Olson (1984:149) affirms:

[I]n addition to the truth that God has revealed in the Bible, God has made limitless knowledge and truth available for our discovery. Our discoveries are limited only by the limits of our scientific and aesthetic understanding, and by the limits of our technology.

Therefore, we, despite being theologians, have every right to tap knowledge from other fields other than theology to expand the knowledge we have and to help the whole person not just the spiritual part of the human being.

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<sup>21</sup> Meyer in Meyer, Moore & Viljoen (1997:21) defines personality as “the constantly changing but nevertheless relatively stable organization of all physical, psychological and spiritual characteristics of the individual which determine his or her behaviour in interaction with the context in which the individual finds himself or herself”.

#### 2.1.4. Psychological perspective

This section sets out to examine personality development from the perspective of psychology. Theologians often ignore the important role psychology plays in the lives of people, and as a result, there is failure to provide the much-needed help most people are looking for. It is rather pitiful that on numerous occasions, we have failed to help people because we do not want to get answers for people's problems from other fields of study other than theology. Thayer (1985:31) explains that it is considerably difficult to speak about "spirit" without considering psychology<sup>22</sup>. In his argument, Thayer (ibid.) affirms that:

...thinking about "spirit" must be continually informed by depth psychology, because depth psychology provides a thorough going analysis of the way we become the kinds of persons we become and what keeps us that way. The kind of person we are deeply influences our spirituality; or more accurately in our spirituality is an expression of who we are.

To properly understand psychology certainly will assist pastoral care researchers in better understanding the people who are being studied.

According to Kroger, 1995, Larson & Ham, 1993 in Berger (2000:501), the changes that take place in any child's life during puberty, bring the child to a point where he or she has "to find his or her identity, his or her unique and consistent self-definition." It is this identity or self-definition that will be considered here as personality development. Olson (1984:28) says that personality development is a "carry-over function from childhood." Olson (ibid.) continues to develop that, "elementary age children are great hero worshippers," who are able to name their favourite television actors/actresses. Olson (1984:28) further states that:

Pubescent<sup>23</sup> young people and early to mid-adolescent adolescents bring more maturity to this theme of hero worshipping. The content changes from Superman or Wonder-

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<sup>22</sup> According to the researcher's personal observation, most Christian counsellors (especially those from Charismatic background) believe that people's problems emanate from satanic forces which attack people's minds. It is as a result of this kind of belief that most Christian counsellors ignore psychological knowledge when providing counselling to those in need of help. This kind of belief then results in people's problems increasing instead of getting solved due to the fact that the psychological aspect of the client's problem has been ignored thereby leaving it untreated.

<sup>23</sup> Pubescent is an adjective from the term puberty, which according to Aiken (1994:78) refers to "the time of rapid physical growth and sexual development" which takes place in children as they develop into adults.

woman to a current rock star, movie star or athlete. For some, the focus may be on a favorite teacher, pastor or even a scientist. As the adolescent matures, the idealized object and the adolescent become more similar to each other. Idealized symbols that represent more attainable characteristics begin to be selected. The adolescent also tries to become more like his or her idealized model.

Fowler (1981:154) echoes Olson by arguing that when children get to teenage years, they start relating to “a widened set of environments” such as peers, school, media, popular culture and religious communities. These environments become spheres of influence to the child such that they bring the particular child into contact with adults and peers who become their significant others<sup>24</sup>. Fowler (ibid.) continues to explain that when they come into contact with their significant others, children begin to think that they have made choices as regards to who has influence over their life when in actual sense it is the “values and self-images, mediated by the significant others in their lives” which have chosen them. This then means that the only thing the mid-adolescents do is to ratify “those images and values which have chosen them”.

As mid-adolescents are in the process of understanding themselves, they also come to a point where they have to negotiate their possible self. Berger (2000:502) finds that in the course of negotiation of their possible selves<sup>25</sup>, children do take a false self in which they act in ways they know to be different “to their core being even if they are not sure what that core being is.” To better comprehend and appreciate what this “false self” is, Berger (2000:502) outlines the following distinct types of false self by quoting from Harter et al. (1996)

- *The acceptable false self.* This false self arises from the adolescent’s perception that the real self is rejected by parent and peers- a perception often coloured by the adolescent’s own self-hate. Adolescents who adopt a false self in order to be accepted tend to feel worthless, depressed, and hopeless; they engage in self-betrayal to hide their true nature. They also report low levels of real self-understanding.
- *The pleasing false self.* This second type of false self arises from a wish to impress or please others. It is quite common among adolescent. Those who adopt it appear

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<sup>24</sup> Fowler (1981:154) explains that significant others are those people whose impact on the young person “has the power to contribute positively or negatively to the set of images of self and of accompanying meanings that must be drawn together in a forming identity and faith”.

<sup>25</sup> Markus & Nurius 1986, Markus et al., in Berger (2000:501) present possible selves as “diverse perceptions of who (adolescents) really are, who they are in different groups or settings, who they might like to become, and who they fear becoming.”

to be less debilitated psychologically, and to have greater self-understanding, than those whose false selves arise from a sense of rejection.

- *The experimental false self.* This type of false self is one that adolescents try out “just to see how it feels.” Compared with adolescents who engage in the first two types of false behaviour, these adolescents report the highest levels of self-esteem and self-knowledge, partly because although they acknowledge that their experimentation is not their usual, expected behaviour, they do not feel it is false.

From the above analysis of the self, the most important and positive, self for the adolescent is “the experimental false self”, as it helps them to build a high level of self-esteem<sup>26</sup>.

In the process of defining and delineating the “self” that is in them, children encounter difficulties as they may come to a point where most of the things in their life do not seem to make any sense. According to Freud (1932:95-96 in Erikson 1980:159) this happens because, every person’s identity or his/her present, is influenced by the ideologies of his/her super-ego<sup>27</sup> which is itself influenced by the particular person’s past, traditions of his race and the people around him. Despite the fact that a person’s past has an influence on their present station in life, as children reach puberty, they begin to question everything they may have blindly relied upon earlier in life. This questioning, according to Erikson (1995:235) happens as a reaction to “rapidity of body growth which equals

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<sup>26</sup> Louw & Louw (2007:183) explain that a person’s self-esteem is the personal evaluation of his or her characteristics. They further explain that an individual’s self-esteem is positive when he/she evaluates his/her characteristics as good and acceptable. Self-esteem becomes negative when a person is dissatisfied with his/her characteristics. In conclusion, Louw & Louw say that self-esteem is usually based on the following:

- the degree to which the individual feels that he or she receives love, acceptance, support and encouragement from others.
- the specific characteristics and skills the person has;
- the degree to which the person accepts the various aspects of the self, especially when comparing the self to others.

Adding to Louw & Louw’s assertions on self-esteem, Rosenberg (1965:31) says that: With high self-esteem, “the individual respects himself, considers himself worthy; he does not necessarily consider himself better than others, but he definitely does not consider himself worse; he does not feel that he is the ultimate in perfection but, on the contrary, recognizes his limitations and expects to grow and improve”. Rosenberg goes on to say that on the contrary, low self-esteem “implies self-rejection, self-dissatisfaction, and self-contempt. The individual lacks respect for the self he observes. The self-picture is disagreeable, and he wishes it were otherwise” (ibid.)

<sup>27</sup> The super-ego “is the internalization of all the restrictions to which the ego must bow” (Freud 1914 in Erikson 1980:19). The super-ego is ‘forced upon the child’ by authorities such as parents and teachers (ibid.).



that of early childhood and because of the new addition to genital maturity". Erikson (ibid.) continues to argue that during this time the children's main focus is on how other people look at them in comparison to what they themselves feel they are. As they struggle with the perception others may have on them, they also struggle with how they can "connect the roles and skills cultivated earlier with occupational prototypes of the day" (Erikson ibid.). This struggle according to Erikson (1980:19), leads the child's super-ego to a point where it forces him/her to abandon/compromise his/her self-love in favour of models through which he/she measures him/herself to achieve happiness as he/she tries to resemble the models in his/her life. When the child achieves the happiness from the models, he/she achieves self-esteem.

It is out of failing to understand who they really are that the growing mid-adolescents come to a point of indulging themselves in dangerous behaviours like doubting "one's sexual identity", displaying delinquent and outright psychotic episodes (Erikson 1995:235). According to Fowler (1981:154) a child's self-image can bring "a powerful ordering" on his/her identity and their choice of values if they commit themselves to God<sup>28</sup>. The personalities of mid-adolescents as other aspects of development, will only reach their potential with the support of adults especially their families because according to Marinoff (2000:140):

Children begin to forge their individual identities<sup>29</sup> in the crucible of the family. The more divergent those identities turn out to be from those of parents or the family as a whole, the more potential there is for conflict ...we human beings depend on our parents for a much longer period than any other mammal because we mature slowly, taking many years to learn all we need to know to assume a fully adult role in society.

If Marinoff's assertion above is to be ignored, those in mid-adolescence will be hopeless because they will turn to their peers for guidance, which according to Huggins in De Vries (1994:79) happens when parents are "extremely negligent". The negative trend of having peers influence the life of children can be reversed because as Huggins in De Vries (ibid.) explains that, "although peers sometimes do exercise more control over an adolescent's choice of dress, music, entertainment, etc. ... in the vast majority of cases

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<sup>28</sup> Fowler (1981:154) argues that commitment to God helps children to have a positive self-image because God is a significant other who can otherwise be called the "Decisive other".

<sup>29</sup> Cf. footnote 19 page 24

parents remain the single most important influence in the development of an adolescent's personality<sup>30</sup>.

Looking at the arguments above, it would not be incorrect to ascribe the various challenges Lavender Hill adolescents are encountering, to the fact that most of them are coming from single parent households. It is a given fact that most of the children living in Lavender Hill do not even know who their father is (Brittijn 2013:53 & 56). According to the website ([family.jrank.org](http://family.jrank.org)) growing up in a coloured family is not an easy thing as most of the children in the families (43%) are born out of wedlock and family life is very unstable as most of the families have no father figure and are headed by single women<sup>31</sup>. Most of these families also happen to be extended, meaning that you have cousins and brothers and in some cases even aunts and uncles; and in yet some cases even two or more nuclear families live together. In most low-income families, "living together (as boyfriend and girlfriend) and desertion are a common phenomenon" ([family.jrank.org](http://family.jrank.org)). Living in a single-parent family is not a simple thing for anyone (both parent and the children) because according to Olson (1984:104) "single-parent families have most of the dynamics and problems that two-parent families have, plus some". The other problem that most single parent families face is the fact that some of the children living in these families often take advantage of the parent as he/she is "weakened" due to the fact that he/she is often stressed as a result of working hard to

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<sup>30</sup> Considering the fact that most children living in Lavender Hill come from broken homes and most of them don't even know who their father is; the church has the responsibility of providing fatherly support to those children. It is in situations like these where the church has to exercise its influence in the lives of the people of the community where it is located. Much as this suggestion may seem unachievable, there is a possibility that it can be achieved if we are to borrow the model being used by families living in South Africa's squatter camps, in helping the neediest of their communities, as reflected in Louw (2005:60). According to Louw (ibid.) those living in squatter camps have developed a new set of "extended family" which operates as "surrogate family" for orphans and the terminally ill. Louw (ibid.) says that this kind of set up has shown that home is not necessarily made up of relatives but even caring "outsiders". If the Church can borrow this model and use it in helping those facing the challenges of *tik*, by providing advice and guidance to them as if they were their own family members, the situation on the Lavender Hill would improve.

<sup>31</sup> According to an article which appeared in the Telegraph of 17th April, 2008, youth who are involved in criminal activities like gangs and drugs, are mostly from unstable homes. The article explains that, youth who are involved in organized criminal activities are drawn into the behaviour so that they can get protection and gain a "sense of belonging" because of the lack of positive role models at home (Paton 2008 [www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)).

support the family, as well as the “decreased support system” which the children encounter (Olson *ibid.*).

With this kind of conditions, it is very hard for families to have a positive influence on the mid-adolescents living in those particular families. It is no wonder then that most of those belonging to families that are in this kind of situation often find themselves on the wrong side of the law, just because they do not get the required positive attention from their families.

In some cases, the challenge comes in because of the big size of the family, which makes it difficult for the dominant member to guide the family.

If society is serious about leading children to a point where they are to achieve their full potential, then it has to make itself available to them during this stage of their development, as it is their moment of greater need. In this case, their time of need is this time when they are struggling with identity issues and crises at this time when they need the support of the significant others.

#### **2.1.5.0. Social/African perspective**

In looking at the social perspective of children’s development, we will consider the African perspective as this research is about adolescents that are living in Africa.

The use of the term “African” should not be viewed as a means of generalising and reducing the experiences of this continent to a homogenous grouping. On the contrary, the use of the term should be viewed as a means through which it is possible to talk about the experiences of people from this continent in contrast to other continents which have necessarily distinct modes of experiencing reality. African people are a people who believe in a life of sharing whatever little thing they may have; this is evidenced in the African philosophy of *Ubuntu*<sup>32</sup>. This African belief of co-existence if maintained can be a very important tool in the promotion of human dignity. Louw (2005:124) affirms this by

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<sup>32</sup> Louw (2008:155) describes *Ubuntu* as the idea that one is a human being through others. Supporting Louw, Bhengu 141 in Broodryk (2010:57) argues that Ubuntu can be defined as “the humanistic experience of treating all people with respect, granting them their human dignity.” Broodryk (2006:17 in Broodryk 2010) further explains that *Ubuntu* is an ancient African worldview which is “based on the values of intense humanness, caring, sharing, respect, compassion, and associated values, ensuring a happy and qualitative community life in the spirit of family.”

saying that, “human dignity cannot be maintained without the necessary support systems namely the importance of friendships, marriage and family life.” Despite the fact that Africans have believed in *ubuntu* for ages, the belief is now losing its value amongst the current generation of Africans, especially the youth; this is happening due to their exposure to various cultures as Beckett & Taylor (2010:173) affirm:

[O]ur image is part of our identity formation, reflected back from what we identify with in the wider cultural context. A major preoccupation of popular culture is lifestyle and fashion. It becomes particularly important in adolescence, when we are looking outside the immediate family for role models. It's often expressed through how we look – our haircuts, the clothes we wear, and the music we listen to...

Supporting Beckett & Taylor, Hendry & Kloep (2006:88) say that traditional/collectivistic cultures<sup>33</sup> (like African) just like their Western counterpart are going through many shifts and changes due to globalization<sup>34</sup>, “many norms are transitional or changing, and social and occupational roles are in a state of flux”. One does not need a binocular to see this in African youth; you just have to look at the way they are dressing, the kind of music<sup>35</sup> they listen to, the way they talk etc. there is a lot of Western influence in every part of the life of the contemporary African youth. The influence of Western culture and civilisation affects the belief system of adolescents; no wonder the belief in *ubuntu* is losing its taste among modern African youth.

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<sup>33</sup> Louw & Louw and Ferns in Louw & Louw (2007:318) explain that collective cultures are those cultures, which are characterized by narrow socialisation, and an interdependent conception of the self. They further state that, in these cultures the family, the kinship group, the ethnic group, the nation, the religious institution -come first, before the needs of the individual. People who think highly of themselves in these cultures are considered as a threat to the unity of the group, because they may be inclined to pursue their personal interests, regardless of the group to which they belong. To the adolescents in these cultures, the ‘self’ is thought of not as a separate, independent being, but as defined largely by a relationship with others.

<sup>34</sup> Globalization is the “process of increased interconnectedness and cultural exchange”. (Louw, Louw & Ferns in Louw & Louw eds. 2007:279)

<sup>35</sup> Nel & Thesnaar (2006:94) argue that music contributes greatly to the formation of children's identity. At one time in South Africa, politics played an important role in shaping identities; but presently, the music that youths listen to is pivotal in the construction of their racial and cultural identities.

### **2.1.5.1. Coming of Age/Rites of passage**

As previously stated, African culture is facing and undergoing a lot of changes and challenges due to exposure to other cultures. This argument cannot be considered without examining the manner in which tradition considers how a true African young person should behave against what modernity or contemporary culture accepts the youth to do as they get into the world of the grown-ups especially during the time when they come of age. This will be done by offering various rites of passage<sup>36</sup> in southern Africa.

It has to be remarked that the way society reacts to children as they come of age differs from society to society and this generally happens as a result of the cultural beliefs and values held by the particular cultural group or tribe.

#### **2.1.5.1.1. Coming of age in Southern Africa**

In Southern Africa, most tribes welcome the young into the world of adults through initiation ceremonies. This is true particularly in some Malawian cultures as well as in some South African cultures.

In Malawi, when a young person comes of age, he/she is required to go through initiation rites<sup>37</sup>, which (unfortunately) are mainly provided to children living in rural areas (Munthali & Zulu 2007:153). Although it is said that the Chewa<sup>38</sup> are the biggest cultural group in Malawi, not many of them attend initiation ceremonies as compared to the Yao and Lomwe cultural groups which are more dominant in Southern Malawi (ibid. 154). According to Munthali & Zulu (ibid. 155) most of those who go for initiation belong to the Yao people group, which is predominantly Muslim. This is because Christians (who are

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<sup>36</sup> Steffoff (1990:14) explains that rites of passage are very important to societies that observe them. This happens because, the rites of passage, “provide an order, a structure, that helps to bind communities” in which the practice is observed.

<sup>37</sup> Mbiti (1990:118-119 in Mtuze 2004: 46) explains that initiation rites introduce children to the life of adults and allow them “to share full privileges and duties of the community”. Through initiation children become responsible and the community expects new obligations from them. Mbiti (ibid.) further explains that initiation offers a great education experience to the initiates as they get knowledge which is not accessed by those who have not been through initiation.

<sup>38</sup> The Chewa or aChewa are Malawi’s largest tribal group. They speak a Bantu language called Chichewa. (Gislason s.d.)

predominant in most parts of Malawi) have their own initiation ceremonies<sup>39</sup> which are known by the Chichewa name, *Chilangizo* contrary to the name *Chinamwali* (another Chichewa name mostly used in non-Church organized initiation ceremonies). According to Fiedler (2005:7-8) during initiation, the initiates are taught without any difficulties, things that are otherwise considered taboo, “like sexuality” which she says is “spoken about freely” (during initiation) but with reverence. Fiedler (2005:15) argues that Church initiation as opposed to traditional initiation, centers on teaching the youth (in case of girls) “on how to dress up and on cleanliness during menstruation”, which is contrary to traditional initiation, which is unnecessarily full of profane language.

Just as it is the case in Malawi, most children growing up in South Africa, also have to attend initiation ceremonies when they come of age.

Among the Xhosa<sup>40</sup> initiation<sup>41</sup> marks transition from childhood to adult hood and all men that have not gone through the ceremony (initiation) are considered as children, no matter how old they may be. In Xhosa culture, initiation makes a person to become a man and therefore “a full member of the community” ([Mavundla et.al. 2010:931](#)) as he is now considered to be a person of moral standards because in Xhosa culture a person develops moral standards through participation in initiation rites (Ntombana 2011:635). According to Ntombana (ibid. 634) initiation rites are important in the development of adolescents as they instill good moral values into them as they move into adulthood. Ntombana (ibid. 635), Mayer in Gitywa 1976:203 in Papu & Verster 2006:181) argue that before initiation, boys live a life that is irresponsible and careless, but after initiation, they change to more responsible men who can now become chiefs, can participate in community discussions and have the right to marry. Mbiti (1975:92) argues that in cultures where initiation is practiced, everyone has to participate in the rite because if they do not, they are considered to be children with no experience and may end-up

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<sup>39</sup> Fiedler (2005:7) argues that the Nkhoma Synod was the first Malawian Church to have successfully changed the tradition *chinamwali* initiation into the Christianized *Chilangizo* way back in the 1940s.

<sup>40</sup> The Xhosa or amaXhosa is a South African tribe of the Bantu people group. The amaXhosa speak a language known as isiXhosa. (Word IQ s.d.)

<sup>41</sup> Amongst the Xhosa people, initiation comes to the climax with “ritual circumcision” of the initiates which in most cases has to be performed on boys of the ages ranging between 16 and 26 (Mavundla et.al. 2010:931).

being isolated from their age-mates. Initiation is of prime importance in Xhosa culture as it helps the initiates to receive training in “how to overcome difficulties and pain, to cultivate courage, endurance, perseverance and obedience” (Ntombana *ibid.* 636). According to Mtuze (2004:53) initiation also offers adolescents the privilege of getting accepted by ancestors into “full lineage membership” of their cultural group. Echoing Mtuze above, Mbiti (1975:93) adds that:

The blood which is shed during the physical operation binds the person to the land and consequently to the departed members of his society....This circumcision blood is like making a covenant, or a solemn agreement, between the individual and his people. Until the individual has gone through the operation, he is still an outsider. Once he has shed his blood, he joins the stream of his people, he becomes truly one with them.

During Xhosa initiation, the initiates learn a new language called *abakhwetha hlonipha*<sup>42</sup> (Mtuze 2004:50). This new language is different from the language used by women<sup>43</sup> as they call water *amacam* (in the Karoo they call water *amagcaza*) instead of *imvotho* a word used by women. Initiation among the *amaXhosa* gets to the climax with the circumcision<sup>44</sup> of the initiates, which is performed by *ingcibi* (an initiation surgeon<sup>45</sup>) who is chosen by the initiate’s father or the chief (Ntombana 2011:636). As it is the case with most initiation ceremonies, the initiates may not always get good advice from their initiation guardians as some of them “introduce alcohol and drugs” and sometimes teachings which encourage the initiates to sleep with women<sup>46</sup> (especially those who are

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<sup>42</sup> It is of prime importance that a Xhosa initiate knows the “*abakhwetha hlonipha*” as it is the language that is used in testing a person claiming to have gone through initiation in cases where the community has doubts concerning his manhood (Mavundla *et al.* 2010:935).

<sup>43</sup> Women’s language is called *hlonipha* (Mtuze 2004:50)

<sup>44</sup> Mtuze (2004:53) argues that it is of prime importance that the children should not have their circumcision performed at a hospital or even take anti-biotics after the circumcision as this is regarded as cheating ancestors on “their right and duty to accept or reject” an initiate. According to Mtuze (*ibid.*) a child who is not accepted or has been rejected by ancestors dies after circumcision. Due to the fact that “no Western medicine is allowed in the circumcision lodge” the initiates wounds are treated by using wild plants called *izichwe* (*ibid.* 49)

<sup>45</sup> Soga (1933:252) states that for one to be an initiation surgeon he has to have a skilled hand coupled with self-control and does not have to belong to “any class of individuals, such as the diviners—*ama-gqira*, or so-called witch-doctors and herbalists”. The surgeon’s only qualification is to be “an expert in the use of the *assegai* through frequent surgical practice”.

<sup>46</sup> This kind of teaching is not confined to South Africa and the Xhosa culture only, it is also found in other cultures beyond South Africa. Nashire in Brown (2004:121) argues that this also happens in the Lomwe culture of

not the initiates' girlfriends) to "remove the bad luck acquired during the initiation" (Ntombana *ibid.*). Soga (1933:253) agrees with Ntombana above and affirms that:

...it is impressed upon the boys that in order to get rid of the taint of boyhood (*inqambi yobu-kwenkwe*), they should, on the completion of their seclusion period, that is when they have reached the stage of raw manhood (*ubu-rwala*), Have sexual connection with some unattached female (*idikazi*), who may be either a widow or a deserted woman. Otherwise he will remain polluted by the retention of the taint of boyhood, and his children will not grow up healthy and vigorous.

As the initiates go through initiation they also receive instructions concerning sexual matters. According to Mbiti (1975:94) during initiation, children are told about the "mysteries and secrets of marriage" as a way of preparing them for marriage life. In Xhosa culture, the instructions are offered to the initiates by an *I-Kankata*, a man who spends most of his time at the initiation lodge taking care of the initiates by making sure that their wounds are always clean until they are healed. Apart from nursing the wounds of the initiates, the *I-Kankata* is also responsible for feeding<sup>47</sup> the initiates as they wait for their wounds to heal (Soga 1933:253-254).

Initiation in African cultures is not just about circumcision as some people may presume. There are many cultural groups in Africa, which conduct initiation as a rite of passage for their children without having them go through the rite of circumcision. A good example of these cultural groups is the Zulu tribe<sup>48</sup> which is mainly found in the kwaZulu Natal Province. Among the Zulus a boy-child's journey to adulthood starts with his first wet dreams (Krige 1981:88). When a boy discovers that he has wet dreams, he wakes up very early in the morning and drives out his father's or neighbours' cattle to a river where he takes a bath in the river before sunrise. He does all this in secret<sup>49</sup>; and when sunrise

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Southern Malawi where boys who go for initiation ceremonies are encouraged to have sex with girls (soon after leaving the initiation school), to prove their manhood.

<sup>47</sup> Soga (1933:254) explains that during the time when the initiate's wounds are not healed, they are not allowed to feed themselves and the duty of feeding the initiates rests in the hands of *I-Kankata*.

<sup>48</sup> The Zulus stopped practicing circumcision during the reign of Shaka, and those Zulus who practice the rite in modern days, do it of their own volition not as a cultural requirement (Nkosi 2008:150)

<sup>49</sup> Krige (1991:88) explains that this is done so as to make sure that no one knows where the boy is hiding. Krige (*ibid.*) further explains that it is of great importance that the boy hides at a place where it will not be easy for those looking for him to find him. The reason for doing this is because society's expectation is that a boy can only be important to society if it was difficult to find him on the day of his first wet dreams.



comes and his housemates and parents discover that he and the cattle are missing, all the boys from the neighbourhood are called out to search for the cattle and the boy (ibid.). Once the boy is found, they take him to the village where they hold a 'strengthening' ceremony for him. During the strengthening ceremony the boy is given medicine made of herbs and barks mixed with animal fat. According to tradition, the father of the boy may not officiate the strengthening ceremony if "he had sexual intercourse the previous night" as he is considered defiled (Krige 1981:88). In this case the father would ask a clean man from the community to officiate the ceremony (Krige 1981:88-89). After the strengthening ceremony, the boy gets into a period of seclusion. The time of seclusion is spent in a boys' hut where the initiate is kept under instructions not to go out<sup>50</sup> and not to speak to women. During this time, the boy is not allowed to speak in loud tone but in whispers, and is attended to by little boys. As the boy is confined in the seclusion hut, he is visited by old men and old women<sup>51</sup> who present him with various instructions on how he is to live his life now that he is a grownup. Some of the instructions given to the boy are aimed at imploring him to refrain from involving himself in sexual relationships with girls (ibid. 91-93). At the end of the seclusion period, the initiate is taken to a river (early in the morning) by his friends. At the river, he dives once into the river, as a sign of new birth, and once he gets out of the water he is given a new name<sup>52</sup> by his friends.

Initiation of Zulu girls is not so different from that of boys. The only difference is that upon reaching puberty, the girl does not run to the bush but she hides herself in the neighbourhood of the kraal. When this happens, the girl's friends report the matter to her mother who in turn reports to the girl's father. After this the friends are sent to collect her and she is then put into seclusion. The seclusion period for girls takes longer than that for boys. Every evening during the period of seclusion, girls spend time at the seclusion hut singing puberty songs and dancing (Krige 1981:100-103).

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<sup>50</sup> The only time the boy is allowed to go out of the hut, is the time when he would want to relieve himself. During this time, he is however supposed to go in the company of the little boys attending to him and he covers himself in blankets so that women should not see him (Krige 1981:91)

<sup>51</sup> Old women are allowed into the seclusion hut because they are considered to be clean (ibid. 93).

<sup>52</sup> The new name is only used by his friends and children younger than him; his parents and other grownups still call him by his original name. (Krige 1981:96).

Given that the present research focuses on largely coloured populated Lavender Hill, it is important, if not imperative, to consider how coloured adolescents negotiate the process of coming of age. The reason for making this enquiry into coloured culture is to investigate whether what Ntombana (2001:635) postulates that children who do not go through rites of passage have challenges in developing good moral values during their journey into adulthood is true or just a mere speculation. In coloured<sup>53</sup> communities, things are somehow different as compared to other people groups from Africa. Coloured adolescents do not undergo initiation rites and ceremonies that are undergone by African tribes of South Africa such as the Xhosa<sup>54</sup>. Unlike their African fellow

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<sup>53</sup> According to the population census of 1951, Coloured people are those people who do not belong to any of the following four major people groups: whites, natives (people belonging to any African tribe), Asiatics (mainly Indians, Pakistanis, and Chinese), and Cape Malays. The following South African Acts of Parliament: Act 22 of 1928 Section 20 (Old Age Pensions); Act 30 of 1928 (Liquor Act); Act 36 of 1946 (Disability Grants Act) further describe Coloureds as a people that “cannot be classified as White, Bantu or Asiatic” (Van der Merwe 1957:7), this argument is also supported by Adhikari (2009:13) who says that “in official definitions” coloured people were usually said to be “neither white nor African”. He (Adhikari *ibid.*) goes on to say that due to this kind of classification, coloured people have usually not been identified by people of other social groups in a positive way. According to him (Adhikari *ibid.*) coloured people have always been identified for what they are not instead of what they are. Adhikari (*ibid.*) further explains that according to the definition of the term coloured as it appears in the population register; a coloured is, “someone that is not black, and is not white and is also not an Indian, in other words a no-person”. Looking at how people belonging to the coloured social group are defined and classified, one may ask as to where did this group (coloured people) originate? According to Van der Merwe (*ibid.*) Coloured people originate from the mixing of “diverse racial and cultural elements: slaves from Eastern and African origin, Hottentots, Bushmen, and Europeans”. Through this mixing there was some form of intermarriages which took place and resulted in a people of mixed race “who are born into, regard themselves as, and are accepted as members of the Cape Coloured group” (Van der Merwe *ibid.* 7-8). The theory on coloured people originating from sexual relations between races is supported by a posting titled, Coloureds, Coloureds (this article is posted on [www.everyculture.com](http://www.everyculture.com)). According to the article, the coloured people are a result of intermarriages between “white settlers, African native, and Asian slaves who were brought to South Africa from the Dutch colonies of Asia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries”. Coloureds are South Africa’s “third largest population group” with a population of over three million ([www.encounter.co.za/article/25.html](http://www.encounter.co.za/article/25.html)). Considering the fact that coloured people have their origins from South Africa’s two main races (black and white) one would wonder as to why the other races seem to marginalise the coloureds. This question is answered by Adhikari (2009. 14-15) who argues that coloureds are always seen as ‘a product of miscegenation’ therefore, “deficient in positive qualities associated with racial purity and handicapped by negative ones derived from racial mixture”. To the whites, according to Adhikari (*ibid.*) the coloureds are “a source of embarrassment “and a reminder of past lapses of morality”. Adhikari (*ibid.*) further explains that this labelling has been “internalized” by the coloureds to the point that they look at themselves as a people “stigmatized by their supposed condition of racial hybridity”.

<sup>54</sup> Even though coloured people may have black ancestors; unlike their black ‘cousins’, coloured youth do not go for initiation ceremonies because initiation schools are a foreign thing to coloured culture. This information was corroborated by the researcher’s friend and former house-mate, Eugene Koopman, who is a coloured from

countrymen, the rites of passage in coloured communities are more private than public affairs, as it is a choice of an individual<sup>55</sup>. Those individuals who practice rites of passage in coloured culture are generally adolescents from poor coloured communities. According to Blandy (7<sup>th</sup> October 2009), it is not uncommon for a person travelling or living in Cape Town to see a lot of coloured people, including children with missing front teeth/incisors (see picture below).



**Figure 1: Cape coloured men with their front teeth missing<sup>56</sup>**

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Kraaifontein in Cape Town. The fact that coloured youth are not exposed to initiation ceremonies organised by the elders in their community is something to worry about because, every culture needs initiation of its children into adulthood, for a healthy development of those children into adulthood. This view is shared by Bly in Pinnock (1997:20) who argues that, "...if a culture does not deal with the warrior energy of its young men and the spirit energy of its young women – take it in consciously, discipline it, honour it – this energy will turn up outside in the form of gangs, wife beating, depression, drug abuse, brutality to children and even aimless murder."

<sup>55</sup> This way of doing initiation is dangerous because even though initiation is of prime importance in the development of children into adulthood, it has to be handled by grown-ups and not by children themselves. If it is handled by children, the end results may be disastrous because as Pinnock (1997:27) explains; "youngsters have no magic rituals, no safe paths to warrior hood, no old men to welcome them into the ancient, mythologised, instinctive male world and, very often, no effective fathers who understand what it is they are being asked."

<sup>56</sup> Photo downloaded from: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/expat/expatnews/6268127/Cape-Towns-passion-gap-sexual-myth-or-fashion-victimhood.html>. Compliments of AFP

One may ask as to what causes loss of teeth in coloured people. According to Blandy (ibid.) a researcher from the University of Cape Town's biology department, Jacqui Friedling, who studied the practice in 2003, discovered that the practice of removing one's front teeth has existed among the coloured people for over 60 years. Supporting Friedling, Barashenkov (n. s.) explains that the practice originated from the time when slavery was being practiced in the Cape. He says that Cape Malay's ex-slaves were the ones who started the practice. Barashenkov (ibid.) further says that:

The absence of teeth originally served as a visual "F word"<sup>57</sup> to their former Dutch and British masters who would usually determine a slave's worth by their dental health, and as a symbolic way of taking back control over their own bodies.

Although many years have now passed since the end of slavery in the Cape and the rest of South Africa, the Cape still has a lot of people who have toothless gums. A lot of theories have been said as regards to why many coloureds still have no front teeth. Some people have gone to the extent of suggesting that coloureds remove their front teeth for the sake of facilitating "oral sex" (Blandy 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2009 and Barashenkov n. s.). Through her research, Friedling (in Blandy ibid.) discovered that, in contemporary Cape Town, the practice is "a rite of passage for teenagers- almost exclusively from poorer families." Friedling (ibid.) goes further to explain that the practice is a result of peer pressure and in some cases gangsterism<sup>58</sup> which is rampant among the Cape coloureds. According to Blandy (ibid.) most of those who are practicing the ritual would pay money to dentists to have their teeth removed, because having no front teeth is a symbol of status. Quoting Friedling, (Blandy ibid.) says that, among most Coloured people, having no front teeth/incisors elevates oneself "above the rest of their peers".

### **2.1.5.2. Religious perspective**

Another area of change in the life of the developing youth is religious development. This area of development has to be considered carefully as it touches on a part of life, which

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<sup>57</sup> Barashenkov (ibid.) mentioned the actual word, but the researcher edited the word considering the fact that mentioning the actual word may not go well with some people.

<sup>58</sup> For an adolescent living in Lavender Hill, "being part of a gang brings a sense of belonging, power and material goods, like a pair of Nikes, a cell phone or gold jewellery." ([sozo](#) foundation)

affects most mid-adolescents because; the majority of them have “a sense of religion and a high interest in spiritual matters.” (Stevens & Banks 2001:14-15).

As mid-adolescents develop from being children to become adults, they are filled with many questions on various issues including religion as Parrott (1993:20-21) affirms, “...adolescence is a time when young people question the religious concepts and beliefs of their childhood.” He goes on to say that:

...They may become skeptical of religious forms, such as prayer, and later begin to doubt the nature of God, but they are on a genuine spiritual quest. This is sometimes mistakenly interpreted as skepticism or doubt. In reality it is sincere questioning.

Echoing Parrott above, Fuller (1988:35) explains that the child’s attainment of the ability to think critically, leads him to a point where he becomes conscious of the need to rethink his religion and all the values attained through parents and Church. Fuller (ibid.) further explains that during this stage<sup>59</sup> in a child’s life, peer influence plays a major role to the point that if one’s peers are so much involved in religious issues, he also spends most of his time on religious issues. This happens because to most mid-adolescents, their “immediate social relations” are their most important thing. Noyce (1989:80) supports Fuller above and clarifies that not many children will find themselves in this situation (of questioning their faith) because for some, this stage will only be reached when they are in “their thirties” or even later on in life.

When the young person reaches this stage of development in life, and it happens that they become sceptical of religion, how are adults to whom the youth is looking up for guidance supposed to react to his/her struggles? Do they have to take the scepticism as the work of the devil, which needs exorcism? Alternatively, do they have to take it as an act of rebellion needing punishment? Responding to these questions, Parrott (1993:21) says:

Adolescents investigate their religion to make their faith their own rather than that of their parents. They question, not because they want to become agnostic or atheistic, but because they want to accept religion in a way that is meaningful to them.

Parrot (Ibid.) further states that “the quest is often frightening, and the search for faith may lead to involvement in destructive religious cults or other potential problems.” One

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<sup>59</sup> Fowler (1981 in Noyce 1989:80) calls this stage “Individuating/reflexive stage”.

may ask as to what families and Churches can do in reaction to the negative feelings, which the youth may have as regards religion in line with Parrot's observation above. Should the youth be ignored, left to their own devices and left to fight their own battles or it is necessary to kneel and pray for divine intervention to deliver them from their situations? Stevens & Banks (ibid.) argue that despite the much scepticism in the life of children:

Many youth have a strong identity with God and do not waver into unbelief even though they may have doubts from time to time...they have a strong spiritual; sense that continues to cause them to seek God and to keep on growing. It is not until the 'cares of this life' in adulthood come upon them that they begin to lose some if not much of their enthusiasm for spiritual things.

Echoing the sentiments of Stevens & Banks above, Fowler (1981:156) argues that strength for youth to keep on trusting God despite the doubts they may have comes from the values they got from their parents. Fowler (ibid.157) further says that children will always stick to God despite the feelings of doubts they may have towards Him because most of them "strongly" identify with their parents' "teachings and standards" because they feel that they are their (youth's) own. Fuller (1988:40) argues that when children start doubting issues of faith, there is no need to worry about the situation, as it is a healthy way of developing one's faith<sup>60</sup>. Fuller (ibid.) goes on to say that "doubt assists the difficult process of individualizing faith to the point where it becomes a living reality rather than a set of dead beliefs in which one strains to profess belief".

It is usually difficult for adults to understand children's behaviours because not many adults know the cause of such behaviours. It is because of this lack of understanding for youth behaviours (like the ones mentioned above) that adults end-up complicating the problems that may be displayed by the youth during their process of development. In order to understand better the reasons which make children to behave in the way they behave, we will turn to James W. Fowler's writings about spiritual development of human beings.

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<sup>60</sup> Much as this statement may seem to be true, the researcher's personal view is that parents should not just stand and watch as their children struggle with issues of faith, expecting them to come back to the faith later on in life. Parents should do whatever they possibly can to help their children remain in the faith even when that faith may not be making any sense to the child. With proper modelling, children will not stray from the faith because they will have internalized their parents' faith.

The reason for turning to Fowler is due to the fact that, he applied the basic paradigm of a developmental approach to the field of spirituality and faith. Fowler reveals that faith, just like morality, develops in stages. He argues that “faith is an on-going process [...] a way of being and learning into life” (Fowler in Astley and Francis (eds.) 1992:329). To most Christians, the idea of having faith developing in stages, may sound confusing because most of them believe that the development takes place in an instant (when a person comes to a point where they give their life to Jesus as a born again believer). This view though popular in Christian circles, is disputed by Droege (1992:272 in Astley and Francis (eds.)) who explains that even though most people have held this view for a long time, the truth of the matter is that development of faith moves in stages and the movement is not instant. In his extensive work on human development titled; *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*, Fowler outlines a detailed description of stages through which a person’s faith develops. He (Fowler 1981:135-211) outlines the stages as follows:

1. **Infancy and Undifferentiated Faith (Pre-stage).** According to Fowler (ibid.) it has to be understood that a person’s faith development starts from the time the particular person is born. As an infant, the child has faith in its mother and it is because of this faith that the child cries out when in need of anything. Despite being an infant, the child is fully dependent on adults that welcome him/her by providing the care that he or she needs. Fowler (ibid.) argues that during this time the child has a feeling that everything and everyone attached to him/her is an extension of its body and when such things and people are removed from the infant, the infant develops mistrust and may come to a point of despair. According to Fowler (ibid.) it is during this stage in life that people develop their “first pre-images of God”. Fowler explains that: the images “are composed from our first experiences of mutuality” (ibid.)
2. **Intuitive – Projective Faith (Stage 1).** This stage runs from around the age of three to seven years. It is the time when the child starts developing reasoning skills. During this stage, children often spend time in asking those around them, the questions “why?” and “How?” which often end-up being answered unsatisfactorily by those to whom they are posed because: “the child’s understanding of how

things work and what they mean is dominated by relatively inexperienced perceptions and by the feelings these perceptions arouse.” Due to the fact that children are not able “to coordinate and compare two different perspectives on the same object, they simply assume without question” (ibid. 123). While in this stage, children’s thinking about God is a combination of “fragments of stories and images given by their cultures into their own clusters of significant associations dealing with God and the sacred” (ibid. 128). Fowler (ibid.) further explains that the belief in God is not only found in children from religious homes alone but it is also found in those children from “non- or anti-religious homes”. Fowler argues that children from homes that do not care about religion show similar tendencies only that with them “their sources of images and symbols may be more limited” (ibid.). Fowler (ibid. 129) argues that children from non-religious homes construct their God-images from “religious symbols and language” that are “so widely present” in the world today despite the world being secular.

3. Mythic – Literal Faith Age (Stage 2). During this stage children spend time “sorting out the real from the make-believe”. This is a stage in which children investigate and test what they come across. During this stage children’s imaginations become part of forms of scrutiny before being admitted as part of what the child “knows”. In this stage children develop the ability to narrate their experiences, and are able to bind their “experiences into meaning through the medium of stories”. The narratives constructed in this stage do not just cover the child’s personal perspectives but include those perspectives that are “attributed to friends and family members” (Fowler ibid. 135-139).
4. Synthetic – Conventional Faith (Stage 3). This stage starts developing during mid-adolescence, and it is the stage in which children develop “formal operational thinking”: and they start composing “A myth or myths of the personal past”. Those that are in this stage attain the ability to come up with images of how they see themselves and how others see them. This is a stage in which children develop “self-consciousness”. Children that are in Synthetic stage, concentrate their efforts on having a personal identity and building interpersonal relations. Apart from developing an identity and building interpersonal relations, the children



also develop a belief system about morality and religion based on personal feelings and things they have been taught by their parents and other significant others. The faith system developed in this stage is seen by the developing person as being “everybody’s faith system or the faith system of the entire community”. The fact that the youth see this faith system as conventional, results in them accepting it without being analytical. Apart from not analysing the faith, those in this stage develop values and convictions which are based on what is accepted by the community to which the individuals who are at this stage of development belong. Their meanings are constructed basing on interpersonal images and terms, and they rely on external authority (Fowler *ibid.* 152-167).

5. Individuative – Reflective Faith (Stage 4). This stage of development often starts when one moves out of their community of belief to a new community with values different from their previous community. When the person sets into the new community, their values and beliefs may get challenged resulting into either the affected person abandoning their previous beliefs and values or they begin to look at them critically. During this stage, one starts questioning the values they previously held as well as the values of their community. The new awareness that comes into the life of those in this stage results in the concerned individuals being marginalised by their communities because they no longer fit into the community’s belief system (Fowler *ibid.* 174-183).
6. Conjunctive Faith (Stage 5). This stage brings a person to a point where their beliefs and values are no longer dictated by other people’s values but by the desire to see transformation in society. It is during this stage that a person allows “reality to speak its word, regardless of the impact of that word on the security or self-esteem” of the developing person and nascent subjectivity. Those that are in this stage spend most of their time “reclaiming and reworking” their past, and they develop a commitment to justice, free from “the confines of tribe, class, religious community or nation.” People belonging to this stage are able to accept other people’s beliefs and values without being prejudicial because they personally have been exposed to “the depth reality to which they refer” (Fowler *ibid.* 184-198).

7. Universalizing Faith (Stage 6). This stage is built on the foundation laid down by stage 5. It is a stage that is made up of men and women<sup>61</sup> who have come to a point in life where one is able to understand that as God's people, they are called to be part of the "reconciling, redeeming and restoring work that goes on wherever the Kingdom of God is breaking in." Those in this stage are people who have come to a point where they are able to see the injustice of the world and its effects; and they therefore come to a point where they aim at helping others realise and get out of the confines of injustices they may be facing. Stage 6 people are not afraid to confront the ills of society because their desire is to see that rest of humanity realises the Kingdom of God without it being forced to become part of the religion of the one holding universalizing faith. As those that are in this stage rise up to challenge the social ills of society, they put their own lives at risk and may even become martyrs (Fowler 1981:199-211).

Development of children is not just physical and psychological but also religious. Just as it is the case with physical and psychological development, religious development is not static but moves on through the life-span of every person. Therefore when looking at the development of a child, we should at no point ignore the religious aspect of development. With religious development, people's faith gets developed and the development affects the way they relate towards others (Green and Hoffman in Astley and Francis (eds.) 1992:265). In case of development of children, no positive development will take place in the absence of adults. This is because adults have a role of fostering "a felt sense of trust in the nurturing support of the holding environment" in which children may find themselves during their period of development into adults (Droege in Astley and Francis (eds.) 1992:272).

In the process of trying to develop skills for relating with God and other people, children will start asking various questions concerning various issues including religion. This will happen because this is a stage in which according to Parrott (1993:20-21) it is normal for them to "...question the religious concepts and belief of their childhood." Parrot (ibid.)

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<sup>61</sup> According to Fowler (1981:201) reaching this stage of faith does not mean that a person is perfect. Some of the people who are considered to have attained stage 5 faith are: Mahatma Ghandi, Martin Luther King Jr., Mother Teresa, Dag Hammarskjöld, Dietrick Bonhoeffer, Abraham Heschel and Thomas Merton (ibid.).

goes on to say that this questioning only happens in a short space of time and the youth comes back to a point where they reassert the religious beliefs they got from the significant others they have been interacting with.

It can therefore be concluded that, mid-adolescent years are truly an important stage in an adolescent's physical, psychological as well as religious life, despite it (mid-adolescent years) being a delicate period. It is a stage in which a person's identity is shaped basing on what they experienced before reaching the stage. As people move into the other stages of spiritual development, their life is shaped by the life images and values they experienced during mid-adolescence. If the values and life images that one experienced during their formative stages of life happen to be negative, then chances are that their adult life will be full of negatives. For one to experience a responsible life, they need to be provided with health life images and values by adults who have close contact with them. Apart from guiding the mid-adolescents, the adults also have to live their life in a way that will help the youth to model their spiritual life on them. The modelling will help the adolescents to stand on the values and principles displayed by the valued adults and they will therefore be able to stand firm in their faith even in times when they (children) encounter issues that may make them doubt God and his power. If the adults will not hold children's hands in this stage, they (children) will end up straying from the faith.

## **2.2. CONCLUSION**

The importance of investigating the social development of mid-adolescents cannot be underscored given its interconnectedness with youth culture given the fact that most of the things that mid-adolescents are involved in are in one way or another, a result of youth culture and how one relates him/herself to that culture.

This chapter has attempted to demonstrate that the world of mid-adolescents is full of exciting as well as challenging things. It has shown how growth and development takes shape in the growing person and how it affects the lives of children as they try to meet the expectations of their families, peers and society. Apart from exploring the life and development challenges faced by youth from various cultural groups, the chapter examined life and developmental challenges faced by mid-adolescents from the

coloured people group, which forms the majority of people living in Lavender Hill, the focus area of our research. It was equally observed that although coloured youth (especially from poor family backgrounds) have rites of passage; no coloured youth go through initiation ceremonies as there is no such thing as initiation ceremony in coloured culture. It was discovered that it is as a result of their lacking of proper places where they can get guidance from that most coloured youth find themselves getting attracted to gangs and drug dealers. Much as it has been observed that coloured people do not conduct initiation ceremonies as commonly done by their black counterparts, it can be noted that there is dire need for the ceremonies in coloured youth. It is certainly out of this need that coloured youth look for recognition from such visible groups as gangs and drug dealers<sup>62</sup>. Coloured youth join gangs and drug dealers because to them, members of these groups are the most visible in society. We saw that because of their being involved in the visible groups, the youth find themselves in situations where they start indulging in risk behaviours. We have observed that during their development, mid-adolescents from groups that practice initiation receive a lot of support from society as well as families. Through our observation, we have discovered that most of the support the youth receive is flawed<sup>63</sup> and if not challenged, it may lead them into situations where they will end up being a menace to society. It has been remarked that with proper support, society can change the way it is currently dealing with children's issues, and thereby raise them into responsible adults.

It is when we can know and understand what mid-adolescents go through in their development into adults that we will be able to help them grow into a people that will be able to say no to the temptation of using dangerous drugs like *tik*. This will be possible

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<sup>62</sup> The researcher's view is supported by Pinnock (1997:29-30) who postulates that if children do not have a system which provides them with rites of passage as they come of age, they do not become "socially and emotionally active...they simply become active." This activeness may then lead the children to a point where they become violent because there is no "social pressure" to check their aggression.

<sup>63</sup> Most communities practice rites of passage for children during their transition period to 'adulthood', and through these rites of passage; the initiates are counselled as regards to how they have to take their new role as 'adults'. In most of these initiation ceremonies, the initiates are given instructions which if not challenged can lead the children to become a menace to society rather than a blessing. Some initiation schools give drugs and beer to the initiates as part of initiation, and some even encourage initiates to practice sex after graduating from the school (cf. page 35).

because if one is not going to fully understand the challenges a growing person encounters in the course of developing into an adult, chances are that they will not be able to properly guide that person on their life journey. Considering the fact that mid-adolescence is the stage of faith in which children are able to develop an identity and build interpersonal relationships as well as develop a belief system about morality; this can be a stage in which those youth that are living with or are in contact with significant others who are using *tik* can model their life on those people resulting in them participating in use of the drug. This may happen because mid-adolescence takes place during the stage of faith in which children develop a belief system about morality and religion based on personal feelings and things they have been taught by their parents and other significant others, so if one learns that using *tik* is not a problem, they will have no problems to participate in the behaviour.

It is of great importance that when dealing with the issue of *tik* abuse, it is relevant to consider a holistic approach of human development. This is because, as previously shown, a person's life is not just affected by physical and psychological circumstances but also spiritual circumstances. It is thus the duty of practical theologians to attempt to address the socio-spiritual issues that affect children in their formative years. Such an intervention by practical theologians could help mid-adolescents to have a quality relationship with God and with other people. Although debatable, it can be premised that if mid-adolescents have a quality relationship with God and other people, they will be able to refrain from using drugs because they will be aiming not only to please God and those people they live with but more importantly in leading a life that is both honourable and exemplary.

The next chapter will explore the social-cultural environment in which substance abuse takes place. It is the view of the researcher that if one understands the environment in which substance abuse is taking place; they will be able to guide those at risk of falling into the behaviour in a way that will move them further from the behaviour. The critical exploration in the chapter will involve an analysis of media, family and social influence over the life of a mid-adolescent.

## CHAPTER THREE

### **The social-cultural environment of substance abuse: A contextual, descriptive approach**

#### **3.0. Introduction**

This chapter analyses the social-cultural environment of substance abuse so as to better understand and appreciate the context in which it is taking place. To have a proper understanding of the context in which abuse is taking place, will allow us to give proper guidance to those at risk of partaking in the behaviour.

The present exploration will closely look at aspects such as the influence of the media, and the family, because these two elements have an influence on the life of children. This is because every day wherever children are; they encounter the media and family both in a negative and positive way and if these two are not challenged, there will be no hope that the mid-adolescent will refrain from risky behaviours that may lead to involvement in substance abuse.

#### **3.1. Media**

As the rest of human beings, mid-adolescents need to enrich their lives and potential. This enrichment comes into the life of a young person through relationships, maintained through communication with family and friends. Today's youth have numerous ways of communicating with friends and compatriots from anywhere in the world, thanks to advancements in technological development currently rocking the world. Children living in the modern world have at their disposal, the most sophisticated tools of communication the world has ever known. According to Ellul in Pyper (1996:96)

[W]e have moved from personal experience to mass circulated 'fact', so that we live in a world where the naked emperor is clothed. What is not circulated in mass communication has no reality. Instead of gaining our picture of reality from our own experiences we gain it from the images transmitted by the mass media.

Mid-adolescents just like the rest of the people living in the world today, have found themselves in this world of mass communication. The most common forms of communication for the contemporary youth include Satellite Television, the Internet with its social networking sites, and mobile phones.

In order to understand contemporary youth and how their world is being influenced by the media, this section looks at the following forms of media, as they are the most commonly used by today's children. These include: (i) Television (ii) Internet (iii) Mobile phones (iv) Social media

### **3.1.1. Television**

It is common for one to hear or find children especially mid-adolescents discussing soap operas or movie series and other popular television programs these days. The contemporary South African youth knows almost every television program that is aired on the various public television channels.

Since the time television made it to the world scene, it has grown fast<sup>64</sup> to the point that it is now having a very big impact, most of which negative, on the life of many people of which adolescents are the most affected. Alley (1977:17-19) argues that authority of the home which is found in most traditions and cultures has been eroded by television, which has undermined parents' ability to hide the truth, "it has stripped us bare." He continues to argue that television has told the truth, which was previously hidden from the youth by authority figures such as parents, the law, the Church etc. Alley (ibid.) further argues that, television has brought in a situation in which "children are willing to listen but do not want to be told." Mueller (1994:124) argues that most parents and authority figures are not able to challenge the influence of television on children because:

...television's ability to define reality and guide children and teens through life has increased overtime in proportion to the decreasing influence of the family, school, and

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<sup>64</sup> Porter (1998:82-83) quoting British *Social Trends* statistics of 1997 says "In 1995 people (in Britain) watched an average of twenty-five hours of television a week (and listened to around sixteen hours of radio). This totals to an average of between three and four hours a day." He further says that in the years between 1988 and 1998, the number of "over sixteen-year-old population" that watched television rose from 98 per cent to 99 per cent for both men and women.

Church. Parental influences deteriorate when parents are absent from the home or oblivious to what their children and teens are watching.

Detweiler and Taylor in Chatteris (2009:67) agree with Mueller and they add by rightly saying that the problems arise because most parents do not take the age rating of television programs seriously, thereby, letting television have a negative effect on the moral formation/development of their children. According to Wyckoff (2000:43) this might be due to the fact that some people view television as having a positive impact on the life of children. Wyckoff (ibid.) further explains that despite some people arguing that television has a positive impact on the development of children; its negative impacts far much outweigh its positive impacts. This is because according to Wyckoff (ibid.) “many children are likely to model the behaviour they see when watching” television, and considering the fact that most of the things television displays are negative, those children who are exposed to such negativity will end up modelling their lives on negative things.

It is rather sad to note that most parents do not care about what their children are watching from television. This has resulted in instances where kids see and hear numerous instances of “sexually explicit, perverse and violent programming during the crucial years of their development” (ibid. 131).

It is also saddening to note that children’s exposure to negative effects<sup>65</sup> of television happens despite the fact that most parents would want their children to live a life that will make them a people that will be considerate to others. These are a people that will not use foul language; a people that will not be sexually or racially intolerant; a people that will not be dependent on alcohol or drugs (Porter 1998:88).

### **3.1.2. The internet**

Apart from television, another media of communication that is having a big impact in the lives of present day mid-adolescents is the internet<sup>66</sup>.

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<sup>65</sup> As previously stated, negative effects of television far much outweigh its positive effects. Television has eroded the authority of the home resulting in children ignoring advice they get from the home.

<sup>66</sup> The Concise Oxford English Dictionary (2008) defines the internet as, “a global computer network providing a variety of information and communication facilities, consisting of interconnected networks using standardized communication protocols.”



Current information<sup>67</sup> about the growth of internet shows that internet usage has increased like wildfire (cf. table 1). Out of the 6,930,055,154 internet users indicated in table 1, South Africa has 6,800,000 users (Internet World Stats 2011). It has to be stated that even though internet access is sourced mainly through computer usage, current trends in technology have resulted in most people, especially adolescents, accessing the internet through use of internet-enabled mobile phones. South Africa is said to have approximately 10 to 12 million of such mobile phones (Czerniewicz 2010).

**Table 1: Internet users and population statistics**

<b>INTERNET USERS AND POPULATION STATISTICS FOR AFRICA</b>				
<b>REGION</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Pop. % of World</b>	<b>Internet Users, Latest Data</b>	<b>Penetration (%) Population)</b>
<b>Total for Africa</b>	1,037,524,058	15.0%	118,848,060	11.5%
<b>Rest of World</b>	5,892,531,096	85.0%	1,991,917,750	33.8%
<b>WORLD TOTAL</b>	<b>6,930,055,154</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,110,765,810</b>	<b>30.5%</b>

**Table 1 Sourced from: Internet World Stats - [www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm](http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm)**

It can be said without fear of self-contradiction that the internet, just like other media of communication, has brought with it both positive and negative effects on the life of people living in the world today. Most of internet's negative effects have had a very big impact in the life of children because according to Porter (1998:174) unlike the situation with other media, the world of internet is a private one. Porter (ibid.) argues that:

<sup>67</sup> Internet World Stats (an organisation involved in research on internet usage and statistics) released these statistics on June 30, 2011.

The world of Internet is an increasingly private one, in which you can shelter behind pseudonyms, develop relationships that exist only on the Net, and sit for many hours alone at a computer keyboard communicating over vast distances while at the same time having no actual contact with anybody.

The fact that the internet provides privacy to its users has resulted in the users using the facility in many unorthodox ways knowing that it is very hard for an outsider to invade that privacy. Many mid-adolescents have used internet as a facility for viewing sites that show things that they cannot easily access in most environments. It is possible for them to have this access due to the privacy that it (internet) offers. Things like hard-core pornography can easily be accessed through the internet provided one knows where to look (Porter 1998:173). According to Porter (ibid.), the internet poses a great challenge to parents and guardians as far as censorship is concerned because, unlike television, which shows adult videos/materials very late at night, the internet shows the same throughout the day provided one gets into the website posting the material. Porter (ibid.) further argues that, the challenge is a big one because, “the Internet is extremely available – and anonymous”, a thing which makes it very difficult for parents to monitor the use of the technology by their children.

Porter’s argument above may be taken by some as an exaggeration because it can be contended that for one to use the internet, they need to have a computer (or GPRS enabled cell phone) which has access to the internet and it is the prerogative of parents to provide their children with such a facility which they (parents) themselves can always check whenever the children surf the internet. This may sound a brilliant argument but to those conversant with modern day technology, the argument cannot carry water as most of today’s children can access the internet not only through use of computers but also by using the mobile phone. Kreutzer (2009 in Czerniewicz 2010) reveals that:

According to one study by two youth marketing agencies (Student Village & Interact RDT) 78% of SA students access the internet via their cell phones. UNISA’s study of high school learners reported that 75.4% of the respondents indicated that they accessed the Internet via their cell phones... 93% of the Grade 11 learners reported having used the internet on cell phones (ever), with 68% using their phones for internet access on a typical day, opposed to 39% using computers.

With the above revelation, it is very hard to dispute the fact that today’s youth are more vulnerable to the negative effects of the internet technology as discussed previously. The internet has placed mid-adolescents in a position where they have to face negative

things thereby changing their life in a way that the world has never experienced before. It has made mid-adolescents' life vulnerable to negative influence from their peers and adults who are using the internet for disseminating information and ideas that may thwart their (youth's) development into responsible adults.

### **3.1.3. Mobile/cell phones**

The mobile phone is one technology, which has spread very fast in the world of today, and it is the most available of the other technologies discussed previously. The cell phone technology has had a very big impact on the lives of people not only in the Western world but in Africa as well. Today one does not necessarily need to have access to the post office to communicate with those away from him/her, because they are able to pass whatever message they have by just dialling a set of numbers on their cell phone.

Available statistics (Czerniewicz 2010) reveal that by the year 2007, 87% of South Africans had cell phones. These cell phones are not very much the kind of cell phones that are sophisticated as the ones people living in the West would consider for a cell phone. They are mostly “the common-or-garden numbers which have been around for a while now and not been taken much notice of” (ibid.). It is estimated that out of a population of 50 million people, South Africa has 44 million cell phones (Czerniewicz 2010). Even though cell phones were originally intended for business use by adults (Aoiki & Downes, 2003 in Campbell 2005:3) they have become popular with all manner of people including the youth. According to (Campbell ibid.) the popularity of cell phones has come about due to the status symbol that it gives to the youth. To own a cell phone (among children) is a sign of being “connected, accessible, in demand” and being independent from one's family (Campbell ibid.).

The impact of the cell phone is very shocking when it is viewed as regards to the number of mid-adolescents having access to the technology (cell phone). According to Czerniewicz (2010), a research on high school students, conducted by the Youth Research Unit at the University of South Africa (UNISA), found that 98-99% of High School students in South Africa own a cell phone. This same research revealed that even students studying in High Schools that are located in poor areas of such places as Cape Town have access to cell phones. The research discovered that in the poor

schools, '77% of Grade 11 students owned their own phone, 18% used other people's phones and 4% owned a SIM card, but used other people's phones to use it' (Kreutzer 2009 in Czerniewicz 2010). It is said that 87% of the South African cell phone users in the age range of 16 to 24 years have declared that they cannot live without their cell phones (Czerniewicz 2010). It is worth noting that in the so-called poor South African High Schools; most 17-year-old students spend about half of their expenses on cell phones (ibid.).

Apart from the internet and cell phones, social media such as Facebook has also affected mid-adolescents in their development. Most mid-adolescents today are spending much of their time on Facebook<sup>68</sup>, than on anything else, as it gives them a platform on which they can chat with friends from just any place in the world without them being physically present where those friends are. South Africa is one country in Africa, which has witnessed a rapid growth in number of people using Facebook as part of their day-to-day activities. According to information posted on the internet ([www.socialmedialogue.com](http://www.socialmedialogue.com) February 25, 2011):

South Africa is one of the world's top rising countries in terms of the development of Facebook population. In the last 6 months, South Africa gained 750,000 new users (+25%) and now has more than 3.76 million users in total. In Africa, only Egypt has more users with over 5.6 million of which 1.6 million joined the social network in the last half of the year (+43%).

Socialbakers.com in its assessment of age groups of the South African population currently using the social media Facebook, gives the following breakdown:

**Table 2: Percentage of people using Facebook according to age groups**

AGE RANGE	PERCENTAGE USING FACEBOOK
13-15	4
16-17	5

<sup>68</sup> "Facebook is a social utility that connects people with friends and others who work, study and live around them." The network came into being on February 4, 2004 with the intention of giving "people the power to share and make the world more open and connected" (facebook.com).

18-24	31
25-34	30
35-44	14
45-54	8
55-64	4
65-0	4

Table 2. Sourced from: [www.socialmedialogue.com/south-africa-rapid-growth-in-face](http://www.socialmedialogue.com/south-africa-rapid-growth-in-face).

According to the information indicated in figure 2, we will not be wrong to suggest that South Africa’s mid-adolescent population is the one that is using the social media 'Facebook', the most as compared to other sectors of the South African society.

Some may wonder as to what is it that is attracting so many children to use social media. Chatteris (2009:74) suggests that children are being attracted to social media because it is a new technology and they (social media) meet children’s need to be connected, and because the social media are either cheap or free.

### 3.2. The Family

The family<sup>69</sup> is an important source of values and character for children, as it is a place where children get guidance on various issues affecting their life. The family is a basic unit of society, created by God as a building block of the society. It is “the unit, into which we are born, find our identity, are socialized and nurtured” (Mueller 1994:40). Echoing with Mueller is Pyper (1996:86) who explains that; “the family is the route by which community or self can have an experience of the possibility of truth, goodness and

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<sup>69</sup> Murdock 1949 in Haralambos 2008 et.al. Defines the family as, “a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction”. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship, and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually cohabiting adults.

hope.” Anderson & Guernsey (1985:45) who argue that, the family is “the source of renewal and stability for society” further support this fact. Marinoff (2000:140) who argues that the family is the place where individuals start to build their identities also supports this view.

According to Haralambos, Holborn & Heald (2008: 459), despite it (the family) being a very important unit of society the family has for a very long time been attacked by critical thinkers who often argued that the family is not an important institution for society. The importance of the family has not only been challenged by academics/thinkers, argue (Haralambos et.al *ibid.*), but even those managing the family have shown their loss of trust in the system. This loss of trust is seen in the numbers of families that are breaking down<sup>70</sup>, increase in numbers of people living together without being married (co-habiting), increase in numbers of single parent house-holds and the increase in numbers of single people. Despite the fact that the family as an institution has fallen under attack from society, there are still many people in society who instead of celebrating the challenges facing the family, have something to worry about the situation.

De Vries (1994:65) sees the need to redeem the family institution from the situation it is currently in because; the family is where children get the influence, which will control their life for the better part of that life. De Vries (*ibid.*) argues that, as children, peers may influence them (adolescents) and they may move away from the authority and guidance of their parents; but when they grow up, “they return to the tracks that were laid by their parents”.

### **3.2.1. Some family problems being faced by mid-adolescents**

As seen previously, the family is facing many challenges, which may result in mid-adolescents looking at the family as being an institution that is not very important. They may come to a point where they can look at the family as being a place where there is nothing but suffering. Fowler (1996:7) argues that most of the challenges that children are facing in their families are a result of the fact that they are not having enough “quality adult time and attention”. The absence of attention and quality time from adults has resulted into children facing many challenges in their lives. Some of the problems being

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<sup>70</sup> Holborn (2011) Says that two thirds of South African children do not live with their parents.

faced by mid-adolescents as regards to family life are HIV/AIDS, and dysfunctional families.

### 3.2.1.1. HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS is a term which is very common in the world today especially in the sub-Saharan Africa where it has claimed many lives than anywhere else in the world. It is such a devastating pandemic<sup>71</sup>, which has affected so many families and has led to breakdown of families resulting in an increase in the number of child headed families and the number of poor households. Louw (2008:415) describes the HIV/AIDS pandemic scenario within the African context as “a great tragic drama” which is calling on everyone “to look steadily and clearly”, as it unfolds. Louw (ibid.) says that:

The drama of the current pandemic presents a challenge to both a market-driven culture and a theological approach based on triumphalism as found in the optimism of a *theologia gloriae* to rethink the paradigms, which they apply to address or to cope with the pandemic. ...tragedy challenges comfortable notions and certainties which proved stability and meaning to our lives, and forces us to question the artifices by which we render even evil and suffering familiar and acceptable.

The drama of the HIV/AIDS pandemic has affected the world of adolescents because as Louw (ibid.) states, “HIV is the main killer of women in the 20-40 age group in major cities in sub-Saharan Africa”. Looking at the ages of these women, one would not be wrong to suggest that most of these are parents to those that are in mid-adolescence. This then may mean that most African children are living in an environment full of challenges, as they have to care for the sick parents and to fend for their families. Some youth have also come to a point where they have been sexually abused due to what some commentators (Mercury 2003 in Swartz et. al 2010) have called ‘virgin myth’ (the belief that having sex with a virgin will cure you of HIV). Ramphela (2008: 238-239) gives the following outline as regards to the extent to which HIV/AIDS has affected the plight of children in South Africa:

...South Africa has witnessed a horrific epidemic of sexual assaults on young girls including babies, by men believing the myth that sex with a virgin cleanses one of HIV. Although statistics on sexual offenses are unreliable, given the high level of under-

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<sup>71</sup> According to the UNAIDS (2006), in sub-Saharan Africa 25 per cent of people living with HIV/AIDS are young people of the ages 15-25. This figure translates to about 6.2 million young people out of 24.5 million sub-Saharan Africans living with HIV/AIDS

reporting, available evidence shows that sexual violence against children, including raping of infants, has increased by 400%.

The United Nations World Youth Report (2007) affirms these observations by saying that 40 per cent of new HIV infections (over 500,000 daily) are occurring in children.

The observations above are good indications of how serious the HIV/AIDS situation is on the ground. The situation is a serious drama, as we have already observed, which is threatening the world of the current generation of mid-adolescents. It is a serious threat because according to Yust et.al. (Eds.) (2006:129):

The cumulative effects of HIV/AIDS demoralize young people, leading to social despondency and nihilism. The young give up on life early when they see their parents helpless and their communities engulfed and ravaged by fear of unknown.

### **3.2.1.2. Dysfunctional families**

The problem of HIV/AIDS is not the only one being faced by mid-adolescents in their world, as some of them are also facing the challenge of finding themselves in dysfunctional families<sup>72</sup>. As indicated earlier (c.f. page 57), “the family is a basic unit of society which was created by God as a building block of the society” as it is the place where children are mould into useful citizens for the benefit of their communities. Despite the fact that most communities know the importance of bringing up children in a good environment, the picture on the ground shows a different story. Most mid-adolescents are living in environments which are not fit to be called families as it can be observed in the following observation by Kretzschmar in Kretzschmar & Hulley (eds.) (1998:67) “33% of married women (in South Africa) are beaten by their husbands, 10% of young girls are sexually harassed in their families.” Cleminshaw in Kretzschmar & Hulley (eds.) (ibid. 90) observes that over 50% of black and Coloured women (in South Africa) have not been legally married.” According to MacMaster (2010:49), the breakdown in the family structure can also be because of “the eroding of traditional extended family structures, absent and busy parents, teenage pregnancies and single parent families”. MacMaster (ibid.) contends that these challenges have resulted into the family failing to provide necessities such as “protection, belonging and respect” to its

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<sup>72</sup> MacMaster (2010:49) elucidates that the family has become dysfunctional as a result of negative “tremendous and radical changes” which the family has gone through “over the past decades”. MacMaster (ibid.) rightly contends that the changes have resulted into “a perceived breakdown of morals, discipline and social order.”



members; and this has resulted into members of families seeking solace outside the home. MacMaster's argument is corroborated by Daniels & Adams (2010:49-50) who argue that the breakdown in the family system often leads children to the point where they join groups that will make them feel important and respected, as they cannot get the respect and acknowledgement they need from their families. Daniels & Adams (ibid.) further argue that most children earn the acknowledgement "through engagement with what is valued, which is membership in a gang and involvement in the drug trade." Apart from the desire for respect, some youth engage in dangerous behaviours because of the absence of father figures<sup>73</sup> in their lives. If this is the kind of situation in which mid-adolescents are being nurtured, one would pause to ask, what kind of behaviour are the adults teaching the children? Is this the kind of behaviour adults want their children to internalize? This kind of raising children will only result into a world full of hate and violence because as Kretzschmar in Kretzschmar & Hulley (eds.) (ibid. 67) argues, "if the parents themselves do not learn to give and receive love, they cannot show genuine love towards their children." This will then result into a generation that has serious psychosocial and emotional problems as can be seen in the observation by Holborn (2011):

Only 68% of candidates (in South Africa) passed their matric in 2010 and to pass a subject they only had to get 30% right anyway. Of those who enrolled in university in 2002, more than half dropped out... a third of 15-24 year olds are not in education, employment or training. More than a third of the country's prisoners are aged 18-25, whereas this age group accounts for only about 15% of the total population. Nearly 50,000 schoolgirls fell pregnant in 2007, a 151% increase since 2003.

It would not be far-fetched to conclude that the situation indicated above is result from the fact that most South African children come from troubled families. If the above observation cannot be a good indicator of the negative results of a dysfunctional family system, then nothing else can.

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<sup>73</sup> Children need to have a father in their life because without a father they have no hero and they may go out of the home to find the hero they need in their life. According to Pinnock (1997:29) most of the children who are involved in dangerous behaviours are those from families without a father-figure. He explains that, the lack of a father-figure in a child's life may make that child to replace the vacuum that is created by the father's absence with "demons" (ibid.). According to Brittijn (2013:51) the absence of fathers from homes is a common phenomenon in Lavender Hill. Agreeing with Brittijn above, Calix (2013:103) quoting the principal of Lavender Hill's Hillwood Primary School explains that if one is to ask a class of students from the school as to "how many of them know their daddies. Not half the room will raise their hands."

### **3.2.1.3. Poverty**

According to the World Bank, poverty is defined two fold i.e. extreme (based on an income of US\$1 per day) and poverty (based on an income of US\$2 per day) (De Rivero 2010:47). De Rivero (ibid.) argues that the world has 1.3 billion people living on an income of less than US\$1.

In South Africa, poverty refers to living conditions of individuals living their lives on less than R200 per month, which is less than half the amount needed for basic survival in the country (Yates & Swart in Swart et.al (eds.) 2010:226).

According to Berry & Guthrie in Yates & Swart in Swart et.al (eds.) (ibid.), “six out of every ten children (11 million)” living in South Africa, live in poverty. Berry & Guthrie (ibid.) further argue that long term poverty results in isolation of families which in turn impacts negatively on the lives of children. If this circle of poverty is not broken, argues Nicro (1990:4 in MacMaster 2010:50) children will develop feelings of not being wanted and when these feelings grow the children will end up making friends with bad people.

Considering the extent of poverty in Lavender Hill<sup>74</sup> we will not be wrong to conclude that poverty is one of the things that are leading the youth to indulge in such self-destructive behaviours as using methamphetamine. To them methamphetamine provides refuge from the problems they face at home and also provides them with a high self-esteem.

### **3.3. CONCLUSION**

This chapter has analysed how the media, technology, and even children’s families influence the youth as they walk into the world of adults. It has been revealed that advancements in media and technology have brought both positive and negative effects on the lives of their users and most of those affected by the influences are mid-adolescents. This chapter has shown that most mid-adolescents are using these new technologies in ways that are mostly negative i.e. some of them are using technologies like internet and cell phones as tools for harassing their friends thereby bringing misery to the life of their targeted victims. It was also discovered that the family is no longer a blessing to most children as it is has gone through a revolution which has resulted from

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<sup>74</sup> (c.f. pages 10-11)

the impacts of HIV/AIDS which has resulted in loss of parents and parental support leading to the affected youth getting demoralised and turning to drugs as an escape route. Dysfunctional families were also discovered to be some of the things that lead mid-adolescents into partaking in drugs due to the fact that dysfunctional families have difficulties in providing support and protection to their members; and in turn the members go outside the family (often to those seen as models) for support and protection. It was furthermore discovered that another attracting factor for children to the use of drugs, is poverty. We discovered that poverty can lead to those affected by it to find an escape route from the challenge and most of those running away from it may end up into drugs. Throughout the chapter, it has been highlighted that there is no way a person can run away from most of the things they encounter in their daily living. Despite the fact that these encounters cannot be escaped, every mid-adolescent including their parents, caregivers and guardians have a duty to see to it that every young person's life is being lived in a positive way. Even though living life in a meaningful way is not easy, it is possible if those concerned (adults as well as the youth) know the cause of the challenges they are facing and they do their level best to stand up against those challenges. It may not be easy to stand up against every challenge in life but if they are to work in unity, chances are very high that the challenges will be defeated. It is therefore imperative that mid-adolescents are helped to make right choices. These choices will make them attain high self-esteem, which will result in them valuing their future more than immediate pleasures of life that may lead them into situations where they may start experimenting with drugs.

The next chapter will examine methamphetamine/tik as a drug of choice and how it affects those using it and those near the users. The aim of this investigation is to see whether the way mid-adolescents socialise with people in their environment has an impact on the choices they make as regards to use of the drugs. The chapter will attempt to analyse how the behaviour of mid-adolescents affects their choices relating to the use and abuse of the drug; an enquiry will be made into what can be the signs which can help one to know whether a child is using and abusing the drug or not. The supposition is that if people know the signs that someone partaking in drug use displays, they will be able to help them before they come to a point where they get addicted to the particular drug they are using.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **The interplay between substance abuse, human behaviour, and socialising**

#### **4.0. Introduction**

This chapter sets out to investigate various substances, especially those that are most popular in today's world. This is in line with research sub-question number two, which aims at finding the most abused substances in today's world and the kind of effects they have on those using them. Particular emphasis will be placed on substance abuse and its effects on adolescents. In order to fully appreciate the effects of drug abuse, this chapter will also propose a brief analysis of the main causes that lead adolescents to use drugs. Such an analytical approach will help in giving a clearer and more holistic view of various substances which mid-adolescents abuse, and how they affect the life of the (ab)users and their families in particular, and their societies in general. It is envisioned that with a clear understanding of various substances of abuse and their effects, those living in communities struggling with methamphetamine, will be better able to know if their children are abusing it or other substances of choice. Such acquired knowledge will aid them to guide adolescents towards a point where they will refrain from indulging in behaviours that may lead to substance (ab)use.

#### **4.1. Types of substances abused by adolescents and their effects**

This section examines the types of drugs/substances that are used the most in various communities of the world. The aim of such an examination is to understand the substances' composition and the effects that they have on those that are using them.

Parrott (1993:96); Louw et al (2005:195-205); Visser (ed. 2007:205-208); Nevid et al (2008:296-310), Pugh (1978:413) and Gillis (1999:111-112) classify drugs into the following three major classes:

1. **Depressants:** This class of drugs, also known as downers, includes all drugs that slow down body functions such as pulse rate and breathing. The medical profession prescribes most of the drugs in this category for the relief of pain, anxiety and insomnia. With this type of drugs, the movement of the body may become slow and the body may lose coordination. Depressants may also induce a 'dream-like' state of well-being, and relaxation leading to apathy, drowsiness, sleep, and finally unconsciousness (Gillis 1999:111-112).

Examples of depressants include alcohol, narcotics, tranquilisers, and inhalants.

- a. **Alcohol:** It is "a liquid usually found in fermented or distilled liquor such as beer, wine, or whiskey". The liquid has the ability to make a person drunk (Coleman 1992:17). Most people who use alcohol do so because of the fact that it gives them the freedom to do things they cannot do under normal circumstances (when they are sober) (Gossop 1998:16). According to Wodarski and Feit (1995:62), once alcohol is ingested, it gets into the bloodstream "through the stomach and upper intestine" circulating rapidly to the whole body and immediately calms (depresses) the consumer's brain and spinal cord. *Gillis* (1999:111-112) asserts in the same line of thought that:

...it (alcohol) is technically classified as a depressant as it decreases the general level of activity of the C.N.S.<sup>75</sup>. Even small quantities of alcohol can impair coordination, vision and judgment, but being freely available and relatively cheap it is the drug commonly abused by young people. All too often an attitude of 'at least it's not drugs' is adopted, ignoring the fact that alcohol is a drug, having a proven potential for producing dependence.

Apart from dependence, alcohol abuse is also responsible for loss of property and income through road accidents and crime; Louw (1989 in Louw *et al* 2005:204) confirms this and contends that "alcohol abuse plays a role in approximately 50% of all crime and fatal car accidents in South Africa".

Apart from contributing to crime and car accidents, alcohol is also responsible for most breakdowns in family relations and is the leading cause of divorce and the development of "depression, anxiety, phobias, hyperactivity and

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<sup>75</sup> C.N.S is an abbreviation for the Central Nervous System

antisocial behaviours” in children of alcoholics, who also stand a risk of becoming alcoholics themselves (Comer 1995 in Louw *et al* 2005:204).

Alcohol can also result in the abuser developing a plethora of diseases that include liver cirrhosis, stomach ulcers, cardiac problems, pancreatitis, diabetes, sexual and menstrual impairment, and brain damage (Bryant-Jefferies 2001:38). Chronic drinking can result in “nutritionally linked disorders as cirrhosis of the liver and *alcohol-induced persisting amnesic disorder*<sup>76</sup>” (Nevid *et al* 2008:302). Those who abuse alcohol also have a high risk of indulging in “risky sex”, as the drug impairs judgment, leading to the abuser making choices they would not make if they were sober (Nevid *et al* 2008:302). Chronic use of alcohol can also result in vitamin B2 deficiency, resulting into brain damage and Korsakoff’s syndrome<sup>77</sup> (Louw *et al* 2005:205).

- b. **Narcotics:** These are described as sleep-inducing psychoactive drugs which can be both legal and illegal drugs such as opium and heroin (illegal), and Wellconal, Morphine, and Codeine (legal). According to Gillis, (1999:113) Wellconal, a drug that is mostly abused by South African youth, is a drug that is medically prescribed for relieving pain. It is in the form of a pink tablet and is taken orally or dissolved in water and injected into the abuser’s body. The drug is very addictive and its effects resemble the effects of heroin.
  
- c. **Tranquillisers:** Louw *et al* (2005:198) describes tranquillisers as types of drugs with the ability of stirring up relaxation, at the same time reducing anxiety or strong emotions and helping the user to sleep. According to Visser

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76 This kind of disorder results from vitamin B deficiency, which results in the “loss of brain tissues due to bleeding in the brain”, and is “characterized by glaring confusion, disorientation, and memory loss for recent events.” “Korsakoff’s syndrome” is the other name for the condition. The condition may persist even years after stopping abusing alcohol (Nevid *et al* 2008:302, 522).

77 According to Louw *et al* (205:205), this syndrome is also called alcohol-induced amnesic disorder, and it results into a person having difficulties in recalling the past and learning new things.

(ed. 2007:207), psychiatrists prescribe tranquillisers in treating patients suffering from psychiatric ailments. Examples of tranquillisers are benzodiazepines<sup>78</sup>, barbiturates<sup>79</sup>, mandrax<sup>80</sup>, and rohypnol<sup>81</sup>.

- d. **Inhalants:** The most abused inhalants are glue, nail polish removers, benzene, paint thinners, petrol, etc. According to De Miranda (1987), and Parry, Pluddemann, Bhana, Bayley, Potgieter and Gerber, (1997 in Visser ed. 2007:207), glue (cf. picture next page) is an inhalant that is commonly used by South African street children. Those using inhalants take the drugs by inhaling the fumes and gases from the solvents to acquire an “instant high”, (Gillis 1999:113). Inhalants are considered to be more dangerous because they have a very high potential for dependence and can damage the respiratory system, which may lead to sudden death as a result of suffocation or cardiac arrest (Gillis 1999:113). Inhalants can also result in “loss of consciousness, coma, or death from lack of oxygen.” Most of the inhalants are high in toxins and chronic use may result in damage of the liver, kidneys, brain, and lungs (Fisher & Harrison 2009:28).

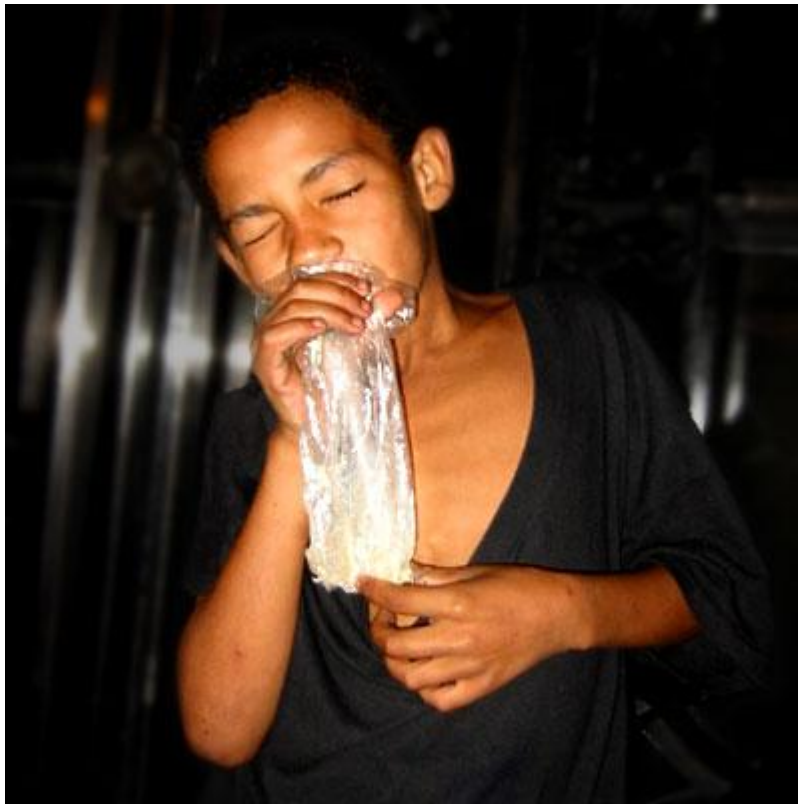
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78 Louw et al (2005:198) say that benzodiazepines provide temporary relief to people suffering from emotional distress. Gossop (1998:159) names valium and temazepam, also known as ‘eggs’, as the most common benzodiazepines.

79 Gossop (1998:157) explains that barbiturates have effects similar to those of alcohol, which results in impaired speech and judgment, and just like it is with alcohol, they result in a hangover. Gossop further states that in cases where the drug is used in combination with alcohol, users have ended up overdosing, resulting in the death of the users (ibid.).

80 Mandrax is a very dangerous drug, which can lead its users into dependence more quickly than most drugs. Users of this drug will feel a great sense of well-being before its tranquilizing effects begin to take toll (Louw et al. 2005:198)

81 Visser (ed. 2007:207 ) asserts that Rohypnol has of recent been used by men in alcoholic drinks of unsuspecting women who then “become defenseless and open to sex abuse”; thereby making the drug earn the name “date rape drug”. Ghodse (2005 in Visser 2007:207) further says that the drug is “colorless, odorless and tasteless, and induces drowsiness, impaired motor skills and amnesia” resulting in difficulties in obtaining “accurate information about the alleged sexual abuse”.



**Figure 2: An adolescent sniffing glue<sup>82</sup>**

- 2. Stimulants:** This class of drugs contains chemicals that “increase the activity of the central nervous system” (Nevid *et al* 2008:305). The drugs remove tiredness, making the person energetic, and increasing concentration in their daily activities (Louw *et al* 2005:199). Examples of stimulants include leaves and barks of some trees, amphetamines, cocaine, nicotine, and caffeine.

An analysis of a handful of examples will help demystify the use and effect of this class of drugs.

- a. **Leaves and barks of some trees:** Hirst (1995 in Louw *et al* *ibid.*) says that “farm workers in the Eastern Cape chew the leaves of a plant, known in Xhosa as *ikambi* or *igqwarha*, for their stimulating effect”. Louw *et al* (2005:199) adds that people in East Africa also use the *ikambi/igqwarha*, only that they call it by its Arabic name *khat*. In West Africa, hunters use *ibogaine*,

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<sup>82</sup> Picture downloaded from [www.carfwebnet.blogspot.com/2004\\_12\\_01\\_archive.html](http://www.carfwebnet.blogspot.com/2004_12_01_archive.html)



the shavings from the bark of a shrub called *iboga*. The hunters chew the *ibogaine* to keep themselves awake during night hunting trips (Louw *et al* 2005:199). According to Okpaku (1991 in Louw *et al* 2005:199), researchers in Kenya have found that excessive use of *khat* (see picture below) causes “emotional and behavioral disorders”.



**Figure 3: Picture of Ikambi/Khat leaves**<sup>83</sup>

- b. **Amphetamines:** According to Langone (1995:64), amphetamines first became known to the world in the time of the Second World War, as most soldiers fighting in the war were using them to remove tiredness and to obtain strength of mind. Well known amongst those soldiers who used the drug during this war were the Japanese suicide pilot bombers (the Kamikaze<sup>84</sup>), who took the drug when going for their suicide missions (Langone 1995:64). During this period of war and after the war, the drug became popular<sup>85</sup>, to the point that many people, including some world leaders, were using it.

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83 Picture downloaded from [www.druginformation.com](http://www.druginformation.com)

84 The Kamikaze were Japanese suicide bombers who dove planes filled with bombs on to American war ships during the Second World War (Langone 1995:64).

85 According to Gossop (1998:152-153) Adolf Hitler of Germany was being injected with the drug on daily basis from the year 1941 to 1943, when he was getting “as many as 5 injections a day”. Anthony Eden, the British Prime Minister during the Suez War of 1956, made a revelation that he was using the drug. It is reported

Amphetamines “are often taken in pill form or smoked in a relatively pure form called ‘ice’ or ‘crystal meth’” Nevid *et al* (2008:305). They (Nevid *et al* 2008:305) continue to explain that, for the drug to produce “an intense and immediate rush”, the users inject it “directly into the veins”. People from various spheres of society have used methamphetamines for the following reasons: students wishing to study late<sup>86</sup> and drivers travelling long journeys use the drug to keep awake (Louw *et al* 2005:200). Some have also used them “as appetite suppressants and for the treatment of depression” (Palfai & Jankiewicz, 1991 in Louw *et al* 2005:200). As is the case with any drug, the use of amphetamines can cause various problems to the user. Thompson *et al* (2004), Toomey *et al* (2003), Volkow *et al* (2001) in Nevid *et al* (2008:305) contend that abusing the drug can result in brain damage and may cause “deficits in learning and memory”. Supporting the above argument, Louw *et al* (2005:200) adds that the drug can also cause paranoia, hallucinations and delusions. The drugs can also cause loss of appetite and insomnia<sup>87</sup> (Nevid *et al* 2008:305). Use of the drug can also result in death because of the fact that “the compulsion to use, the desire to maintain the high, and the unpleasantness of withdrawal make overdose fairly common” (Fisher & Harrison 2009:20).

- c. **Cocaine:** This drug comes from the leaves of the coca bush, and is known to have been chewed by indigenous South Americans for centuries (Louw *et al* 2005:200). According to Louw *et al* (2005:200), “the most common form of cocaine, cocaine hydrochloride, is a concentration of the active ingredient in the coca leaves”. Louw *et al* (2005:200) further, argue that the substance is

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during the Second World War, 72 million tablets of the drug were distributed to British soldiers who were involved in the war (Gossop *ibid.*).

86 Visser (ed. 2007:208) argues that this behaviour is popular, “among students studying for tests and examinations,” because amphetamines have the ability of improving “task performance that has been impaired by boredom or fatigue”.

87 Insomnia is a syndrome which leads to having “difficulties falling asleep, remaining asleep, or achieving restorative sleep”. (Nevid *et al*. 2008:564)

processed into a powder, which when sniffed, results into a greater effect than chewing the coca leaves. The use of cocaine can result into dangerous side effects as Nevid *et al* (2008:305) assert:

...cocaine directly stimulates the brain's reward or pleasure circuits. It also produces a sudden rise in blood pressure and an accelerated heart rate that can cause potentially dangerous, even fatal, irregular heart rhythms. Overdoses can produce restlessness, insomnia, headaches, nausea, convulsions, tremors, hallucinations, delusions, and even sudden death due to respiratory or cardiovascular collapse. Regular snorting of cocaine can lead to serious nasal problems including ulcers in the nostrils.

In addition to the effects outlined above, continuous use of cocaine can result in the user experiencing restlessness, insomnia, paranoia and even mental illness (Edwards 2004; Barber 1995 cited in Pycroft 2010:14).

- d. **Nicotine:** This is a stimulant drug “found in tobacco products including cigarettes, cigars, and smokeless tobacco” (American Cancer Society 2004 in Nevid *et al* 2008:305). According to Salojee (1992 in Louw *et al* 2005:201), nicotine is the most dangerous chemical out of the 4000 chemicals<sup>88</sup> found in tobacco smoke. Louw 1989 (in Louw *et al* 2005:201) confirms this and adds that because of the poisons contained in nicotine, the chemical is sometimes used as an “insect-killer”.

It has been scientifically proven that nicotine can lead to physical addiction, which may lead to death from lung cancer and “other lung diseases, as well as cardiovascular (heart and artery) disease” (Teo *et al* 2006; Zickler 2004 in Nevid *et al* 2008:306). According to Zimbardo and Gerrig (1996 in Louw *et al* 2005:202), “the total negative impact of nicotine on health is greater than the total negative impact of all other psychoactive drugs, including heroin, cocaine and alcohol, taken together”. Peto *et al* (1992 in Louw *et al* 2005:202) adds that “nicotine is responsible for 20% of all deaths in the total industrialized world: this is equal to 14 jumbo jets filled with passengers crashing everyday”.

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88 Salojee 1992 in Louw *et al* (2005:202) says that tobacco smoke contains 4000 chemicals, which include 200 poisons and 43 carcinogenic substances.

Nicotine addiction is very serious in South Africa, as Salojee (1996 in Louw *et al* 2005:202) confirms: In the 1994/95 financial year South Africans smoked approximately 40,000,000 kilograms of tobacco resulting into an expenditure of more than R6 000 million.

- e. **Caffeine:** Carson *et al* (1996 in Louw *et al* 2005:202) describe caffeine as “a mild stimulant found in coffee, tea, chocolate and certain drinks and medicines”. They (Carson *et al* 1996) contend that taking too much caffeine can lead to a syndrome called caffeinism, which results in “restlessness, sleeplessness, muscle contractions, excitement and gastrointestinal problems such as diarrhea”. According to Julien (2005 in Fisher & Harrison 2009:21), caffeine should be used with caution as it may cause panic attacks in individuals that are “predisposed to panic disorders”. He adds that the drug may cause serious problems in some heart patients.

3. **Hallucinogens:** Parrott (1993:96) says that hallucinogens are a type of drug that creates altered perceptions of the mind. The drugs also have the ability to alter colour perceptions and hearing, and may result in euphoria, relaxation, and “in some cases, panic” (Nevid *et al* 2008:308). According to Visser (ed. 2007:208), hallucinogens may make the user to experience many strange things like: “perceiving things that are not real, such as seeing insects crawling on the skin (visual hallucinations), hearing noises (auditory hallucinations), and feeling things that are not there (tactile hallucinations).”

The following are examples of hallucinogen drugs:

- a. **LSD:**<sup>89</sup> This drug is mainly taken orally, and is the most powerful of the hallucinogens. A single gram of the drug “is enough for an effective dose for approximately 10,000 people” and its effects can last for up to between six and twelve hours (Louw *et al* 2005:195).

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<sup>89</sup> According to Langone (1995:57), LSD is an acronym for lysergic acid diethylamide, a drug made from “fungus that grows on different grains”.

According to Nevid *et al* (2008:308), the effects of the drug may vary from person to person, depending on “the amount taken, the user’s expectations, personality, mood, and surroundings.” Louw *et al* (2008:308) shares this view and adds that:

The drug affects all the sense organs as well as all the components of conscious experience. People may re-experience childhood events, memories of their own birth process or prenatal existence in the womb. There may also be a wide variety of vivid dream-like experiences. These can include horrifying scenes such as encounters with frightening monsters or being on a battlefield littered with dying soldiers....People have also reported positive experiences such as interesting journeys into outer space, encounters with heavenly beings, or even feelings of merging into the fabric of the universe.

Louw’s observation above is corroborated by Gossop (1998:123), who adds that:

The person (the user<sup>90</sup>) mistakes their hallucinations for reality itself. Thought processes are also altered by the drug. Thinking becomes non-logical, and often it has a strong magical quality to it. The person may believe that they can read the thoughts of other people or that they are able to transmit their own thoughts. Several people have been convinced that they could fly, and one or two unfortunate cases have occurred in which they actually tried to put their beliefs into practice. This delusional idea has even led to death.

According to Nevid *et al* (2008:308), the ‘trips<sup>91</sup>’ experienced by those using LSD may result from “chemical changes in the brain caused by the prior use of the drug” and for some users they may result from “psychological factors, such as underlying personality problems”.

b. **Marijuana:** Marijuana is taken from the *Cannabis sativa* plant (cf. picture below) and is considered to be a hallucinogen because it causes hallucinations when taken in high doses (Langone 1995:53). The drug has more names than any other plant, and the following are just some of its names: Indian hemp, Canadian hemp, Indian hay,

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90 Researcher’s explanation.

91 Trips are oneiric experiences, which an LSD user experiences after taking the drug (Louw et al 2005:195).

dagga, crazyweed, weed, grass, pot, Marijuana, kif, hashish, hash, bhang, charas, ganja, THC, reefers, stick, and joints (Van der Westhuizen & Fourie 1988:18).

According to Louw *et al* (2005:196), the drug is the most popular of all illegal drugs. Louw *et al* (2005:196) further explains that using marijuana as a drug is not a new phenomenon, as there are records indicating that “the Chinese emperor Shen Nung warned his people against its use” way back in 2700 BC., and Jan Van Riebeeck recorded in his diary that the Khoi of South Africa were using it. Echoing Louw *et al* above, Langone (1995:51) explains that in India, people have smoked marijuana for more than 2000 years before Jesus Christ was born. Marijuana can cause disorientation in users if taken in large quantities, but if taken in small quantities it may make the user to have relaxed feelings similar to those experienced by alcohol users (Nevid *et al* 2007:308). The drug can also lead to “impairment of judgment” (Visser 2007:208), a thing that may result in the user engaging in behaviour they may not have engaged in when in a normal state. Long term use of the drug can lead to “impaired work performance, self-image and a decline in interpersonal relationships, due to the fact that the drug makes the user lose motivation for constructive activity” (Barlow & Durand 1995; Davison & Neale 1994 in Louw *et al* 2005:196). Julien (2005 in Fisher & Harrison 2009:27) agrees with Barlow and Durand, and Davison and Neale, and adds that chronic use of the drug “decreases the male hormone testosterone thereby affecting sperm production” and also results in “impairment of ovulation” in females. Julien (2005 in Fisher & Harrison 2009:27) further says that so far “no effect on fertility or sexual potency has been reported.”



**Figure 4: Cannabis Sativa/Marijuana/Dagga plant<sup>92</sup>**

## **4.2. Causes of substance abuse**

As children go through the transitional period from children to adults, they go through many challenges because of their contact with people from various lifestyles, some of whom are adults and some fellow youth. In their encounter with various groups of people, some adolescents find themselves in situations where they get attracted to substance use, and a good number of them fall into the behaviour of abusing the substances. It would not be wrong to assume that most people know of a mid-adolescent who is involved in substance abuse<sup>93</sup> or if they do not know any, they have heard of someone (a mid-adolescent) who was or is currently involved in abuse of substances. Even though most people may have this knowledge about adolescents abusing substance, most people do not really know what actually causes substance

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92 Picture downloaded from: [www.nicd.us/marij2.jpg](http://www.nicd.us/marij2.jpg)

93 Nevid et al (2008:292) define substance abuse as “a pattern of recurrent use (of drugs) that leads to damaging consequences.” They (Nevid et al) continue to say that, “the damaging consequences may involve failure to meet one’s major role responsibilities (e.g., as a student, worker, or parent)”. They (Nevid et al) also contend that the drug users may put themselves in situations where substance use is physically dangerous (e.g., mixing driving and substance use), encountering repeated problems with the law arising from substance use (e.g., multiple arrests for substance-related behavior), or having recurring social or interpersonal problems because of substance use (e.g., repeatedly getting into fights when drinking).

abuse among adolescents. A number of studies have been conducted to determine the causes of substance abuse among children. This section will examine some of the studies conducted to determine the causes of substance abuse. In these previous studies, the researchers asked those involved in the abuse to say what made them to become involved in the behaviour.

In research conducted among adolescents in the United States of America (Van Pelt 1997:188-189), the following were the reasons for taking drugs:

- **Curiosity** - Taking drugs is a new experience and kids love new adventures.
- **Peer pressure** - Difficulty in saying no. Nobody wants to stand against the crowd and be vulnerable to ridicule and possible alienation.
- **Fun** - "If it feels good, do it" becomes a dominant life principle ... kids choose drugs because they are cheap, accessible, and require no personal discipline.
- **Mimicking** - Children are mimicking the model set by an adult generation, where drinking and drugs is the order of the day. "Example is the best teacher".
- **Rebellion** - It is a way of asserting one's independence and letting parents know that the child plans to do whatever pleases him. "To some kids drinking is a great way to upset and control parents who are non-drinkers."
- **Disinhibition** - "I drink because it helps me be myself." "When I do dope, I'm so much more creative. I can get into music so much more." However, Van Pelt (1997:188-189) says research has shown that this kind of adolescents would experience disinhibiting effects of alcohol if they take a drink after being told that it contained alcohol, despite it (the drink) containing no alcohol.
- **Escape** - To escape the pain of broken relationships, feelings of inadequacy, fear of the future, pressure of school, expectations of parents, and other stressors.
- **Addiction** - Most kids get physically addicted to substances because of frequent use of the substances. Most of those involved in harder drugs, started with less addictive drugs like marijuana/dagga and graduated to harder drugs to obtain a 'higher high'(to feel more high).



A 1992 research conducted by Anthony T. Campo and Ronald P. Rohner<sup>94</sup> (Campo & Rohner 1992:430-431) found the following to be causes of substance abuse in children:

- **Dysfunctional families** - People coming from dysfunctional families tend to live a life that is full of “impaired psychological adjustment”. This impairment of psychological adjustment results in the affected person not trusting anyone, including themselves, as they feel that they are not worth of achieving anything in life. The person looks at themselves as a failure, and this kind of thinking results in them having low self-esteem. With low self-esteem and lack of trust, the person develops the tendency of not accepting responsibility and because of their failure to accept personal responsibility they fall for anything, including drugs.
- **Poor parenting** - Most of those who responded, indicating that they partake in abusing substances, came from a family where as toddlers, their mothers were not responsive to their (children’s) needs. Most of the parents were “hostile” and not “sensitive to their children’s needs”. These mothers were not encouraging their children in any way. The poor parenting resulted in the children developing feelings of insecurity, and as they reached early childhood, they could not “form good interpersonal relationships, and showed signs of emotional distress”. Furthermore, by the time they reached the age of 18, they became “interpersonally alienated, emotionally withdrawn, manifestly unhappy, and [expressed their] maladjustment through under controlled, overtly antisocial behaviour” (Shedler & Block 1990:617 in Campo & Rohner 1991:430). According to the research, those children who grew up in families where they faced rejection<sup>95</sup> ended up becoming involved in drug use as a coping mechanism for the rejection they received from their parents.

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94 In the research conducted by Campo and Rohner, they sampled 40 young adult substance abusers who were compared with 40 non substance abusers. The research was aimed at “examining the relationship between perceived parental acceptance-rejection, psychological adjustment, and substance abuse” (Campo & Rohner 1991:429).

95 Campo and Rohner (1991:431) argue that children who grew up with rejecting parents grow up to be more aggressive and hostile in the way they deal with situations that they consider being aggressive and hostile.

In another research conducted by Marilyn Rocky amongst street children in Liberia (Anderson in Kilbourn 1997:94), the children outlined the following as being reasons for them taking drugs:

- To have the confidence to beat others and have adequate courage to steal.
- So that when caught stealing and are beaten, you will not feel the pain.
- To forget problems and become happy.
- To get ideas for finding money.
- For help in falling asleep.
- To be more courageous, so that you are able to fight someone when they refuse to pay for your service (reported by a girl involved in prostitution).
- So that if you have to kill someone, you do not see it as a bad thing.
- So that when you are stealing, you do not feel shame.
- So you do not think.
- Sometimes you are accused of using drugs when you do not, so you decide to use them.

In yet another research (Tammy Bell in Larson & Brendtro 2000:38-40), the following were discovered to be reasons that make children to involve themselves in substance abuse:

- **Experimenting** - Motivated by the desire for either pleasure or escape.
- **Psychosocial dependence** - To accomplish things they do not believe they could do without drugs, such as asking someone out on a date.
- **Harmful use** - Depending on drugs to cope and maintain stability. There is an increase in tolerance to the substance and require an increase intake to achieve the same result/effect.
- **Core addiction** - Withdrawal symptoms accompanying any attempts to stop using the chemical.

In another research by Anne-Gloria Moleko (in Visser ed. 2007:209-211), the following reasons were discovered to be the causes for children's involvement in substance use:

- **To try out new experiences** - Children like to be adventurous and to feel good, so they use substances as a source of recreation<sup>96</sup>.
- **To be independent** - Children want to be rebellious against their parents and the rules set up by the parents, so they use drugs to make independent decisions and to experience adulthood/a life without external control.
- **To overcome feelings of insecurity** - Children use drugs to escape problems and negative feelings, so they use drugs and alcohol as a means for escaping and alienating<sup>97</sup> themselves from reality. This is done because most children believe that drugs and alcohol make people more courageous.
- **To be accepted in peer groups** - Some children have never experienced “positive behavioral models in their families” and as such, they look for closeness and positive models in their peers. Most young drug users come from dysfunctional families<sup>98</sup>.
- **Influence by friends** - Moleko (2007:209-211) argues that despite the fact that a lot of people talk about peer pressure being a thing that leads to children becoming involved in substance abuse, there is no evidence that anyone is pressurised by their peers to do things that they themselves do not want to do. Moleko continues to argue that despite their being influenced by their peers to do some things, children still make their own choice to become involved in substance abuse, without being pressurised to do so (ibid.). Moleko concludes by saying that the choices are made to conform to the social norms and this is true because “social norms- what everyone else is doing- have an important influence on the behaviour of young people” (ibid.).

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96 Parrott (1993:95) says that recreational use of drugs takes place when the drug user uses the drug “to share pleasurable experiences with friends” and not as a way of achieving “a mood or mental effect from the substance”.

97 Horney in Louw et al (2005:567) says that alienation comes into an individual when the particular individual loses touch with his/her real self. This, Horney continues, leads the alienated individual to a situation where he/she creates “a false self to substitute for the real self”. This false self then leads the alienated individual to a point where they do not find the happiness they thought they would find through their behaviour, but instead they end up in the same situation they were trying to avoid and their alienation defeats them in the end.

98 Dysfunctional families always have negative effects on development of adolescents because, without a strong home, adolescents face greater difficulties in handling life issues (Mueller 2006:20).

- **Community problems** – children’s experience with stress<sup>99</sup> and lack of resources for coping with stressors may lead children into situations that may result in them taking refuge in substance abuse. Moleko (2007:209-211) outlines the following as being some of the stressors: “deficiency of support structures, changes of family structure, high levels of uncertainty and unemployment, and loss of personal safety owing to high crime rates.”
- **Medicalisation of substances by society** - The belief by society that one does not need to suffer from anything, be it tiredness, pain, tension, or sleeplessness, because there is a cure for any discomfort. This can lead children to a point where they use substances as a method of ‘self-medication’ for the discomforts they may be facing.

According to a research conducted amongst Indian high school pupils, (Pillay 1993 in Louw *et al* 2005:521), most children use substances because their friends are using them (see figure 3 below).

**Table 3: Reasons and frequency for taking drugs amongst Indian high school students**

Reason for taking drugs	Frequency	Percentage
Friend(s) use them	53	41,4
Rebellion	23	18,0
Rejection	26	20,3
To relieve depression	23	18,0
Curiosity	27	21,1

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99 According to Singer (1990:369 in Louw *et al* 2005:609), stress is the “physiological (of the body) and psychological (of the mind) reactions people exhibit in response to environmental events called stressors.” These stressors are “events or conditions” that cause stress, and they can cause stress in a person at any time of the day, including when a person is sleeping. An example of a stressor, which can be experienced at night, is a nightmare or a bad dream, which may result in a person feeling frightened and lonely (Louw *et al* 2005:609).

Boredom	18	14,1
To get 'high'	48	37,5
Fun or 'kicks'	38	29,7
To relax	19	14,8
To perform better at school	10	7,8
To express feelings	10	7,8
To help control anger	7	5,0
Other	4	3,1

**Table 3. Adopted from Louw *et al* (2005:521)**

Adding to the reasons listed above, Parrott (1993:97-98), while looking at the problem in America, gives the following as some of the reasons that make children to get into the behaviour of using drugs/substances:

- **Media influence**<sup>100</sup>: Most television viewers witness on average about twenty drinking acts every evening. By the time the adolescent reaches the age of eighteen, they would have seen an average of 100,000 television beer commercials. This glamorising of beer by television advertisers results in adolescents becoming attracted to beer and to try out drinking.
- **Family factors**: Quoting research by The Children of Alcoholics Foundation, Parrott says that “children of alcoholics are at greater risk of developing alcoholism by four times than children of non-alcoholics.” Taking this into account, we can argue that the more a child lives with a parent who uses drugs, the greater the chance is for that child to start using drugs.

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<sup>100</sup> See the previous chapter for more information on how the media is negatively impacting the lives of children.

- **Personality factors:** Children who “struggle with low self-esteem, have low expectations for personal achievement, lack impulse control, are highly adventurous and independent, and are in search of inclusion in social groups,” are more likely to indulge in drug taking habits. This happens because this kind of children “sometimes make unbearable feelings bearable” by using drugs.

In summing up the reasons why people, especially the youth, use substances, Anderson (in Kilbourn ed. 1997:93) says that those who take drugs do not see their using drugs as a problem, but they look at the behaviour as a solution to their problems. This summation, true as it is, is a cause for worry to those around the ones involved in substance abuse. They may wonder why someone should look at destructive behaviour as a solution to personal problems, when to those not involved in the use and abuse of the substance it is viewed as something to be worried about. To better understand the reasons why most substance users and abusers take the behaviour as not being a problem, it is necessary to look at the process, which leads one to a point where the drug/substance controls them instead of them controlling the behaviour.

### **4.3. The process of substance abuse and the development of addiction**

According to Nevid *et al* (2008:292), a person who is dependent on substances does not just come to the point where they depend on the drug in the click of a finger, but they go through a long process of using and abusing the substance until they reach a point where they cannot control their craving for the substance; the substance then takes control of them. This is the stage where the substance user/abuser is fully aware of the damage that the particular substance is causing to their character and health, but they “feel helpless or powerless to stop using drugs, even though they may want to.” Nevid *et al*, (2008:292) Louw *et al* (2005:194-195), Reisser (2006:492-493) and Visser (ed. 2007:205) give the following as an outline of how the process leading to dependence progresses:

1. **Experimentation/occasional use:** The user may feel good and excited; they may even feel in control and have a belief that they can stop using the

substance anytime. The user feels that the substance cannot control him/her.

2. **Routine use:** As the user continues his/her use of the substance, they get to a point where their whole life is spent on pursuing and using the substance. During this stage, the substance user hides the negative results of his behaviour from himself and others; they look at themselves as a person who is not in danger of losing control over their destructive behaviour. They (the substance users) now reach a point where whatever used to be important in their life becomes less and less important and the substance starts taking centre stage. The substance users at this stage get to the point where they will do anything to support their behaviour; they can borrow money, sell valuable items, steal from their own families, and tell lies and even manipulate others.
3. **Withdrawal syndrome:** As substance use takes centre stage in the life of the user (when the user becomes dependent on the drug); they come to a point where they “abruptly” stop using the substance by taking a break from using it. Every time the substance user takes a break from the use of the substance, they find themselves developing some physical and psychological symptoms<sup>101</sup> of withdrawal. Some of the withdrawal symptoms that can occur in substance users include: diarrhea, vomiting, hot and cold flushes, muscle pains and spasms, increase in body temperature and increase in the rate of breathing. Even though withdrawal syndrome is often left untreated, it may be fatal in some of the people suffering from it and according to Hunter (2005:97), up to 15% of those suffering from withdrawal can die in the event that their condition is left untreated.

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101 According to Visser (ed. 2007:205), the withdrawal symptoms can be physical, psychological, or both. Visser describes physical symptoms as those that take the form of feeling ill, and psychological symptoms such as those that may lead the user to develop anxiety and other disturbances when the drug use has been reduced or stopped altogether (ibid.).

According to Nevid *et al* (2008:293), those who experience withdrawal symptoms after stopping the use of substances “often return to using the substance to relieve the discomfort associated with withdrawal”.

Nevid *et al*, (2008:293) give the following substances as the ones that may lead to withdrawal syndromes: alcohol, opioids, cocaine, amphetamines, sedatives and barbiturates, nicotine, and anti-anxiety agents (minor tranquilisers).

4. **Tolerance:** Regular users of substances can reach a point where they start taking larger amounts of the substance in order to achieve the same effect. In some instances, substance users may not even get larger amounts of the same substance but may go to the extent of using much stronger drugs to achieve the same effect. This may happen as the user may consider the previous substance as failing in helping him achieve the same effect the substance was giving him before.
5. **Addiction or dependence:** Routine use of a drug/substance turns into addiction<sup>102</sup> or dependence when the drug user reaches a point where they no longer have the power to stop using the substance, either because they feel helpless without using the drug or because they need to experience the substance’s effects or “the consequences of withdrawal”. This dependence/addiction happens in two forms, namely physiological and psychological<sup>103</sup>.

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102 Ellison and Maynard (1992:167) explain that addiction in a person starts when the particular person makes an attempt “to avoid pain” with the hope of experiencing “well-being”. Ellison and Maynard (1992:167) further argue that addiction comes about in a person when the particular person begins to get emotionally attached to “an object, event, person or experience” as a way of fighting “stress and emotional pain”, so as to reach personal goodness. As the behaviour gets repeated, the person involved in the behaviour reaches a point where they get attached to the behaviour because of the “psychological and biochemical reinforcement” that arises from “the association between particular actions and the desired mood elevation” (Ellison & Maynard 1992:168).

103 Nevid *et al*, (2008:294-295) explain that in physiological dependence, the substance user’s body changes “as a result of the regular use of the substance” and the major signs of the dependence are “tolerance and a withdraw syndrome”. In psychological dependence, the substance user uses the drug to “meet psychological needs” for example to “cope with daily stress”. Nevid *et al* further explain that it is possible for one to be psychologically dependent on a substance “without becoming physiologically or chemically dependent”, for example, someone can use marijuana to cope with stress but may not necessarily become a compulsive user of the drug.



#### 4.4. Causes of substance dependence

From what has been discussed above, it is observable that the process of substance abuse starts with the point where a person takes small amounts of the substance, usually for experimental purposes. With time, some users may come to a point where they use the drugs/substance carelessly and “without proper control”, a thing that happens when the substance user finds him/herself at a point where the substance takes control of their life (Louw *et al*, 2005:194). One may ask what actually causes substance dependence; is it the kind/type of substance one uses or is it a person’s weak mind? To answer this question, it is worthwhile to analyse the manner in which a person’s brain works in order to get ourselves acquainted with how people’s various cravings are affected by the way the brain operates.

According to Nevid *et al*, (2008:310-311), the brain is one part of the human body whose functioning gets affected by the use of drugs/substances. Dubovsky (2006 in Nevid *et al* 2008:310) argues that substance use affects the way the brain’s neurotransmitters<sup>104</sup> work. Dubovsky argues that as a person uses drugs, they reach a point where their brain’s “natural reward system - ‘the feel good’ circuitry that produces states of pleasure associated with the ordinarily rewarding activities or life, such as consuming a satisfying meal and engaging in pleasant activities-becomes blunted” (ibid.). This then leads the person to a point where they become dependent on the particular drug/substance in order to feel good due to the fact that their brain craves for the drug/substance as it (the brain) becomes accustomed to the feelings associated with the use of the drug/substance.

#### 4.5. Signs of mid-adolescent substance abuse

People living with children may wonder how they can recognise if their youth are involved in drug/substance abuse or use. For a family, school or community to know if a mid-adolescent is abusing/using drugs, there are a number of signs that they may notice in the youth as being indicative of the person being into this type of behaviour.

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<sup>104</sup> Louw *et al* (2005:70) say that no one knows the exact amount of neurotransmitters that are found in a person’s brain, but says that at present, scientists have identified more than 50 neurotransmitters, some of which are acetylcholine, dopamine, serotonin, noradrenaline/norepinephrine, and endorphins.

According to Van Pelt (1997:190), the following can be indicators of drug abuse in mid-adolescents:

1. **Withdrawal:** The child can always be alone in a room or other isolated place in the home, and may start avoiding family times of interaction and fun.
2. **Changing relationships:** The child can form a new set of friends, while keeping a tight lid on the names of the friends and places where he/she meets them.
3. **Difficulties in School:** The child can start being absent from school, be unwilling to do homework, show lack of concentration in class, and their school progress can start declining, resulting in low or poor grades.
4. **Resistance to authority:** The child can start showing rebellious behaviour towards parents, teachers, police, the Church, and even youth workers.
5. **Shifting interests:** The child can start losing interest in personal grooming and neatness.
6. **Behavioural problems:** The child may get to a point of involving himself in stealing, shoplifting, and even unexplained spending.
7. **High-risk behaviour:** The child may start showing little regard for their own safety; if they are involved in driving, they may start getting frequent traffic tickets, and may become involved in Vandalism.
8. **Signs of depression:** The adolescent may show signs of suicide and may even try to commit suicide.
9. **Sexual promiscuity, physical complaints:** The child may start complaining of vomiting, colds, flues, abdominal distress, headaches and tremors, and if the adolescent is a girl, she may start getting involved in promiscuous behaviour.
10. **Changes in eating habits:** The child may show an increase or decrease in eating habits, which may be accompanied by weight gain or loss.
11. **Obvious signs of “being under the influence”:** This may be indicated by the smell of alcohol on the breath, slurred speech, staggering, dilated pupils, exhilaration, hallucinations, panic, and delusions.

In conclusion, Van Pelt (1997:190) argues that it is important to always exercise caution when dealing with children showing one or two of the above signs. Van Pelt (ibid.) says that it is not good to jump into conclusions when one or two of the above signs appear in

a youth, as some of the signs might not appear because one is on drugs but it may be a result of the changes of adolescence.

#### **4.6. Conclusion**

Drug/ substance abuse is a serious problem in the world and it affects the lives of children and their families. Most people involved in the behaviour (in the early stages of the habit) do not consider it a serious problem. Most of them (substance users) take the behaviour to be a way of socialisation and sometimes a way of fighting against problems/challenges of life. As we have seen, however, things change for the worst as the behaviour takes root in the drug/substance user. It has been noted in this chapter that most mid-adolescents indulge in drug use and abuse so they can obtain the confidence to do things they cannot do in normal circumstance, as they believe that drugs take away their shyness. Some also use drugs because they want to be accepted by their peers. Furthermore, it has also been discovered that children who are involved in the behaviour of substance abuse have found themselves in positions where they have to become involved in crime as a way of getting money to support their habit. As time goes by, the behaviour does not only affect the mid-adolescent using the drug; it also affects their family. It results in loss of income, violence, breakdown in family system, and poverty, as the users may start stealing from their families to get money to support the habit. In some cases, drug/substance use can result in the death of the user or even other people closer to the drug user. To mitigate the negative results of drug/substance abuse, it is imperative that one knows the signs, as well as effects of the behaviour because, without getting acquainted with these (causes and results), the fight against abuse and addiction will not be won.

The following chapter moves onto an exploration of methamphetamine/tik. The discussion focus will be on tik, because it the most common drug of choice being (ab)used in Lavender Hill, the focus area of this research. As discussed in Chapter 1 (c.f. page 9), Lavender Hill is a poverty stricken area due, in part, to high levels of unemployment, resulting in those using drugs going for the most affordable drugs. We will look at how the drug came to be used over history and possible reasons that have made the drug become a popular drug of choice in mid-adolescent users from the Cape

Flats. The chapter will attempt to investigate the extent to which methamphetamine/tik use is on the Cape Flats, the effects of the drug on adolescents living there, and the response of the Cape Flats communities to the effects of the drug.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### **Methamphetamine abuse and its effects on mid-adolescents living on the Cape Flats**

#### **5.0. Introduction**

To better comprehend drugs and drug abuse, it is essential, if not indispensable, to understand the whole scenario in which drug use and abuse is taking place. This would certainly allow for a comprehensive understanding of the consequences and impact of the problem at hand.

Considering the fact that the present research aims at dealing with the problem of methamphetamine abuse and its effects on mid-adolescents living on the Cape Flats, this chapter analyses the drug situation on the Cape Flats. In order to make a good analysis of the situation, the research answers research sub-question number four, which is enquiring on; what kind of effects methamphetamine has on mid-adolescents and communities affected by the drug? The chapter therefore investigates the impact of methamphetamine abuse among mid-adolescents living on the Cape Flats, and existing prevention programs and strategies within the local community. In order to understand how serious the problem is, this chapter will offer a synoptic history of methamphetamine use in the world and how it came to be popularized in South Africa, Cape Town in particular. This chapter will equally examine the signs of abuse in adolescents, the effects the drug has on the life of those abusing it, their families and communities; before ultimately investigating how the community, including the government has responded to the problem.

## 5.1. What is Methamphetamine?

Methamphetamine<sup>105</sup> is “a white, odourless, bitter-tasting crystalline powder that easily dissolves in water or alcohol” (National Institute on Drug Abuse, March 2010). It is popularly known by the street names: ‘Tik<sup>106</sup>, Lolly, Choef, Speed, ICE, Crystals, tuk-tuk, globes<sup>107</sup>, Hitler’s drug, Popeyes or straw’ (*South Africa travel forum and bulletin board* 29 September 2010). According to National Institute on Drug Abuse (March 2010), the drug is consumed through snorting, oral ingestion, injection or smoking<sup>108</sup>. “It is smoked through either a light bulb that has been scrapped clean with a straw or through a glass rod with a bulb on the end known as a lolly”. *South Africa travel forum and bulletin board* (ibid.) further states that “a lighter is used to heat the bulb and the user smokes the fumes” (see picture below).



**Figure 5: Picture of a drug user smoking methamphetamine<sup>109</sup>**

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<sup>105</sup> The drug is “a powerful psycho-stimulant that directly affects the autonomic nervous system and central nervous system even when taken in small amounts” (Shrem & Halkitis 2008:670)

<sup>106</sup> The name “tik or tuk-tuk” comes from the noise the drug makes when being smoked (Kapp 2008:193).

<sup>107</sup> The name “globes” originates from the fact that it is smoked using globes of light bulbs. (*South Africa travel forum and bulletin board* (ibid.).)

<sup>108</sup> In South Africa, smoking is the most common method of consuming the drug (*South Africa travel forum and bulletin board*, 29 September 2010)

<sup>109</sup> Downloaded from: SANGONeT Pulse ([www.ngopulse.org/article/tik-killing-communities](http://www.ngopulse.org/article/tik-killing-communities))

## 5.2. History of Methamphetamine/tik use

The Japanese first discovered the drug in 1919 (UCT Monday Paper in Science in Africa June 2005). During the time of Adolf Hitler, most of those fighting in the World War II (the Nazis, Japanese soldiers, and American soldiers ) used the drug as “combat drug” to make their soldiers more aggressive, and to help them “stay awake and remain focused for long periods” (Health24.com 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2010; Scott, Cobb J., Woods, Steven Paul et.al 2007:276). In the 1930s, the drug found its way to the United States where it was “marketed as bronchial inhalers used to treat nasal congestion for allergies, asthma and colds” (Anglin, Burke, Perrochet, Stamper, & Dawd-Noursi, 2000 in Shrem & Halkitis 2008:671). During the Vietnam War, American soldiers used the drug “to enhance performance” and their total use was more than “the rest of the world’s total use during the Second World War” (Miller, 1997 in Shrem & Halkitis 2008 ibid.).

The use of the drug has spread across Cape Town and surrounding areas “uncontrollably since the late 1990’s”, and it has become so popular that it has led to fights among rival groups trying to control the booming market of the drug (Henda 2010). In 2008, the South African Medical Research Council (MRC) estimated that Cape Town had 200,000<sup>110</sup> methamphetamine abusers<sup>111</sup> (Kapp 2008:193).

## 5.3. Causes of Methamphetamine abuse among mid-adolescents

Just as it is with most drugs, those who use methamphetamine are lured to the drug by the ‘positive effects’ that they see in those using the drug. According to Kapp, (ibid.) some people may be attracted to the drug because of the negative psychological effects associated with gangsters (as it is the case in the Coloured communities of Cape Town).

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110 These figures were confirmed by Prof. Johan Smit of Tygerburgh hospital, during an interview beamed on SABC3 Special Assignment programme for Thursday October 4, 2012.

111 According to information obtained from SABC3 Special Assignment programme beamed on Thursday October 4, 2012 at 9:00pm. Every year 1000 babies are born to mothers who are addicted to tik. The programme went on to reveal that most of these children end up having problems with schooling due to the fact that they suffer from Acute Withdraw Syndrome which results in them being “irritable and restless”. It was further reported that most of these children have difficulties with remembering things and they always get angry for no reason at all which is not good for school.

Some people may take the violence caused by the gangs as an outcome of “high energy and confidence” resulting from their use of *tik* and as such they may be tempted to use the drug so that they also can achieve the “high energy and confidence” (Kapp 2008 *ibid.*). Supporting Kapp’s assertion above, Science in Africa quotes Karl Taro Greenfield (a journalist writing about his experiences with ‘*tik*’ in Asia) as saying that: “The drug is like a companion telling you that you’re good enough, handsome enough, smart enough, banishing all the little insecurities in your subconscious” ([scienceinafrica.com](http://scienceinafrica.com)). Moss & Tarter 1993 in Shrem & Halkitis (2008:674) further agree with the argument above by asserting that, “the social effects of methamphetamine lead many adolescents to start using the drug in party scenes to relieve social inhibitions, and improve self-confidence and self-esteem.”

The cheap cost<sup>112</sup> of the drug is another factor, which has led to the popularity of the drug among mid-adolescents. According to Pluddemann et.al (2007), the drug is cheaper because it is made in “clandestine laboratories from relatively inexpensive over-the-counter ingredients”.

To some mid-adolescents (especially girls), the drug is a tool for making themselves look attractive, as it has been marketed as a medication for helping in losing weight ([health24.com](http://health24.com) 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2010). This phenomenon is not only a South African one; it has also been reported in such countries as Canada. Writing in the Ottawa Sun of February 11, 2006, Katie Lewis says that a good number of Canadian adolescent girls have reported using methamphetamine to lose weight. According to Lewis, those using methamphetamine for weight loss claim that with methamphetamine, one can lose up to 18 kilograms of weight in a month. Quoting Scott Rintoul of the Vancouver Royal Canadian Mounted Police Corps, Lewis (*ibid.*) explains that methamphetamine is “an appetite suppressant” with powers to make one go for up to 12 hours without feeling hunger for food ([amethyst-ottawa.org](http://amethyst-ottawa.org))

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<sup>112</sup> The Medical Research Council (MRC) fact sheet on methamphetamine of 28 February 2007 says that *tik* can be purchased at the cost of “about R15-R30/straw”.



According to Denzil Van Wyk (community activist and lay preacher from Hout Bay); some users are attracted to the drug so that it helps them “improve their sex drive” (Kapp 2008:193).

The other reason, which attracts children to methamphetamine, is lack of parental supervision or knowledge about drugs: “Adolescents are able to do drugs because their parents are never around or don’t know enough about drugs to see a difference or the warning signs” (South Africa Travel Forum and Bulletin Board).

#### 5.4. Extent of Methamphetamine abuse in Cape Town and surrounding areas

The use of methamphetamine in Cape Town has reached epidemic levels especially among coloured people who are the most users of the drug. Figure 4 below shows the extent of the problem from 2002 to 2006:

**Table 4: Patients with methamphetamine as primary or secondary substance of abuse**

	2002b		2003a		2003b		2004a		2004b		2005a		2005b		2006a		2006b	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Primary	13	0.8	38	2.2	38	2.3	241	10.7	445	19.3	644	26.1	739	34.7	990	37.2	1184	42.3
Secondary	19	1.2	43	2.5	83	5.0	188	8.3	223	9.6	240	9.7	213	10.0	242	9.1	267	9.6
Overall*	32	2.1	81	4.7	121	7.3	429	19.0	668	28.9	884	35.8	952	44.7	1232	46.3	1451	51.9
Total patients	1551		1724		1659		2255		2308		2468		2131		2660		2798	

**(Adopted from Medical Research Council’s Fact sheet on methamphetamine (28 February 2007))**

The table above shows the proportions of patients who had methamphetamine as a primary or secondary substance of abuse for each respective 6-month period since January 2002 (where 2002a refers to January-June 2002, 2002b to July-December

2002, etc.). “The total patients” row refers to the total number of patients treated at over 25 specialist treatment centres/programmes for ANY substance (including alcohol, cannabis, mandrax, heroin, cocaine, etc.).

According to IOL news most of those who seek rehabilitation in rehabilitation centres, are adolescents ([iolnews.co.za](http://iolnews.co.za) December 7, 2006). Pluddemann, Myers, & Purry (MRC Fact Sheet –methamphetamine) agree with iol news and add that, “the average age of patients who reported methamphetamine as their primary substance of abuse in 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 2006 was 22 years”.

The problem of methamphetamine abuse is rampant among Cape Town’s Coloured population than in the other people groups living in and around the city. Kapp (ibid.) confirms this by arguing that, “all the suburbs populated by coloureds, who make up about half of Cape Town’s population, are also gripped by the epidemic of *tik* addiction”. Samodien (24 June 2007), affirms this by saying that, “about 90% of all *tik* users in the Western Cape are coloured people”.

## **5.5. Effects of Methamphetamine abuse**

Just as it is with the use of any kind of drugs, methamphetamine abuse has many negative effects on both the abuser and the community in which he/she lives. The effects of the drug can lead to serious problems in the individual and community.

### **5.5.1. Effects of Methamphetamine abuse on the individual**

According to Shirem & Halkitis (2008: 675), methamphetamine use can result in the user getting involved in sexual experimentation<sup>113</sup>, which may lead to an “increased risk for sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted teenage pregnancies”. Shirem & Halkitis (ibid.) argue that this may result from the fact that the drug “may dissuade sexual inhibitions”.

The use of methamphetamine can also hamper treatment of HIV positive users because according to Halkitis, Kutnick, & Slater, 2005b; Reback, Larkins, & Shoptaw, 2003 in Shirem & Halkitis (ibid. 673), sleeping and eating patterns of those using the drug are

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<sup>113</sup> Methamphetamine use increases sex drive (Van Gelder 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2010; Scott, Cobb J., Woods, Steve Paul et.al 2007:276)

usually disturbed, and as such the drug users may find problems to adhere to their HIV treatment program. Women's Health Co-op Newsletter (December 2005) confirms the above assertion and adds that:

Methamphetamine ("TIK") use is a potential HIV risk because it can impair judgment and can make users forget about safer sex. Studies have shown that TIK users have higher numbers of sexual partners and more unprotected sex than non-TIK users. TIK can also be dehydrating, which may make women more prone to tears in the vagina...therefore more prone to HIV/STD infections. TIK use is also dangerous for those already infected with HIV. TIK may decrease the effectiveness of HIV medications, which may lead to drug resistance.

Concurring with Women's Health Co-op Newsletter above, Scott, Woods, et.al (2007:276) explain that use of methamphetamine can result into the user developing "elevated self-esteem" which may result in the user doing risky things they cannot do under normal circumstances. They (Scott, Woods et.al) further argue that, use of methamphetamine can also result into a number of physical and mental health problems like nutritional deficiencies, lack of sleep and "rapid tooth decay, known as 'meth mouth'" (cf. picture below) (Scott, Cobb J., Woods, Steve Paul et.al. ibid. 277).



**Figure 6: 'meth mouth'**<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Picture downloaded from <http://www.ebaumsworld.com/pictures/view/81666592/> (August 14, 2012)

According to Sharp Addictions Clinic (10 November 2010) methamphetamine abuse can lead to the following physiological effects:

- Abnormal high blood pressure,
- Rapid and irregular heart rate and rhythm
- Seizures
- Damage to blood vessels in the brain (stroke)
- Accumulation of excess fluid in lungs, brain tissue and skull
- Continuous/excessive dilation of the pupils
- Impaired regulation of heat loss
- Hyperpyrexia (dangerously high body temperature)
- Internal bleeding
- Breakdown of muscle tissue leading to kidney failure and heart attacks.

Supporting Sharp Addictions Clinic's observation above, South Africa Travel Forum and Bulletin Board (29 September 2010) adds the following as long-term effects of abusing methamphetamine:

- Out-of-control rages
- Violence
- Anxiety,
- Confusion
- Mood disturbances and insomnia
- Hallucinations
- Flight of ideas (jumping from one topic to the next)

- Going for long periods without food (due to the fact that the drug can make the user to seldom get hungry)

Supporting the above assertions, Pluddemann, Myers, & Parry (28 February 2007) add the following as effects of methamphetamine use:

- Increased energy and self-confidence
- Restlessness
- Irritability
- Heightened sense of sexuality
- Decreased lung capacity
- Tachycardia (abnormally rapid heart-beat)
- Severe weight loss (anorexia)
- Severe dermatological problems
- Panic disorders
- Impaired concentration and memory
- Paranoid reactions
- Renal failure

In addition to the problems discussed above, methamphetamine use has the ability to change the way a person's brain functions. This may happen because the drug "increases the release and blocks the reuptake of the brain chemical (or neurotransmitter) dopamine, leading to high levels of the chemical in the brain" (National Institute on Drug Abuse March 2010). The National Institute on Drug Abuse (ibid.) further argues that the drug's effect on dopamine may result in "reduced motor skills and impaired verbal learning". The above assertion is affirmed by Thompson et.al, 2004; Toomey et.al, 2003; Volkow et.al 2001 in Nevid et.al (2008: 305) who argue that: the

negative effects of the drug on motor skills and verbal learning are a result of brain damage, which the users of methamphetamine suffer due to prolonged use of the drug.

#### **5.5.2.0. Methamphetamine abuse on the Cape Flats: A social-cultural outline.**

The name Cape Flats refers to a vast area comprising such townships as Bonteheuwel, Heideveld, Bishop Lavis, Hanover Park, Manenberg, Elsies River, Mitchells Plain, Lavender Hill and other townships (Jensen 1999:76; [capeflats.org.za](http://capeflats.org.za)). The area, which is located on the sand dunes on Cape Town's coastal line, lies to the north of Cape Town. The Cape Flats is an area full of poverty<sup>115</sup>. This poverty is visible in the way the houses and other infrastructure<sup>116</sup> located in the area appear ([sa-venues.com/attractionswc/cape-flats.htm](http://sa-venues.com/attractionswc/cape-flats.htm)). According to most commentators this area, which is a home to over a million people, came into being as a dumping ground for people of colour (non-whites) during the apartheid rule (Jensen 1999:76). The area is a result of forceful removals of the 1960 which came as an enforcement of the Group Areas Act<sup>117</sup> of 1950 (Jensen *ibid.*).

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<sup>115</sup> Ellison & Maynard (1992:27-28) argue that poverty causes stress in those affected by it (poverty). This happens because those living under poverty have to go through a daily struggle for "physical survival". Ellison & Maynard (*ibid.* 28) further argue that in the course of trying to survive, the poor are always 'exploited and victimized'. According to City of Cape Town (1999 in Jensen 1999:76), the Cape Flats is an area which is impoverished and socially disintegrated.

<sup>116</sup> According to [capeflats.org.za/modules/home/towships.php](http://capeflats.org.za/modules/home/towships.php) most of the houses in the area are tiny and overcrowded, the roads and most houses have not gone through maintenance for ages.

<sup>117</sup> With the coming into power of the National Party, South Africa saw the introduction of apartheid policy in 1948. The policy was aimed at promotion of separate development for individual races in South Africa which was in favour of whites at the expense of the other races. With this new political dispensation, a lot of new 'apartheid' laws were passed one of which was the Group Areas Act of 1950. According to Hiemstra (1953:79-85) and Fields of Play (2010:11) the Group Areas Act led to the division of Cape Town's residential areas into racially separated locations. As part of the implementation of the Act, thousands of people were forcefully moved from places that used to be their homes to new homes on the Cape Flats. The new homes were places which lacked decent life and had no basic amenities. Townships were razed to the ground and buffer areas created.

### 5.5.2.1. Effects of Methamphetamine abuse on Cape Flats communities

Apart from having many negative effects on individuals, the use of methamphetamine also has a multitude of negative effects on the communities in which those abusing the drug live. The following are some of the effects the drug has on the community:

- **Crime** - According to Walker (2009:210) Cape Town has the most drug related crimes as compared to the rest of South Africa. Walker (ibid.) states that “drug-related crime accounts for 830 incidents per 100 000 people in Cape Town” and this is “almost four times more than the rest of South Africa”.

It is not just outsiders like Walker who are able to see the impact of drugs on crime in the Cape, even those living on the Cape Flats are giving testimony as to how seriously connected to crime are drugs. A member of the Americans gang in Cape Town, who is also a *tik* addict, confessed that he was prosecuted 27 times for murder and attempted murder. He (the American gang member) also confessed that he and his fellow *tik* users, do not have jobs but steal in order to find money for buying the drug (Kiley: 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2007). Martin Fienies, a ward councillor from Mitchells Plain, agrees with this and says that in Mitchells Plain “children steal their own parents dry”, and then their neighbours before taking “their crime to the streets” (Samodien 24<sup>th</sup> June 2007). Gelder (21 October 2010) says that one *tik* addict was killed by his own mother after “he had ransacked the family home, stealing the glass from the window frames and his mother’s underwear”. Gelder (ibid.) further states that the boy then “attacked his parents with a knife and set fire to the curtains when they refused to give him money”. It was out of the stress of going through the boy’s behaviour that the mother killed him.

Schools located in neighbourhoods struggling with *tik* abuse share in the effects of crimes perpetrated by *tik* use. Regency Foundation Network (2008) argues that learners who abuse drugs cause most of the violence occurring in South African schools. The Regency Foundation Network (ibid.) reports that, a student from Thornwood secondary school in Pinetown, Kwa-Zulu Natal, was in 2009

sentenced for murdering a teacher for “humiliating him in front of his fellow pupils”. Regency Foundation Network further reports that, another pupil (14 years of age) from New Drift High School in Paarl, Western Cape, appeared in court for stabbing a fellow pupil after picking an argument on a school bus. Van der Rheede<sup>118</sup> (2009) affirms that *tik* has fuelled violence in schools, and he says:

During the many years I served as the principal of a primary and secondary school, teachers would bring boys and girls who were clearly heavily under the influence of tik to my office...I often heard stories of the most gruesome acts of violence perpetrated by tik users. One day the parents at the high school staged a protest as I had unknowingly admitted three boys who had been involved in the gruesome rape and murder of a young girl. On another occasion two primary school learners, who always sat next to each other in class, went missing. Sadly, their bodies were discovered not long afterwards...Tik is a drug that destroys the conscience and soul of many of our young people.

According to Health24.com, using methamphetamine has led to the proliferation of violent crimes because it “changes the brain chemistry and numbs the reaction of users. Killing or raping someone is nothing to them” (22 September 2010).

Reading South Africa’s crime statistics released in September 2010, one will agree with the arguments above that drugs are contributing to the sharp increase in crimes in the Cape. The statistics indicated that the Western Cape Province recorded 60,409 drug-related crimes between April 2009 and March 2010 indicating a 12% increase compared to the previous period of April 2008 and March 2009 (Henda 2010).

- **Human rights violations** - The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights demands that every individual enjoys their rights, which include freedoms of movement and association (United Nations Organization 1948). Despite the call by the United Nations on all people to promote rights of their neighbours, families struggling with methamphetamine abuse, find themselves in situations where they cannot avoid it but have to limit their children’s rights. Dixon (January 18, 2007) affirms this by highlighting an incident in 2003, in which a Cape Town woman kicked her son out of their home for his involvement in methamphetamine. The son had to sleep outside the house under the carport for

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<sup>118</sup> Christo Van der Rheede is the Chief Executive Officer of the *Stigting vir Bemagtiging deur Afrikaans*



2 years with no blanket and bed. In another incident, Martin Fienies, then councillor for Mitchells Plain, stated that out of desperation, some Mitchells Plain residents had to “strap their kids to their beds to prevent them buying drugs or selling their bodies for *tik*” (Samodien 24<sup>th</sup> June, 2007).

- **Promiscuity** – A considerable number of female users of *tik* have reported getting *tik* from the suppliers even without paying any money. They say that this is possible because when they do not have money, they get the drug through having sex with the drug dealers (Gelder: 21 October 2010). This is supported by Kiley (23<sup>rd</sup> September 2007) who quotes one drug dealer as boasting that the dealers “get lots of sex” from their female customers who give them sex “for a straw (a one-inch measure of *tik* in a drinking straw)”. Quoting Dr. Wendee Wechsberg of the Medical Research Council, Regency Foundation Network confirms that trading sex for *tik* is a common phenomenon among females involved in *tik* (2008).
- **Poverty**-The use of methamphetamine can lead to increased poverty levels in the community. Kiley (23<sup>rd</sup> September 2007) confirms this by saying that: a 17 year old mother of two who had been using *tik* for two years, “sold her children’s nappies, her mother’s furniture, curtains, crockery – and the pipe which used to carry water to the toilet” to pay for the drug. Kapp (2008) affirms this confirmation by quoting Denzil Van Wyk, a lay preacher from Hout Bay, who says that he “has visited homes stripped of curtains and even cutlery as once respectable families seek to finance their drug habit”.
- **Psychiatric problems**-Methamphetamine has also led to a high rise in people seeking treatment for psychiatric problems. Dr. Nesdaad Schrueder of the GF Jooste hospital in Manenberg Cape Town confirms this by saying that, before the drug took its toll in the Cape, his hospital used to see 40 psychiatric patients per month but the numbers have increased to about 180 per month due to the use of methamphetamine (Kiley. 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2007).
- **Strain on meagre financial resources** - Drugs contribute to a very big strain on the financial resources, meant for development as well as improvement of

medical care for citizens. In trying to contain the drug situation, the government spends a lot of money in policing the affected areas instead of using that money for development and social projects such as education, health, and service delivery. The government and social institutions also have to spend a lot of money in providing medical care to people suffering from effects of drug abuse and injuries resulting from drug related crimes. The use of financial resources in issues related to drugs becomes a challenge as it results in communities lagging behind in terms of development as most of the money which could have been used to develop the communities is directed towards the war against drugs (Walker 2009:210).

## **5.6. Community Response to Methamphetamine abuse**

People living in communities affected by methamphetamine abuse are doing everything they possibly can to fight the abuse of *tik* which has certainly reached epidemic levels. The following are some of their efforts in dealing with the problem:

- 1. Organising protests against drug dealers** - Residents of Lentegeur suburb in Cape Town, in 2007 twice took to the streets in protest over the killing of Abduraghaman Sydow, a local anti-drug and crime activist. During the protest, the protestors “torched alleged drug dens and Vandalized cars” (Samodien 24 June 2007). In a desperate move to show solidarity to the struggle against drugs, Ms Helen Zille (then Mayor of Cape Town) in September 2007, participated in a protest outside the homes of known drug dealers in the city. However, this particular protest led to the police arresting Ms Zille and some of the protestors for being involved in ‘vigilantism’<sup>119</sup> (Kapp January 19, 2008).
- 2. Collaboration with Police** - Communities affected by methamphetamine abuse have Community Policing Forums (CPF), which they use as platforms for controlling the flow of drugs in the area. The Cape Metro Police assists the communities through a project called “Operation Choke” which is used to “stem

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<sup>119</sup> Vigilantism refers to an act in which “a self-appointed group of people undertakes law enforcement into their own hands without legal authority” (Concise Oxford English Dictionary 2008).

the flow of drugs in the province (Western Cape) by repeatedly raiding drug dens” (Henda 2010). Picture below shows police raiding a drug den



**Figure 7: Police raiding the house of a suspected drug dealer<sup>120</sup>**

### **5.7. Challenges faced in the fight against methamphetamine**

Efforts by the communities to fight drug abuse in Cape Town and surrounding areas are hampered by various challenges, which include the following:

1. **Police corruption:** According to information available, police corruption is affecting community efforts aimed at fighting the war against methamphetamine in Cape Town and surrounding areas. Ms Scott, a Mitchells Plain anti-drug activist, says that efforts to fight drug use in her area are affected so much by Police failure to arrest those suspected of being involved in drug dealing. She says that this happens because the Police often turn "a blind eye to the crisis" thereby "allowing the drug lords to operate with impunity". She believes things are like this because the drug lords have corrupted Police officers (Kapp 19 January 2008). Scott's view of the Police in relation to the fight against drugs is shared by the Institute for Security Studies (Henda 2010) who argue that:

The most perverse of all shortcomings regarding the Western Cape's efforts against drugs is persistent police corruption. Corruption destroys the trust

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<sup>120</sup> Picture courtesy of Stellafrica ([www.stellafrica.co.za/tik.html](http://www.stellafrica.co.za/tik.html))

between police and community members and blunts initiatives to mitigate the drug trade. Despite the evident seriousness with which Cape Town police have approached the drug trade in recent years, perceptions of police corruption and complicity within the drug trade remain high. In Mitchells Plain several former drug addicts and community workers have claimed that certain members of the police are paid off by drug dealers to ignore their activities. In some instances police are said to have given favoured drug merchants tip offs about possible raids.

These allegations of police corruption in relation to the fight against drugs in the Cape are confirmed by a news article which appeared on the News24 website on 15 September 2010 titled: 'Cops in court for drugs' (Henda 2010). According to Henda (ibid.), two police officers who worked at Woodstock police station were, on 14 September 2010, arrested due to their involvement with drug lords from Woodstock area. According to the report (on News24), the two were involved in transporting drugs for the drug lords operating in Woodstock.

- 2. Use of minors (underage children) in drug deals:** Most drug dealers are using underage schoolchildren in drug trafficking which according to Kapp (January 19, 2008), happens because the drug dealers know that the minors cannot be prosecuted. Kapp (ibid.) argues that the drug traffickers "entice schoolchildren with free samples and presents to get them hooked". Affirming Kapp's observation above, Ina Van der Merwe in Regency Foundation Network (2008) says that "drug lords are specifically targeting school children because they are an easy mark and peer pressure will often lead to them experimenting with drugs". Ina Van der Merwe (ibid.) further states that, the drug lords often provide children who are first time drug users, with free drugs. After using the free drugs for some time, the children come to a point where they start craving for more of the drug. When the children reach this point, the drug dealers stop providing them (schoolchildren) with free drugs, telling them to find their own means for purchasing the drugs. This need for money to support the addiction is what moves the children to a point where they have to get involved in crime so they can get money for buying the drugs.

3. **Arrival of Chinese Triad gangs:** The arrival of Chinese Triad gangs looking for abalone<sup>121</sup>, has led to a sharp rise in methamphetamine trade. According to Kiley (23 September 2007) the, triads exchange abalone with ingredients for making methamphetamine.
4. **Gangsterism:** Apart from Police corruption, use of minors in drug deals, and arrival of Chinese triad gangs, gangsterism<sup>122</sup> has also proven to be a challenge in combating methamphetamine abuse.

It is estimated that the Cape Flats has approximately 130<sup>123</sup> gangs with a membership of between 80 to 100 thousand<sup>124</sup> contributing to 40% of murders, and 42% of robberies taking place in the Western Cape (Kinnes, 2000; Standing, 2004; Kagee & Frank, 2005; Samara, 2005 in Cooper 2009:3). The largest of these gangs is the Americans gang, followed by the Hard Living Kids also known as the Hard Livings (Standing 2003:4).

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<sup>121</sup> Abalone is an endangered and protected saucer-sized sea creature. The abalone is prized as a delicacy in the Far East where it is smuggled to from Cape Town (Kiley *ibid.*)

<sup>122</sup> The history of gangs in South Africa has its origins from the 1880's, when the first gangs appeared on the Witwatersrand. Their appearance followed the discovery of gold in South Africa. The original gangs concentrated their activities in prison (Kinnes 1:s.d.). According to MacMaster (2010:32) gangsterism in the Western Cape traces its origins to Apartheid laws such as Group Areas Act (1950), pass laws (1952) and labour preferences laws. MacMaster (*ibid.* 34) explains that the forceful removals of people from areas such as District 6 "had a definitive influence on the lives of many people in Cape Town" one of which was "the intensification of gang activities on the Cape Flats". Kinnes (*ibid.*) echoes MacMaster, and adds that it was the dumping of people, by the government, on the Cape Flats which made the gangs to be more "organised and attractive" than they were originally. Affirming MacMaster's assertion above, Pinnock (1984 in Cooper 2009:2) & Pinnock (1982 in Ward & Bakhuis 2010:52) argue that the appearance of gangs on the Cape Flats is a result of children "attempting to recreate social networks or "brotherhoods", after the Group Areas Act tore communities apart." Walker (2009:36) agrees with Pinnock and explains that those that were forcefully removed from their homes and dumped on the Cape Flats had a lot of problems in identifying with the new area and to start a new life as a community since they were used to their previous community spirit which was lacking in the new location.

<sup>123</sup> Standing (2003:4) argues that according to Police experts the number of gangs on the Cape Flats is roughly 120.

<sup>124</sup> Kinnes (3 s.d.) puts the numbers at between 80 000 to 120 000.

The rampant growth in gangsterism on the Cape Flats is a result of poverty<sup>125</sup>, which is serious in the region. Apart from poverty, some people attain gang membership for the sole reason of getting respect from society due to the “notoriety and the power that goes with access to weapons”, and in order to receive material goods<sup>126</sup> supplied by the gangs (Ward & Bakhuis 2009:56). This argument is supported by sentiments made by one Cape adolescent called Tacky who is a member of the Thug Life gang, who according to IRIN In-Depth report (2007:71) explained that to him, gangsterism is just like religion as it is part of his family history. Tacky (IRIN In-Depth report *ibid.*) further explains that both his grandfather and father were gang members and they even spent time in jail for their involvement in gang activities, and he feels that someday he will also find himself in jail. According to the IRIN In-Depth report (*ibid.*) to Tacky and most children living in the Cape, gangsterism is something to be embraced as it helps one to learn about respect and to gain status.

Joining gangs is not just about earning respect and gaining money and material goods. Some people join gangs to access recreational facilities provide to them by gang leaders. There are reports to the point that some of the gang leaders operating on the Cape Flats provide recreation services<sup>127</sup> to people living in their areas of control. According to Kinnes, (2000:16 in MacMaster 2010:42) gangs living in the Western Cape have successfully exploited “the economics of poverty” in the province and have used it to provide bread and other basic needs to the people. In some cases some gang leaders have driven through the province’s streets throwing money from their cars to maintain support from the residents of

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<sup>125</sup> Kinnes (1 s. d.) explains that restriction of opportunities to marginalized groups results in those marginalised forming special interest groups aimed at achieving whatever goals those marginalising them may be trying to stop them from achieving. It is mostly the poor who face the restrictions. This is the case with the people living on the Cape Flats because as Standing (2003:1) argues “the Cape Flats is unacceptably impoverished”.

<sup>126</sup> MacMaster (2010:42) affirms that gangs provide basic needs in form of food, rent, and school fees to the needy people living in areas where they operate. MacMaster (*ibid.*) adds that there was even a case in which a woman from Valhalla Park shouted on television after the arrest of the then leader of the Firm gang, Colin Stansfield: “Wie gaan nou vir ons kinders sorg? (*Who is now going to care for our children?*)”.

<sup>127</sup> According to Kinnes (8 s. d.) some gangs buy buildings in their areas of control and use the buildings as places where children gather to play games and access liquor.

their areas of influence (Kinnes *ibid.*; Standing 2003:11). Some of the gang leaders have even gone to the extent of running loan schemes to the benefit of members from the communities in which the gangsters are operating (Kinnes 2000:16 in MacMaster 2010:42). Another reason which attracts children to gangs is “the eroding of traditional extended family structures, absent and busy parents, teenage pregnancies and single parent families” (MacMaster 2010:49).

The gangs have control over almost every aspect of life on the Cape Flats including cultural activities. This is echoed by Standing (*ibid.*) who argues that:

[M]any of the most prominent drug merchants sponsor groups of performers who compete in various events, including the prestigious Coon Carnival that takes place over New Year. The most successful troop, sponsored by one of the biggest drug merchants on the Cape Flats, is estimated to cost its ‘captain’ over R200,000 a year. This sum includes hiring buses to collect members for practice every Sunday, providing free food and drink, paying for one-off parties, as well as buying instruments and subsidizing uniforms.

It is therefore because of the influence they have on the people living on the Cape Flats that it becomes difficult for the police to arrest those involved in drug dealing. To most people who have benefited from the generosity of the gang leaders, it would be absurd to betray those who help them in times of need.

## **5.8. Conclusion**

As previously discussed, methamphetamine has a long history tracing back to the period of the First World War. Over the years, people have used the drug for its effects, which range from raising a person’s low self-esteem to hyper-activity in sexuality, and the drug’s ability in helping females get a good figure through weight loss.

To those who have used the drug, it has been discovered that the drug’s negative effects far much out-weigh its positive effects as it has led to some of them getting involved in crime, losing their well-being and even leading some of them to an early death.

The drug has torn Cape Flats communities apart, making the area one of the most unstable and unsafe areas in the Cape. Most of the mid-adolescents living in the area (Cape Flats) are in a very hopeless situation due the instability brought about by the effects of the drug. Most of them (mid-adolescents) are living in surroundings full of violence emanating from gang wars ignited by hunger for control of drug trade and

power. Some mid-adolescents have found themselves having no choice but to join in the gangs to get protected from the effects of gang wars, but have ended up getting involved into *tik* use, behaviour associated with gang membership. Communities have tried through various efforts to fight the abuse of the drug but in most cases, their efforts have been in vain due to various hiccups ranging from availability of the drug on the streets, weak laws, and corruption. The 'generosity' of the drug dealers has also resulted in communities protecting the dealers as they consider them providers of their various needs.

As the Cape Flats continues to face the challenges posed by methamphetamine, many questions may arise in people's minds. The biggest question in everyone with a heart for the people, especially the youth, living in Lavender Hill on the Cape Flats would thus be; for how long will those growing in this troubled area continue to live with the dangers emanating from the negative impacts of methamphetamine? Will it be possible that the Church, as a community of believers will get more involved in motivating a preventive strategy for dealing with drug abuse in order to assist Lavender Hill mid-adolescents not to become addicted to methamphetamine?

In the next chapter, particular emphasis will be placed on the impact of drugs on identity-formation. This is because most of those using *tik* in the focus area of the research are at a point in their life when they are developing into adults, this is a time when they are struggling with the question 'who am I?' In the process of examining identity formation, focus will be on how achievement of identity affects the manner in which mid-adolescents look at issues of human dignity.

The focus of the next chapter will be on mid-adolescence because it is during this stage that the factors mentioned have a huge impact on identity formation and children's decisions regarding values and virtues.



## CHAPTER SIX

### Identity formation and the quest for human dignity during mid-adolescence

#### 6.0. Introduction

It was argued in the first chapter of the present research that mid-adolescents who have been exposed to *tik*, have come to a point in life where they have lost their God given dignity. It was further argued that their loss of dignity has in most cases led them to ignore the dignity of others in their community. The current chapter investigates how identity formation in mid-adolescence affects the dignity of mid-adolescents and those around them. The chapter seeks to examine if there is a possibility that identity formation can lead to promotion of human dignity among mid-adolescents and thereby leading them to a position where they will be able to promote the dignity of others. The supposition is that if mid-adolescents are able to achieve a positive identity, they will be able to attain the dignity given to them by God and they will in turn promote the dignity of others. It is assumed that positive identity and embracement of human dignity can help in promotion of a methamphetamine addiction free generation among those living in areas affected by the impact of the drug. If the youth living in Lavender Hill will attain a positive identity, chances are that it will not be very difficult for the church to implement the preventive strategy proposed by the research.

## 6.1. Identity- a definition

Defining the term identity is a very complex<sup>128</sup> thing as it involves finding meaning<sup>129</sup> in one's life. According to Louw (2012:62) identity is about how one responds to life and "on the degree and quality" of their responsibility. It is about how good one responds to the happenstances of their life and how responsible they are in their reaction. Louw (ibid. 63) continues to argue that "in a theological anthropology 'identity' means that people discover that God calls them to respond to their destiny", which is "to love God and their fellow human beings". Louw (ibid.) further explains that God's call to love is not by force; one has a right to respond to the call by taking appropriate action or just to ignore the call. He (Louw ibid.) further says that the fact that God gives people freedom to choose how they will respond to the call shows that "our choices are not unlimited but are determined by the ethical principle of unconditional love. This love includes an acceptance of oneself, founded on grace." According to (Louw ibid.), the freedom to respond to the call is based on the grace of God. In spite of the call not being forceful, it is of prime importance that one positively avails themselves to the call so that they can have the strength to accept themselves without underestimating or overestimating themselves.

## 6.2. Identity formation during mid-adolescence

To have an identity is of prime importance in any person's life. Identity helps us as human beings, to understand ourselves, and the responsibilities we have towards our

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<sup>128</sup> Buckingham (2008:1) explains that defining identity is not an easy thing as the term Identity "has been used-and overused- in many different contexts and for many different purposes, particularly in recent years". Buckingham (ibid.) continues to explain that the difficulty in defining the meaning arises from the term identity itself. The term *idem* (the same) which is the Latin root of the term identity "implies both similarity and difference" which shows that identity is "something we uniquely possess: it is what distinguishes us from other people. Yet on the other hand, identity also implies a relationship with a broader collective or social group of some kind" (Buckingham ibid.). Buckingham (ibid.) continues to argue that the two 'aspects' above are at the center of the ambiguity that has risen from trying to define the term identity. He (Buckingham ibid.) elucidates that in the course of developing an identity, a person may try to find his true-self and to be himself and at the same time may also "seek multiple identifications with others, on the basis of social, cultural, and biological characteristics, as well as shared values, personal histories, and interests".

<sup>129</sup> Kiang and Fuligni (2010:1253) explain that finding meaning in an adolescent's life involves "exploring and questioning their life purpose, their passions and motivations, and what they are meant to do with their lives in education."

environment and towards other human beings. According to Erickson (1968 in Buckingham 2008:2) identity formation brings individuals to a point where they:

[O]vercome uncertainty, become more self-aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and become more confident in their own unique qualities undergoing a “crisis” in which they address key questions about their values and ideals, their future occupation or career, and their sexual identity. Through this process of self-reflection, adolescents arrive at an integrated, coherent sense of their identity as something that persists over time. While this is partly a psychological process-and indeed a function of general cognitive development-it also occurs through interaction with peers and care givers. Identity is developed by the individual, but it has to be recognized and confirmed by others.

Collaborating with Buckingham above, Marcia in Adelson (1980:109) postulates that identity formation does not happen smoothly as “it involves commitment to a sexual orientation, an ideological stance, and a vocational direction”. According to Marcia (ibid.) the fact that identity formation involves integration of various components as stated above, is important as it helps the adolescent to negate as well as to affirm various behaviours. Marcia (ibid. 110) goes on to explain that in the course of forming one’s identity:

One must relinquish one’s parents as psychosexual objects, relinquish childhood ideology based on one’s position as a “taker,” and relinquish the fantasized possibilities of multiple, glamorous life styles, that which one negates is known; what one affirms and chooses contains an element of the unknown.

According to Marcia (ibid.) the fact that identity formation involves abandoning some behaviours and adopting new ones, is the reason which leads to some children to not form an identity or “form only a partial one”. Marcia (ibid.) argues that the failure to come up with one’s own identity comes about because children concerned, find themselves in a situation where they are afraid of “saying “no” to elements of their past of which they are certain and make the affirmative leap into an uncertain future”. They become afraid of the unknown. Assenting Marcia’s postulation above, Parrott (1993:15) adds that:

Without identities, awkward adolescents carry a “how’m-I-doing?” attitude that is always focused on their concern about impressions they are making on others. Without self-identities they will be or do whatever they think others want. They will flounder from one way of acting to another, never able to step outside of a preoccupation with their own performance and genuinely ask others, “How are you doing?”

Agreeing with Marcia and Parrott above, McAdams (1993:91) argues that developing an identity in one's life is not easy because it is like "creating an integrative life story through which we are able to understand who we are and how we fit into the adult world". According to McAdams (ibid.) this life story is not a fixed one as it gets revised as one's views of himself and his world change. McAdams (ibid. 92) postulates that our stories help us to reach maturity and with maturity we come to a point where we get to accept events from our past and are able to make meaning out of them (the past events). In order to find meaning of our past, argues McAdams (1993:92.) we reorganise the past through creation of a myth which helps us to make sense of "our lives and the lives of others". McAdams (ibid.) further argues that creation of a myth in a person's life is important because it helps the individual to determine who he/she is, who he/she was, and who he/she may become in future.

### **6.3. Development of identity during mid-adolescence**

In order for us to understand what is involved in identity formation, we first have to understand the importance of identity in a person's life. Identity is not a so easy thing to achieve. Even though it may seem to be a difficult thing to achieve, a good number of scholars have tried to explain what is involved in achievement of identity and how the achievement affects not just the development of a person, but the entire life of an individual. Achieving identity is not an easy task as it can be seen in the following argument by Parrott (1993:15):

Achieving a sense of identity is the major developmental task of teenagers. Like a stunned soldier in a state of confusion, sooner or later, young people are hit with a bomb that is more powerful than dynamite—puberty. Somewhere between childhood and maturity their bodies kick into overdrive and fuel changes at an alarming rate. With this acceleration of physical and emotional growth, they become strangers to themselves. Under attack by an arsenal of fiery hormones, the bewildered young person begins to ask, "Who am I?"

Parrott's argument above is in total agreement with what was discussed in Chapter two (cf. page 24) of this research, where it was explained that identity is a term which answers the question "who am I?" Thus in asking the question, an individual tries to define himself/herself in relation to what others think about that individual and how responsible that individual is; it looks at one's confidence in him/herself despite the doubts others may have over the particular person.

Attainment of identity is of prime importance in any individual's life as it helps the affected person to have a wellbeing which results in the particular person attaining a sense of self-direction which result in the person having purpose for their life (Burrow & Hill 2011:1196). Burrow & Hill (ibid.) further explain that having a purpose in life is not something that happens by mere chance but it is a result of several other things in life like self-esteem<sup>130</sup> and locus control. Burrow & Hill (ibid.) continue to postulate that:

[A] stable sense of self facilitates individuals' ability to negotiate everyday experiences by enhancing their recognition of obstacles and opportunities most relevant to them. ...with a clear sense of identity, experiences can be understood in light of the personal goals individuals may possess.

Agreeing with Burrow and Hill above, Schwartz et.al (2005:204) enunciates that the stage of identity is very important in a person's life as it is the time when an individual has the chance to "enhance ego capacities, such as agentic abilities and strengths, and to master difficulties and obstacles presented by the social environment". True as it may be argued that having an identity is very important in every person's life, a question may be asked as to how one may attain identity. To answer this question we will have to engage arguments by leading scholars on mid-adolescent development issues.

According to Burrow & Hill (ibid.), for one to attain identity, they must have an identity capital which is a result of a person investing in their purpose for life. It is a person's journey for finding meaning in life. Erikson (1968 in Burrow & Hill ibid. 1197) argues that in the course of attaining identity, children may come to a point where they may face an identity crisis. When it happens that they have reached this point (identity crisis), the only way out is having a purpose<sup>131</sup> because it provides them with "a meaningful ideal to which they can dedicate themselves". A meaningful ideal cannot be achieved in one's life without them getting connected to a caring community, because it is through

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<sup>130</sup> Scott and Spencer (1998: in Swartz et.al 2008:78) explain that self-esteem is "the evaluation of one's worth as a person, based on an assessment of the qualities that make up self-concept." Agreeing with Scott and Spencer, Plotnik (1999 in Swartz ibid.) contends that self-esteem is developed through "the challenges" children encounter in the school system "such as the challenges generated by learning tasks and their interaction with teachers and peers". Plotnik (ibid.) further explains that it is not the school system alone that affects one's development of self-esteem but also such things as one's "family circumstances and experiences such as the loss of a parent".

<sup>131</sup> According to McKnight and Kashdan (2009 in Burrow and Hill 2011:1196) "purpose is a central, self-organizing aim that organizes and stimulates goals, manages behaviours, and provides a sense of meaning."

communities or society that identities of individuals exist. This is supported by Baumeister (1986:7), who argues that, “identities exist only in societies, which define and organize them.” Through the search for identity, one comes to a point where they question their surrounding and things they used to consider valuable including parental authority as well as authority from other adults. Kroger (2007:59-60) explains that during this period the person in mid-adolescence struggles with a lot of questions such as the following which were raised by a class of high school students aged 15 to 17 years old:

Do you find me attractive? Who is interested in me? Am I popular? How can I make Shane H., the gorgeous boy in my math class, fall madly in love with me? What do I want to do when I leave high school? Where will my friends all go after high school? How can I become a great writer and dancer? Will I do OK at the university? How do I want to be treated? What do I value? What am I like? Why are people prejudiced against me because I am different? What is justice? How much control do I really have in my life? How much control should my parents have over my life now? Why does society expect things from me that are not what I want?

According to Kroger (ibid. 60) mid-adolescents ask these questions as they are now at a stage in life where they are “struggling to find some optimal balance between Identity Versus Role Confusion”. During this period, mid-adolescents spend most of their time building a new identity which replaces the sense of identity they had gained from their identification and interaction with those closest to them (Kroger ibid. 62). According to Erikson (1968:155 in Kroger ibid. 63) during this period those in mid-adolescence spend most of their energies in “developing new identifications” which are “no longer characterized by the playfulness of childhood”. According to (Kroger ibid.) this period is a period of psychosocial moratorium<sup>132</sup> in which the mid-adolescent spends his energies “in the service of synthesizing all previous identifications of childhood and early adolescence into a new identity structure that is uniquely one’s own”. Kroger (ibid.) further explains that apart from evaluating their previous identifications, mid-adolescents also spend much of their time “exploring the implications” of their “adult physique through expressions of sexuality and gender roles”.

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<sup>132</sup> Buckingham (2008:3) explains that the notion “psychosocial moratorium” was introduced into psychology by Erikson to mean “a period of “time out” in which children can experiment with different potential identities and engage with risks of various kinds”. Echoing Buckingham above, Baumeister (1986:109-110) adds that psychosocial moratorium is made up of the following features: “transitional status, lack of commitment, and isolation from society’s mainstream”.

## 6.4. Identity crisis

As part of identity development, mid-adolescents come to a point where they face a crisis in identity issues. According to Baumeister (1986:198) the term identity crisis<sup>133</sup>, was coined by Erik Erikson and his colleagues in the 1940s. Baumeister (ibid.) asserts that Erikson (1956) claims that they (Erikson and colleagues) made the term Identity crisis to refer to “a specific, narrow type of psychopathology they observed at the mental hospital where they worked”. While agreeing with Baumeister above as regards to the origin of the term ‘identity crisis’, Parrott (1993:15) alludes that originally Erikson used the term “to describe the orientation of shell-shocked soldiers who could not remember their names”. In his book entitled *Identity: Youth and Crisis*, Erikson (1968:16-17) gives the following as the origin of the term ‘identity crisis’:

The term “identity crisis” was first used, if I remember correctly, for a specific clinical purpose in the Mt. Zion Veterans Rehabilitation Clinic during the Second World War, a national emergency which permitted psychiatric workers of different persuasions and denominations, among them Emanuel Windholz and Joseph Wheelwright, to work together harmoniously. Most of our patients, so we concluded at that time, had neither been “shell-shocked” nor become malingerers, but had through the exigencies of war lost a sense personal sameness and historical continuity. They were impaired in that central control over themselves for which, in the psychoanalytic scheme, only the “inner agency” of the ego could be held responsible. Therefore, I spoke of a loss of “ego identity.” Since then, we have recognized the same central disturbance in severely conflicted young people whose sense of confusion is due, rather, to a war within themselves, and in confused rebels and destructive delinquents who war on their society.

Baumeister (ibid.) explains that after Erikson and his colleagues made the term ‘identity crisis’, “the term became popular, and with popular usage it began to refer to a wide range of existential ailments. More important, it became used to refer to formative struggles of “normal” (non-pathological) persons”. According to Baumeister (ibid. 199) despite the fact that a lot of research has been done on identity crises, “there is no clear definition or model of what an identity crisis is.” Although it can be argued as Baumeister above would, that there is no clear definition of the concept ‘identity crisis’ the fact remains that ‘identity crisis’ is there and it is affecting most people especially those in mid-adolescence.

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<sup>133</sup> According to Baumeister (1986:103) identity crisis is “a period of struggle to adopt a religious and political ideology and to choose an occupation”.

Identity crisis is part and parcel of a healthy development of a human being. Without experiencing an identity crisis, it is very difficult for an individual to live their life in a positive way. Without going through an identity crisis, it is practically impossible for one to attain a healthy identity because identity crisis helps in stimulating “an identity consciousness that compels the individual to explore life alternatives (e.g., occupations, political views, religious choices)” (Adams 1983:194). In the course of going through identity crisis, children come to a point where they have to consider “potential life choices and eventually make a commitment or psychological investment in particular decisions” (Buckingham 2008:3). They have to resolve the crisis. The process, through which one indulges to resolve identity crises, has been labelled by James Marcia as ‘identity statuses’ (Kroger 2007:28).

## 6.5. Statuses of Identity formation

Swartz et.al (2008:89) explicate that for a person to achieve an identity, they have to go through some statuses in which they explore and make commitments<sup>134</sup> to various alternatives concerning their future. The exploration and commitment theory is based on Erikson’s ideas on identity formation and what it takes to achieve a positive identity (Swartz et.al *ibid.*).

According to James Marcia (1966; 1980 in Ratele and Duncan 2003: 135), in the course of developing an identity, a person comes to a point where they go through an orientation which he (Marcia) calls ‘identity status’<sup>135</sup>. Ratele and Duncan (*ibid.* 135-136) discuss the statuses as involving the following:

*Identity diffusion...a state resulting from two absences: an absence of crisis about identity and an absence of commitment to an identity. People who have a diffuse identity do not know what they want to do with their lives and do not want to find out. Their state is one characterised by a sense of directionlessness and apathy. The individual refuses to face him- or herself and the challenges of making a life. It may be said that ‘they are just going along’. Though they may manage to steer clear of the struggles of commitment*

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<sup>134</sup> Swartz et.al (2008:89) explain that exploration is about “active exploration of future possibilities where choices that parents have made are re-evaluated, and alternatives that are more personally satisfying are considered,” while commitment is about “the extent of a person’s involvement in, and allegiance to, choices he/she makes.”

<sup>135</sup> According to Ratele and Duncan (*ibid.*) an identity status is “a result of a combination of the presence or absence of a crisis and a commitment regarding identity.” They (Ratele and Duncan *ibid.*) go further to give the following as being the statuses: Identity diffusion, Identity moratorium, Identity foreclosure, and Identity achievement.



and the future, steering clear of identity in the present may lead to future challenges. In *identity moratorium* one is in the middle of a crisis about who one is and is not. The individual is searching and so there is a deferment of commitment. The individual is experimenting with possibilities, for example, by going to work abroad, taking a year to travel the world, or, as people would say, 'doing something different'. This experimentation can be useful when one decides to commit to a life course, but one should guard against the lack of commitment going on forever. [...]With *identity foreclosure* there has not been a struggle. Rather, there is a commitment to an identity, social values, and a life. Such commitment is therefore seen as premature. The individual has avoided making an informed and active choice. His or her commitment is not a questioning one. *Identity achievement* may be seen as an antithesis to identity diffusion in that the latter results from two presences: a presence of commitment to an identity, after the presence of a struggle for identity. Identity achievement means a person has arrived at a sense of who he or she is following a search of what he or she can be.

Ratele and Duncan's postulations above are asserted by Swartz et.al (2008: 89-91) who discuss Marcia's states of identity development in the following way:

- 1. Identity achievement:** The state of identity achievement is a state in which children pursue their goals after having actively "gone through a period of decision-making." If asked about their career choices, the youth in this state will respond in the following way: "I've considered all the possibilities and have decided that becoming a psychologist is the career choice best suited to me." It is a state in which children commit themselves to the future; after making an active exploration of the choices they had.
- 2. Identity foreclosure:** In this state of development, the adolescent is very active in pursuing his/her goals. The goals pursued in this state are basically not the youth's own goals but those of their parents. It is a state in which, children take on their parents' goals without re-examining them; "they merely assume the choices their parents have made." Asked about their choice of career, the youth in this state may say: 'I've never really given career choice much thought. My mom's a psychologist, so that's the career I'll choose.'" This is a state in which, children make commitments without any exploration.
- 3. Identity moratorium:** It involves "active exploration, but no commitment". In this stage, "adolescents are in an identity crisis". It is in this state where a child may have difficulties with deciding as to what kind of profession they want to follow as adults. This happens because most of the careers they may think of may seem to

be appealing to them, thereby making it very hard for them to come up with one concrete choice.

4. **Identity diffusion:** This state involves unsuccessful exploration of alternative choices by the youth. It is a state characterized by a display of lack of commitment and discontinuation of exploration. In this state if asked about their career choice, the child often responds in the following way: “I don’t give career choice any thought any more. There doesn’t seem to be any career that particularly interests me.”

In his work published in Handbook of Adolescent Psychology (Adelson (ed.) 1980:111) James E. Marcia had this to say on identity statuses:

The identity statuses were developed as a methodological device by means of which Erikson’s theoretical notions about identity might be subjected to empirical study. [...]Those classified by these modes are defined in terms of the presence or absence of a decision-making period (crisis) and the extent of personal investment (commitment) in two areas: occupation and ideology. *Identity Achievements* are individuals who have experienced a decision-making period and are pursuing self-chosen occupation and ideological goals. *Foreclosures* are persons who are also committed to occupational and ideological positions, but these have been parentally chosen rather than self-chosen. They show little or no evidence of “crisis.” *Identity Diffusions* are young people who have no set occupational or ideological direction, regardless of whether or not they may have experienced a decision-making period. *Moratoriums* are individuals who are currently struggling with occupational and/or ideological issues; they are in an identity crisis.

From what we have seen in our discussion of identity in mid-adolescence, we will not be wrong to conclude that attainment of identity is the climax of the transition any person has to go through before they reach the mature state of adulthood.

### **6.6.0. Identity and the pursuit for human dignity in mid-adolescence**

This section of the chapter looks at the interplay between attainment of identity in mid-adolescence and the pursuit of human dignity.

#### **6.6.1. Identity and the pursuit for human dignity**

Issues of human dignity have a long history. This history can be traced to the 15th century when GioVanni Pico della Mirandola wrote the book ‘On the Dignity of Man’ in which he explained that every human being has the capacity “to have that which he chooses, and to be that which he wills” (Horton 2004:1083). Despite the fact that della Mirandola wrote about human dignity in the 15th century, human dignity is as old as the

human race. It is therefore not surprising that most Christian scholars, who have made an attempt to write on human dignity, ascribe the history of human dignity to the time when God created man. They argue that human dignity finds its place in history through the creation story. According to Dalton in Duffy & Gambatese (1999:32) the foundation of human dignity is found in God's creation of man in his own image. Mitchell (2009:42) agrees with Dalton above and explains that even though no human being knows "precisely as in what way we image God" because according to him (Mitchell 2009:42) "the Bible never defines what the *imago Dei*, the image of God, actually is". The fact that "man did not create himself" but was created by God, is evidence enough that "life and death belongs to God" therefore man has a responsibility to take care of the life given to other human beings by God. [According to Dalton (ibid.) God through his actions after man's fall, shows us that he is the source of human dignity. After the fall of man, God took it upon himself to provide a way for restoring the fallen human being through Jesus Christ. Dalton (ibid.) further argues that God's actions in response to man's state after the fall proves that "the rights and privileges that accrue to human reality take precedence over those of animals, plants, and inanimate reality". Dalton (ibid.) elucidates that during the fall, all nature fell with man because of the powerful linkage, which is there between man and human orders. Despite the fact that nature fell with man, God is not restoring nature to its former glory but he is rather restoring human beings only. This way of restoration according to Dalton (ibid.) proves that the dignity of man is of more prominence than that of the rest of creation.

### **6.6.2. Human dignity defined**

In order to get a clear view of the term human dignity, it is important to engage with various scholars who have made an attempt to define what human dignity is. A clear definition of the term (human dignity) is of prime importance as it can help one to appreciate situations where people's dignity may be under threat. It is when one has this understanding that they will be able to rise up to the rescue of those whose dignity may be under threat.

Meeks in Moltmann(1984:ix) explains that the term human dignity is a word not so simple<sup>136</sup> to define even though it has mostly been used to mean “honour of rank”. According to Meeks (ibid.) the term has been widely used since the time of enlightenment, to mean “worth of being human”. Meeks (ibid.) further argues that it is not possible to talk about human dignity without “describing the fundamental meaning of being human”. Hobes in Horton (2004:1083) concurs with Meek above and adds that, human dignity is the “public worth of man”. Meek (ibid.) explains that human dignity is now “the key concept in the worldwide struggle for human rights” and a lot of people in the world, have been willing to fight for their well-being with some even getting to the point of losing their life, for the sake of preserving it (human dignity). Whilst agreeing with Meeks, Moltmann (1984:9) cautions that human dignity should not be confused with human rights because according to him (Moltmann ibid.) “human rights are plural, but human dignity is singular” meaning that human dignity comes before human rights because it (human dignity) “is the one indivisible, inalienable, and shared quality of the human being”. Moltmann (1984:9) continues to argue that dignity unlike rights, which are inclusive as they also belong to animals; belongs to human beings. According to him (Moltmann ibid.) it is for this reason that we say that a person has acted “inhumanly” when they violate another person’s rights and we do not use the same connotation when an animal violets a person’s rights (ibid.). While agreeing with Moltmann, Louw (2012:61) argues that human dignity is not just “a right to be claimed merely on the basis of ethics” but it is “the value of our being human within the dynamics of relationships”. Horton (2004:1083) further develops Louw’s argument above by elucidating that human dignity is “a component of an attitude or behaviour that can best be summed up as respect”. Louw (ibid.) further argues that, as a relational issue, human dignity requires that those who get it respond to the needs of others “within different roles, tasks and perceptions” because without the response, people’s “experience of value and worth” will be affected thereby leading to “stigmatisation and discrimination”. Looking at these

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<sup>136</sup> Horton (2004:1081) argues that “human dignity is a linguistic currency that will buy a basketful of extraordinary meanings”. He goes on to say that due to the complexity that is found in defining human dignity, “it is not surprising that some critics describe dignity as a meaningless slogan”.

arguments, we will not be wrong to conclude that human dignity is about people being human because as Moltmann (1984:9-15) argues, people are human because they are created in the image of God from whom they get their value which he ushered to them through “the atoning and redeeming work of Christ”. Therefore, motivation for realizing dignity for both ourselves and others should be nothing but love; because it is only love grounded in human experience which can help all people to have hope in a better life (ibid.).

### **6.7. The image of God (imago Dei) and its relationship to human dignity**

According to Mitchell (2009:43-44) the image of God is like a stamp engrossed by God on human beings.

This stamp was engrossed on every human being irrespective of their social or physical status, and it is granted to human beings “from the beginning of life and follows us to the grave”. No person can take human dignity away from another person because it is without end as it “reflects the image of God” in his created beings. According to Mitchell (ibid.) despite the indestructibility of human dignity, sometimes it gets “obscured, assaulted, and hidden,” and one can see a good example of this by relating the “experiences of Jewish men, women and children of the Holocaust” and the stories of those who suffered during the period of slavery. Mitchell (ibid.) warns that it is of prime importance that human dignity is preserved because if it is not preserved the human spirit can get distorted and people’s personality may get deformed.

### **6.8. The world and human dignity**

Human dignity got prominence in the world after the end of the Second World War; when the United Nations Organisation came up with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is acclaimed all over the world as the most important instrument for the promotion of human freedoms; but in spite of this acclamation it has little to offer on human dignity as it only mentions human dignity in passing (Muzaffar 2002:34). Apart from the little mention it gets in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, human dignity is not discussed in secular literature on human rights. It is only in religious literature that the term has been given

much focus (Muzaffar 2002:34). In religious literature where human dignity gets recognition, it is looked at not just as an achievement of human rights but about its being achieved through:

Conscious, faithful adherence to a Spiritual and moral way of life built around universal, eternal values and principles such as justice and compassion, freedom and equality, moderation and restraint. It is a way of life which, in the ultimate analysis, seeks to liberate the human being from both the inner shackles of bondage created by greed and ego and the outer chains of servitude brought about by control and domination. Muzaffar (2002:35)

Concurring with Muzaffar above, Jewett a religious writer from a Christian background explains that for Christians, human dignity is of prime importance because human beings despite being small in stature as compared to other creatures like the universe and all its galaxies, are “remarkably different” from the rest of the creation. They are “remarkably different” because they bear the image of the creator who has made them “for himself” (2002:4-6). Moltmann (1984:35) agrees with Jewett above and explains that human dignity is of prime importance to Christians not just because Christians, as God’s creation, are “remarkably different” from the rest of creation but because:

Christianity understands itself as a witness to the triune God who liberates human beings from inward and outward humanity, who allows them to live in his covenant, and who leads them to the glory of his kingdom.

Moltmann (ibid.) further explains that it is “for the sake of God” that Christians “will stand up with all means at their disposal, acting as well as suffering, for the dignity of human beings and their rights as the image of God”.

## **6.9. The value of Human dignity**

Human dignity, just like any gift given to man by God, is of great value to human beings. When God freely chose human beings over the rest of creation to be bearers of his image, he did that because he valued human beings; and he expects them to value fellow human beings. If human beings are to value other human beings, they will only do that when they understand how much they are valued by the creator, and this they can do if they value religion, because according to Mitchell (2009:52) religion helps people to develop “a culture of concern for each other, particularly the ones who are lodged precariously along the margins”. Mitchell (ibid.) continues to argue that looking at dignity from a theological/religious point of view is of great importance because:

It forces us to renounce all forms of defacement. It calls us to acknowledge and affirm a divine basis for the common bond between us. ...It gives us a basis for challenging the nature of our economic, social, and political systems which hinder our life together. This theological conception of human dignity, rightly understood, leaves us no choice but to recognize that human dignity is also a social and political reality.

Valuing human dignity leads people to a point where they look at all people as being friends and not enemies. According to Mitchell (2009:52) once people start looking at others as not being enemies, they will not wish them dead and will not wish to subdue them as they would with enemies because an enemy is a “monster” which must be hated, “a vile thing” to be “subdued, dominated, tortured, and ultimately destroyed.” People will come to look at others as people that need to be protected from defacement. They will come to a point where they will value people for what they are, “the *imago Dei*, the image of God”, and they will start to see the glory which is in every human being. It is of prime importance that people understand that it is not just some people that were created in God’s image but every human being. When we understand that God’s image is found in every human being, we will not treat other people as being less human but will treat them with the dignity they deserve. No one will use another for selfish gain, but will try their best to help those struggling with various challenges to attain their self-worth, the worth given to all human beings by God.

#### **6.10. Troubled environments as a threat to achievement of human dignity in mid-adolescence**

Most children in the world of today are living in communities that are facing a lot of challenges. As we discussed in chapter three of this research, mid-adolescents are facing such challenges as HIV/AIDS, broken families, exposure to dangerous drugs and alcohol, poverty, violence, and abuse. Living one’s life in an environment draped in any of these challenges cannot be an easy thing for anyone. The difficulty of living in such environment comes from the fact that those living in this kind of environment spend a better part of their lives fighting for survival. Fighting for survival in such environments is not a thing for the faint hearted, as a result those who find themselves in the fight for survival end up impinging on the dignity of others. As Van Houten (1988:72) would argue, people that live in areas filled with challenges do not have time to think about the promotion of other people’s interests. Their most important concern is to find a means

for their own survival through whatever means no matter how dubious that means may be.

If parents of mid-adolescents concentrate on living a life that is so committed to attaining a living through dubious means, then mid-adolescents living in such scenarios may end up internalising the behaviour<sup>137</sup>. If they can internalise such kind of behaviour it will be difficult for them to live a normal life because to them life will be about fighting for survival at all cost. If those that are living in troubled areas are to realize the dignity that is given to them by God, they will do so only if they are to come to the point where they are to see themselves as stewards of God's creation which includes fellow human beings. According to Jewett & Shuster (1996:448) as God's stewards, human beings should know that in whatever they do they will be held accountable by God because he is the one who gave them the responsibility to act on his behalf. Jewett & Shuster (ibid.) continue to argue that, being stewards of God's creation, human beings should know that they have the responsibility to "invest, to improve the stock, to distribute benefits rightly and to make right choices". Explaining as to what it means to make right choices, (Jewett & Shuster ibid. 449) say that, a person who makes right choices does not allow himself to "be dictated by self-indulgence or ambition", but they try as much as possible to act with power and action in pursuing responsibilities given to them by God.

### **6.11. Christian Spiritual Identity: the notion of eschatology**

For individual Christians and Christian communities to take an active role in fulfilling responsibilities given to them by God, they must have an identity shaped by their faith in God. An identity shaped by a person's faith in God is different from the identity shaped by society because other than just concentrating on people's social life, the Christian social identity transforms the whole person. It transforms the person's physical being as well as his/her spiritual being. Another advantage of Christian spiritual identity is that one does not achieve it but receives it by the grace of God. This kind of identity is not dependent on inner resources (psychic) potential but it is from "outside". As explained by (Louw 2012:70), spiritual identity does not depend on a person's capabilities but is rather

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<sup>137</sup> In chapter two of this research it was argued that, any person's life is influenced by their past, beliefs of their community and people surrounding the particular person. It is through a person's interaction with significant others that they learn various behaviours which later become part of the person's life.



dependent on the “influence of grace” which is a “mobilising factor” in the shaping of human behaviour.

As previously discussed, the whole concept of identity is about finding meaning in one’s life; the same goes with Christian spiritual identity. Christian spiritual identity is about finding meaning in one’s spiritual life.

In order to have a clear view of Christian Identity, we may need to answer the following questions: What role does Christian spiritual identity play in the shaping of a person’s life? Is Christian spiritual identity of any value in people’s life? In order to answer these questions we will first have to discuss what Christian spiritual identity is. According to Louw (2012:71-72) Christian spiritual identity is about the paradoxical<sup>138</sup> character of faith, the steadfastness of faith, the commitment and fidelity of faith. Christian identity is about faith<sup>139</sup>. Louw (ibid.) goes on to explain that Christian spiritual identity cannot take place in people’s life without grace<sup>140</sup>, which according to him (Louw) is like fuel or the driving force behind the identity. Grace, argues Louw (ibid.), provides the energy for a positive human existence and helps the believer to build a base upon which he/she starts “to interpret life in a more coherent context of meaning”. With grace, a believer is able to evaluate his/her responsibility; thereby promoting purposefulness in life. As a result of grace, the Christian is also able to have hope<sup>141</sup> for the future as it (grace)

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<sup>138</sup> According to Louw (2012:72) the paradox is that as faith “progresses beyond finitude, it simultaneously regresses to the most primitive level of that finitude”.

<sup>139</sup> Immink (2005:17) explains that faith is “an act of human beings” and it involves the ‘self’ because despite the fact that people’s faith is experienced in a community; it is the “individual human subject who believes.” Immink (ibid.) goes on to say that even though belief/faith is about religion and an individual’s ‘religious lifestyle’, it may also be used as reference to “the sum total of a person’s religious ideas and convictions; or it may have an even more pregnant meaning, one that points to one’s trust in God or to the conviction that God reveals himself in his Word.” Concurring with Immink above, Moltmann (2004:87-88) argues that for Christians, faith is Easter faith and it means “living in the presence of the risen Christ, and stretching out to the coming kingdom of God.” Faith for the Christian is about living one’s life in anticipation for the return of Jesus Christ.

<sup>140</sup> According to Booth (1994:13) grace can be defined as “undeserved kindness, or favour given *without it being earned in any way.*” Booth (ibid.) goes on to say that when one talks about receiving God’s grace, they are talking of receiving something they are not worthy of receiving, something they do not deserve to receive. Grace according to Booth (ibid.) does not depend on a person’s ability but “solely on God’s will”.

<sup>141</sup> To a Christian, hope is not just about the future but it is about “present possession” which is “oriented toward heaven and eternity” (Greer 2001:59). Hope to a Christian is what shapes and defines his life and “what lies beyond

“provides a feeling of security and continuity during experiences of uncertainty” resulting in the Christian having the strength and energy to live positively in spite of the challenges he/she may be going through.

## 6.12. Conclusion

Attainment of identity during mid-adolescent years involves a lot of things. It involves questioning of values and beliefs the person grew up with during childhood years. Through the questioning, one comes to a point where they make a choice of what and who they will be in their adult life. It is not an easy thing for one to come up with a positive identity. The difficulty results from the fact that coming up with one depends on the support they receive from those around them. From what we have seen in this chapter, if one is surrounded by people with a negative and unhealthy identity chances are high that they will model their identity on the identity of the negativity they face. This is because most children’s life ideals are modelled on the significant others they encounter in their daily life.

Despite the fact that attainment of identity is not an easy thing to achieve, it is possible for one to attain a positive identity even when they live in troubled communities; in those communities considered to be hopeless. In this chapter we have seen that it is not an easy thing for people living in troubled areas to promote the well-being of their neighbours. The challenge comes from the fact that most people living in such kind of environment spend most of their time in fighting for survival. Fighting for survival in such communities is done through any means no matter how dubious it may be. In the fight for survival, some may even come to a point where they can deface their neighbours’

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the world or our experience”. This is because despite the fact that the Kingdom of God is in the present, “its consummation lies in the age to come after the destruction of this world” (ibid. 60). The focus of Christian hope is in nothing but Jesus Christ whose resurrection gives a “guarantee and promise of the general resurrection” with the assurance of the disappearance of “all the evils of our present life” and a challenge to the Christian to live life in a way that displays “standards that spring from the destiny for which we hope” (ibid. 60). Agreeing with Greer above, Moltmann (2004:88) goes further to explain that Christian hope is not something that starts from a vacuum but from “a particular historical reality, and announces the future of that reality, its power over the future, and its power over the future and its consummation.” Christian hope is resilient hope and it goes beyond the challenges one can face in the daily life due to the fact that it always looks forward to a day of redemption. It is “hope against hope”, and it keeps on hoping even “where there is nothing else left to hope for.” Moltmann (ibid. 90)

dignity. This kind of life (fighting for survival) becomes part of life for the youth living in such areas as they internalise the behaviour from the adults they live with.

This trend of events can be reversed if those living in troublesome communities can be helped to develop a positive identity. With a positive identity, mid-adolescents will come to a point where they will understand the importance of valuing other human beings. They will learn to look at themselves and those around them as bearers of God's image and will therefore begin to value themselves. Chances are very high that if they can come to a point where they can value themselves as being worthy of being loved by others; they will in turn look at other people as being valuable and worthy of their love. They will look at their neighbour as being the image of God, and will therefore try their best to protect the image bearer as a way of showing their thankfulness to God for putting his image in them. When they will look at others as God's image, they will consider them as people worthy of being protected from exploitation and not as objects to be used for selfish gain. In addition to treating others as God's image, Christian spirituality will help them to have a hope that will go beyond the challenges they may be facing in their environment. This hope will be the one driven by God's grace and the realisation that through his (God's) power, they have the ability to live their life with a purpose, which will enable them to find meaning for life.

Considering the fact that Christian spirituality is attained by grace and not by a person's efforts, those who have attained it will not struggle much to help those who may be struggling with identity issues. Driven by God's grace, they will recognise that they have a role of helping others to achieve purposefulness in life which they themselves would have achieved by the grace of God. The end result will therefore be communities filled with individuals that will be willing and ready to help those trying to find meaning in life through the use of drugs, to reach a positive and constructive understanding of identity. This will be an identity that will not be found by partaking in drugs but by allowing the transformative power of God to work in their life.

In the next chapter being a concluding chapter, the discussion will focus on coming up with a ministerial approach to substance abuse. The presupposition is that with a ministerial approach to substance abuse, people living in Lavender Hill and other areas affected by the epidemic of methamphetamine abuse will be able to prevent those in

mid-adolescence from indulging in methamphetamine use and thereby address the challenges resulting from methamphetamine abuse.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### **Towards a prevention strategy in a ministerial approach to substance abuse**

#### **7.0. Introduction**

In the guise of conclusion to this research, this ultimate chapter attempts to answer the main research question, which centres on the challenges being faced by pastoral ministry as regards to substance abuse and the possible impact of Christian spirituality on youth culture and identity formation. In answering the question, the chapter therefore strives to clarify and motivate the contribution of pastoral ministry in preventing mid-adolescents from becoming addicted to methamphetamine. To achieve this, there will be a critical discussion of how ministry can serve as a vehicle for dealing with substance abuse in communities struggling with the challenge of drug abuse. There will also be a consideration of what previous chapters have indicated as being the challenges mid-adolescents face, which lead them to indulge in abuse of various substances including methamphetamine, and the strategies that the local communities and government are using in their attempts to combat methamphetamine abuse. Finally, this chapter will suggest ways of solving those challenges and motivating the local Church to take a leading role in fighting the battle against mid-adolescent methamphetamine abuse. Basing on the belief that since most of the ways currently followed by communities in combating methamphetamine abuse seem to be failing; there is need for replacing the current strategies with fresh ones. As discussed in chapter five of this research, people living in Lavender Hill and other areas affected by the epidemic of methamphetamine, have tried through various efforts to combat the challenge of methamphetamine. This was being done through such activities as, holding marches/demonstrations against drug dealers and setting up community policing forums aimed at dealing with drug trafficking.

The strategies will be designed based on arguments by pastoral care and counselling experts; as well as outstanding practical theologians.

## **7.1. A ministerial approach to substance abuse**

In this section we look at the role of Christian ministry in dealing with issues of drug abuse. It is the belief of the researcher that if Christian ministry takes its proper place in society and gets fully involved in issues affecting particular societies, most of the problems being faced by communities will be mitigated. In order to mitigate the challenges being faced by the communities struggling with methamphetamine abuse, the Church should aim at partaking in ministries that indulge in serving others, showing love to the marginalised, standing for justice and becoming a welcoming community to those that are alienated. The Church should strive at rethinking its ecclesiology as well as reformulating it in a way that responds to the needs of its environment.

The following are possible modes of ministry (ecclesial functions) which may help in addressing the problem of *tik* addiction in mid-adolescents living in Lavender Hill.

### **7.1.1. Service of others**

If the battle against *tik* is to be won, Churches need to be involved in an inclusive ministry. This is a kind of ministry which will involve every Church member (both young and old), without considering their position in the Church. Christian ministry is to involve every Christian<sup>142</sup> in the fight against the drug. Christian ministry can help mitigate societal challenges not by its own powers<sup>143</sup> and for the sake of making a name for itself, but for the service of others. This can be possible if Christians will practice Christianity with full commitment to its (Christianity's) spirituality. Louw (2012:184-185) argues that Christian spirituality is about a life journey in which it (the spirituality) is not static but moves towards hope. Louw (ibid.) explains that this hope is about finding meaning in life and it aims at helping one to accept their being vulnerable to the challenges of life, and giving them the courage to cope by developing "a new mindset and new condition or state of being". Louw (ibid.) further argues that to engage in the service of others, one

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<sup>142</sup> By every Christian, the researcher is referring to all believers living in the affected areas.

<sup>143</sup> According to Philippians 4:13, believers have the capability to do all things but not by their own powers but 'through Christ' as He is their strength.

needs to reach out and engage with those that are vulnerable. A question may be asked as to how we can reach out and engage with the vulnerable. To answer this question we have to look at what Karl Barth says. He says that the Church as a community of believers has to live its life by following the example of Jesus Christ who as the head of the Church did not stop serving the needy. Jesus, through his atoning work, humbled himself and made himself a servant even though he was a king (Van Engen 1991:122). In the same way believers have to bring themselves to the point where they look at themselves as nothing but servants of the people of God to whom they have been called to serve by Jesus Christ.

### **7.1.2. Practicing *koinonia***

The Church should always keep in mind that it is called to make a difference in the world where God has placed it. This can be done by remembering the fact that the Church is Christ's representative on this earth, and as Van Engen (1991:88) puts it, the Church is in this world because Jesus Christ lives in our midst. Therefore, as a people who make the community of Christ, the Church has the responsibility of making sure that the communities, in which it is placed by God, experiences its presence which is felt through the love that the Church shows others. This love<sup>144</sup> comes to practice as a result of the fact that as Christians we are called to practice *koinonia*<sup>145</sup> which according to Van Engen (ibid. 90) had always been the "way of life expected of people of God" throughout Bible history even before the birth of Christ. According to Van Engen (ibid.), the coming of Jesus Christ to the world, brought a new meaning to the whole idea of practicing love. Van Engen (ibid.) argues that when Jesus talked about giving his disciples a new command ("Love one another as I have loved you" [John 13:34]), he was talking about "a self-dying response" to our communities. Summing up the argument for the need to show love to our neighbours as a way of serving the world in which we are placed by God, McKee (1989:30) says that, the only way Christians can show that they truly adore God is by practicing love for their neighbour.

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<sup>144</sup> Perkins (1993:147) argues that love is and always is "the common denominator" of our Christianity. He further argues that whatever Christian ministry does if it is not motivated by love for God then it is useless.

<sup>145</sup> Van Engen (1991:89) explains that *koinonia* (which is a Greek word) is the command to "love one another" as given by our Lord Jesus Christ in John 13:34-35; Romans 13:8 and 1 Peter 1:22.

### 7.1.3. Living as an academy of justice

For the Church to practice love and to give love to the world, it first needs to understand its task which according to Schweiker in Stackhouse et.al (Eds.) (2000:37) is witnessing “to the reign of God teaching, learning and living justice”. According to Schweiker (ibid.), the Church has a moral obligation to be ‘an academy of justice’. For the Church to live as an academy of justice, explains Schweiker (ibid. 27) it should “enhance the integrity of life before God”. This assertion is supported by Harris (1991:18) who argues that:

Religion must be concerned with justice and righteousness. If it is to be authentic, it needs to take issue with form and appearance, and in order to be prophetic, it needs to be able to see emptiness for what it is and dare call it that. Conversely, religion that is not empty is religion that has power. It is powerful enough to make us change our social and political situation...It gives us the power to seek freedom. Religion that has power is the voice of truth cutting like a two-edged sword, yet healing the wounded by the power of love and compassion that only come through Jesus. It is religion that knows that the blood of Jesus allows us to be saved from the grips of injustice and oppression as well as sin.

As the Church of God, Christians have the responsibility to practice justice because according to Perkins (1993:127) justice is at the heart of God. Perkins (ibid.) goes on to say that people who believe in God will make it a point that they practice justice because to them doing justice is part of their mission, which is “representing a just God”. In the world we are living today, it is not easy for the Church to practice justice because most Christians have problems with the Church’s involvement in issues of Justice. These problems arise because most Christians confuse doing justice with following Marxist or Communist teachings/ideologies (Perkins ibid. 130). According to Perkins (ibid.) as Christians our being involved in matters of justice is not in any way connected to Marxist or Communist beliefs because to us, the motivation for doing justice is to exercise the responsibility of being stewards of whatever God has given us. It is therefore the duty of the Church to see to it that it is involved in issues of justice as part of its way of ministering to the world. If the Church runs away from practicing justice, it will not be easy for it to engage and make a difference in communities in which it has been placed. Most of the problems we are seeing today (for example drug abuse) are a result of the fact that the most of the Churches existing in our communities are doing little to transform the communities in which they are placed.



#### **7.1.4. Being present for those that are struggling**

A question would then be asked as to what can be done to show the world that as the Church we are present and we are partaking in their various struggles which include methamphetamine abuse? Answering this question, Schweiker in Stackhouse et.al (Eds.) (2000:27) argues that the solution lies in the realisation by the Church that it “cannot and ought to not simply exist for itself. It must seek to transform the world”. A Church which does not exist for itself but for the world spends most of its energy in making that world a better place to be. To make the world a better place, the Church also has to remember that it is meant to be there for the world. According to Sobrino (1994:35) the role of theology is to make sure that truth is not being oppressed; but unfortunately this is exactly the opposite of what theology through the Church is doing. Sobrino (ibid.) argues that theology has been corrupted by sin to the point that it no longer sees “reality as it is: a world of suffering”. This is somewhat disheartening because the Church is supposed to follow the example of Jesus Christ who was always moved by compassion to help those that were facing difficulties in life (Sobrino ibid. 37). Sobrino (ibid.) continues to argue that throughout the Bible we see God and Jesus Christ showing acts of compassion, from the time of the Exodus where God liberated Israel from the house of bondage in Egypt not because He wanted to make a covenant with them but because He was moved by their suffering under their Egyptian masters. In the story where Jesus healed the ten lepers “Jesus was not saddened when the lepers did not give thanks to God, but the healing as such was solely the result of an act of compassion”. Echoing Sobrino, Van Engen (1991:91) argues that the Church can show its presence in the communities where it is placed by allowing Jesus to be present in the Church’s life. He explains that “without the presence of Christ there is no Church” and he further explains that, it is only when the Church lives in love that the presence of Christ will be felt in all the activities that the Church may be involved in (ibid.). The love that the Church practices, should lead to a point where communities will experience social change as Harris (1991:19) explains:

[T]he Church has to become an active and intentional agent of liberation and social change. It must be the catalyst that will foster social change as a continuous phenomenon until the reality of equality is evident in all areas of life.

Achieving social change is not an easy thing because as Harris (ibid.) explains, any change that aims at transforming “people’s attitudes, prejudices, and practices is more complex”. This kind of change, Harris (ibid.) argues, is more complex because it involves a change in laws and may even go the extent where the constitution has to be re-interpreted and the end result is always that “the change has little impact on the lives of concerned people because the laws do not change people’s feelings, as it (the law) is just a reflection of change than an agent of change’. True change however, “comes from within the heart and soul of like-minded individuals’ (Harris 1991:19). For this change to be achieved, the Church should make it a point that it involves itself in a kind of ministry which is open and responsive to God’s call to stand for the marginalised<sup>146</sup> in society. According to Baum (1987:107) the Christian Church has a responsibility of making a personal ‘critical and positive contribution” to the struggle in which the marginalised are entangled. The Church has to do this in response to God’s call on His people (Church) to “reconstruct their society to bring it into greater conformity with social justice and social solidarity” (Baum ibid.).

### **7.1.5. Becoming a welcoming community**

The Church’s presence in communities where God has placed it will not only be felt through the practice of justice and social change alone. Justice and social change can only be experienced by communities if the Church becomes a community that welcomes everyone irrespective of their status, race or background. To be a welcoming community may seem to be a difficult thing but is a possible thing to do. For the Church to reach out to those living in communities facing various struggles, the Church has to first of all come to a point where it understands what the reality of life is like to the people belonging to such communities. According to Van Houten (1988:72) most people living in marginalised areas live a very lonely life and they are always spending their time in trying to get the desires of their heart through dubious means. Van Houten (ibid.) further argues that in these areas:

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<sup>146</sup> In this case the marginalised include those living in areas struggling with the epidemic of methamphetamine/*tik*. They are marginalised because most people don’t want to help them out of their situation.

Nearly everyone is out and about solely for self-interest and self-gain. Manipulators abound, and the art of manipulation grows daily in the varieties of form and levels of skill. It has gotten to the point where everyone trusts no one.

We will not be wrong to say that most of the people living in communities affected by *tik* abuse are actually strangers in their own communities. They are strangers because their experience of life is full of dislocation as they live in a community that seems to be neglected by society at larger. This neglect has resulted into what (Gornik 2002:79) calls a life of “dislocation and exile”, It is a life without hope. Gornik (ibid.) further says that with people who are living a life of struggles, it is not easy to follow the Lord’s way as they feel abandoned just like the Jews who were in Babylonian exile, who according to Psalms 137:4, asked the question ‘How can we sing the song of the LORD while in a foreign land?’ It is to this kind of people that the Church is called to welcome so that instead of them being “dislocated and exiled” in their own communities, they should experience God’s presence through the Church. According to Gornik (ibid.) to be welcoming means to make those alienated by society feel our presence and experience the love of God through us. This love of God is only experienced when the Church chooses to stand for the weak and to be their strength; this we can do by modelling our actions on Jesus Christ who (according to Paul’s letter to the Romans) did not please himself but suffered for our redemption and hope (Gornik ibid. 80). The Church as Christ’s representative should be willing and ready to offer itself as a sacrifice for the redemption of the marginalised.

Now that we know the role of theology in dealing with issues of *tik* abuse, how can the Church exercise her role in helping mid-adolescents to refrain from involving themselves in use of *tik*? To answer this question, the research recommends the following, as ways through which this challenge can be mitigated:

#### **7.1.6. Liaising with local communities in healing the social system in which methamphetamine abuse is taking place.**

In the fight against mid-adolescent methamphetamine abuse, those fighting need to remember that for any struggle to be a success, the fighter has to have a clear understanding of the battleground as well as the enemy they are fighting. As we have seen in Chapter five of this research, the Cape Flats is an area that is going through many challenges due to its history and the poverty that most of its inhabitants are

experiencing. Without analysing the social system in which the inhabitants of the Cape Flats are living in, it would not have been possible for the researcher to find the connection between the Cape Flats' history and the challenges its inhabitants are currently facing. The researcher therefore calls on the Church to follow the same route taken by the researcher by analysing the social system in which methamphetamine abuse is taking place. Analysis of the social system will help the Church to find its proper place in the struggle against methamphetamine abuse. This will be possible because God calls the Church to partake in His mission to the world and God Himself is an active participant leading the Church as it participates (Bosch 1991: 10). According to Hendriks (2004:70), as missional, congregations are being influenced by their contexts, therefore they (congregations) should themselves work at influencing that context because the Bible (Matthew 5:13-14), calls on them "to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth". Hendriks (ibid.) further argues that congregations will be able to influence their context only when they have understood that context. According to Hendriks (ibid. 71) an understanding of the congregation's context will lead to a point where the congregation will be able to witness "about the way, the truth and the life". Boesak (2005:3) affirms this by arguing that as Christians we should try our best to take a stand in issues affecting the public. He further says that this will be possible if we follow the example of Jesus Christ, "who took on public form" when he became human and lived his life "in public servanthood and public vulnerability in obedience to God" (ibid.). If the Church will seriously take the call to partake in public issues like mid-adolescent methamphetamine abuse, they (Church) will help society to get transformed because according to De Gruchy (2006:31) the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ transforms Christians into a 'new humanity' which lives, act and hope in ways that transform the society.

As argued in chapter three, children's transition from childhood to adulthood goes with many challenges, which may result in them hurting themselves and those near them. The Church as "the light of the world" has to shine the light in these challenges so that children can see the right way and be able to receive healing from the salt that is the Church (Matthew 5:13-14). This healing will only take place if the Church stops being silent and rises up to take its stand in the public sphere. According to Smit (2008: 98),

Christians can take this stand through the way they follow Christ in their own daily ways by confessing their faith “through their life and actions”.

Therefore, the local congregation has to sensitize its membership on the problems affecting its context, and must help them to “shine their light” and provide healing to the sick context which in this case are communities threatened by methamphetamine abuse. It is only when the congregation will realize their role in issues affecting them, that they will be able to change their communities as the congregation will truthfully act in line with its calling ‘to be change agents<sup>147</sup> in the world, taking a stand, living by faith and fulfilling our purpose for being here’ (Anderson 2009: 114). This purpose is not just ‘propagation of faith and hope’ but, transforming life and the ‘relationships in which this life is lived’ (Moltmann 1993:330).

### **7.1.7. Prevention Care and Family enrichment programs**

The third chapter argued that the family is an institution created by God to be a building block of society, and that despite this fact, the family in South Africa, is every day getting weakened by its own membership; thereby negatively affecting the strength of society.

According to chapter two, as children are living in their communities, they face most of their struggles alone. This mostly happens due to the fact that the family is no longer a safe place as it is full of violence (most mid-adolescents are coming from broken homes, and some are abused and neglected by their own family members).

It is therefore the responsibility of the Church to help in reclaiming families’ lost glory, so that the youth can look up to the family as a source of inspiration<sup>148</sup>. The Church can restore the lost glory by conducting family enrichment<sup>149</sup> seminars in which adults will be discussing the importance of family in the life of children and society; they will be

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<sup>147</sup> Burkey (2000:76) defines a change agent as “a person who initiates a process of change.”

<sup>148</sup> Children will not have problems to follow the guidance of their parents and guardians as it is a known secret that children internalise the things they learn from those adults they consider to be their role-models (significant others) as discussed in chapter two of this research.

<sup>149</sup> Mace & Mace in Denton (1986:13) explain that family enrichment is important because it helps family members to reach a point where they understand that family is about attainment of “a deeply satisfying interpersonal relationship”. They further explain that families cannot reach this goal unless they attain “the necessary skills” which will be met through enrichment seminars.

discussing skills<sup>150</sup> needed for successful family life, which will result in the improvement of children's well-being.

Family enrichment is important because it helps families "to assess and to understand what happens and occurs on a daily basis/scale within the space of family interaction" (Louw 2005:68). Louw explains that family enrichment also helps members of a family to assess how their "different dispositions" within the family "influence one another and contribute to the atmosphere of family space, i.e. intimacy" (ibid.). If family members can be made to understand that their interaction with one another can lead to the well-being of the family unit, then they would try their utmost best to find ways of improving how they interact. With family enrichment, family members will be able to change their positions in a positive way. They will be able to perceive one another without stereotyping or labelling because they will have understood that "stereotyping and labelling...lead to negative family interactions" (Louw 2012:115).

For family enrichment programs to have a positive impact on the participants, they (participants) should be given a chance to outline the things they see as being threats to family life and their results, after that, they should be asked to provide what they think could be solutions to the problems. In cases where participants indicate that they have tried to solve the problems but failed to achieve required results, they should be asked to outline what they think made their efforts fail, and they should be allowed to come up with what they think would be new solutions to the problems. This kind of interaction can be helpful because according to Capps (1990:14-15) most of the problems societies face are as a result of society's mishandling of difficulties which results from the people setting up unattainable goals, which then result in more problems rather than providing solutions to the problems.

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<sup>150</sup> Mace & Mace in Denton (1986:14-5) outline the following as being skills for success in marriage: 1. Commitment by marriage partners "to work together for the building of a relationship that will meet, as far as possible, the needs of both; and to make all possible behaviour changes that will further that end." 2. Building an effective communication system in which marriage partners will be open and truthful to each other leading to them being able to discuss and solve their differences before they pile up. 3. Make creative use of all conflicts that develop in the relationship. If marriage partners will be able to creatively use their conflicts, they will be able to change their behaviour and understand each other.

If the difficulties outlined by the families participating in the workshops/seminars are recognised and acknowledged by the participants themselves, they will result in positive change. The participants will see the importance of building health families, as they will reframe<sup>151</sup> their previous solutions to the threats affecting family life. In order to help communities to have strong families, the researcher proposes that family enrichment programs be made in a way that helps family members to shift positions in their respective families. The shifting of positions in family systems is not aimed at changing “personalities or characters of family members” but using “the family members’ convictions of faith as well as their value system to undertake meaningful positions” (Louw 2012:116). In order for family enrichment programs to be achieved with ease, the researcher recommends that those providing family enrichment programs follow the model for evaluating or assessing patterns of interaction taking place within the family system<sup>152</sup>. The model was designed by Daniël J Louw, who is an expert in pastoral counselling. If properly used, the model will help concerned family members to shift positions in their family system in a way that will turn their families into a health environment for the nurturing of children into responsible adults. It can be argued that if this model is used properly, families will be able to achieve change and healing<sup>153</sup>.

If families living in Lavender Hill can be motivated to participate in family enrichment programs, they will be able to raise their young members in a way that is respectable. They will understand the importance of affirming good behaviour and they will rebuke bad behaviour in a way that is not demeaning to their children. With positive affirmation coming from their own families, children will not seek affirmation from other people such others as drug dealers or gang members. This in turn could mean that they are in a better position to avoid indulging in use and abuse of methamphetamine.

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<sup>151</sup> Capps (ibid. 17) says that reframing aims at changing “the conceptual and/or emotional setting or viewpoint in relation to which situation is experienced and to place it in another frame which fits the ‘facts’ of the same concrete situation equally well or even better, and thereby changes its entire meaning.”

<sup>152</sup> See Addendum

<sup>153</sup> Louw (2012:116) explains that one of the aims of family enrichment is to help family members “to identify and gain greater clarity within the patterns of family interaction”. Louw further argues that this will then result in families achieving change and healing (ibid.)

### **7.1.8. Promoting youth groups as locus for shaping mid-adolescents' behaviours and attitudes/growth and experiential groups**

According to chapters two and three of this research, other children influence behaviours exhibited by most youth (both positive and negative). This (it has been argued) happens because as children are growing, they look up to their peers (especially the ones they consider to be successful) as role models.

Using Youth groups in influencing mid-adolescents to refrain from involving themselves in using methamphetamine, will be achieved if the youth groups can come up will programs aimed at combating the behaviour (use of *tik*). In the programs, the youth groups will be required to involve their membership so that there is a sense of ownership, as it has been observed that most programs end up being failures due to lack of participation from those the programs are aimed at. This failure comes in because according to Burkey (2006:56) success can only be achieved when people participate in various programs aimed at uplifting them, because participation helps to 'develop self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, responsibility, cooperation" and it "helps people learn to take charge of their own lives and solve their own problems'.

The programs should involve things, which the youth are interested in for example, music<sup>154</sup> and dramas. In these programs<sup>155</sup> (music and drama), those making presentations will have to make it a point that the messages they carry are pointing towards avoidance of methamphetamine use.

The youth groups may also have to organise talks in which other youths who have had an experience with methamphetamine (these could be recovering users) will be making presentations on their experience with the drug. These presentations may have a

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<sup>154</sup> It has been argued by Nel & Thesnaar in chapter 2 of this research that music is one of the things that define the identity of most children.

<sup>155</sup> It has to be noted that this model will not in any way lead to the creation of false hope of entertainment to young people as some may fear. The researcher is a person who has worked with youth for 8 years as a high school teacher and at the same time doubling as a youth leader at both congregation and synod level. Through this time of working with the youth, this model was tried and it worked very well to the point that there are a lot of young people from the researcher's congregation and synod who can give testimony as to how the model has helped to shape them into responsible people.



positive impact on the participants (youth group members) as they will be coming from real life experiences of other children. This kind of presentations will have a positive impact in the life of mid-adolescents because as Jacobs et.al (2009:36) argue, growth and experiential groups help members to clarify their personal values and to explore themselves through sharing of thoughts and feelings. In our case, the growth and experiential groups will be the youth groups.

#### **7.1.9. Using the media and modern technologies in disseminating information about the dangers of using methamphetamine/*tik***

“If you cannot beat them, join them” so goes the old adage. In chapter three there was a discussion of the extent to which (multi)media has on children. It was argued that the media and modern technologies<sup>156</sup> have a very big impact on the life of children to the point that most youth accept without question, whatever information the media relates to them. In view of this development, it can be contended that instead of spending time contemplating as to how the impact of the media on youth can be contained, Churches existing in areas threatened by methamphetamine abuse, can corroborate with each other and if possible the corporate world to come up with programmes highlighting the dangers of using methamphetamine. These programmes can be relayed to the youth through the various forms of media which may be at the disposal of the youth like their favourite musical shows on popular radio and television stations. This kind of initiative may look unattainable to some, considering the fact that radio and television are an expensive form of media to use, but there is a high possibility that Churches can manage to use them if they (Churches) can pool together their resources so as to work as a team in financing the projects, in cases where they cannot manage they can involve the assistance of the corporate world. The researcher believes that it is possible to get support from the corporate world because if communities are populated with people that are using and abusing methamphetamine, the business community will have to suffer the consequences due to the fact that (as discussed in chapter five) the drug makes people to involve themselves in various forms of crimes aimed at supporting their behaviour.

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<sup>156</sup> By modern technologies, the researcher means: such technologies as internet, mobile phones, and ipods.

It was discussed in chapter five that most of the crimes perpetuated by drug users start from their homes. This includes crimes such as petty theft which progressively becomes more serious and once there is nothing to steal from the home; they take the crime to the streets thereby affecting community members who run honest businesses. With this in mind, it is evincible that most business people will be willing to help in dealing with the problem before it gets out of hand so that they should not end up being victims of the actions done by the drug addicts.

#### **7.1.10. Helping Christians who are in the police and correctional services to realize their call to be Christ's witnesses.**

Long (1989:43-44) explains that the term 'witness', comes from a Greek word 'martyr' which means someone who is ready to die for the truth they have experienced. He affirms that a witness presents the truth he/she has seen, fully knowing that what he/she says may not please other people but he/she continues to present the truth because his/her aim is to present true facts of what has happened.

In the same way, Christians as people that have been commissioned as witnesses<sup>157</sup> (cf. Acts 1:8) are supposed to act as martyrs; they should be ready to stand for the truth despite the dangers they may face for their witness. This then means that as believers, those serving in the police can show their commitment to the gospel truth by living in line with the teachings of the Bible. In chapter five, it was argued that one of the reasons the war against methamphetamine is failing is police corruption as it was argued that some police officers help drug lords in facilitating their trade due to the fact that they get monetary gifts from the drug dealers. The researcher believes that police corruption can be combated if the Christians who are serving in the Police service as well as Correctional services can stand by the word of God which calls on them (Christians) to be light as well as salt of the world (cf. Matthew 5:13-16). As believers, Christians, irrespective of where they are placed, have a responsibility of making it a point that they offer their service with the intention of making the world a better place. This then means

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<sup>157</sup> According to Guder (1985:42) a person does not just become a witness by chance, he becomes a witness because of his experience of Christ "to which that person can testify". This then means that for a person to become a witness for Christ, they must have a personal experience of Christ which will then move that particular person to a point where they will be able to stand for the truth they have found in Christ.

that the Christian has the obligation to bring transformation to their communities through their actions and behaviours. It is the transformation they bring to the world that will mark a defining point between non-Christians and Christians. A Christian as a follower of Jesus Christ will by any means display a life that is in line with Christian beliefs to which they ascribe. These beliefs will motivate the Christian worker, whether they be in the Police or Correctional service to bring transformation to their community by standing against any acts that may be in conflict with their belief, without considering the price their actions will cost. It is only when they will understand this call that they will refrain from the temptation of getting corrupted by drug lords. To achieve this, Christians in both the Police and Correctional services will be encouraged to form and participate in Bible Study groups in their duty stations. Through these Bible Study groups they will be encouraging one another to be witnesses of Christ even in their places of work.

#### **7.1.11. Introducing Church-organised initiation ceremonies**

It was argued in chapter two of this research that in some African societies, children are received into the world of adults through initiation. It was argued that initiation acts as the channel for getting into the world of adults, as those who are not initiated are deemed to be children no matter how old they may be. It was also argued that initiation makes a big impact on initiates, as they try their best to live in line with what was taught them by those running initiation schools to the point that most initiates practice whatever was taught to them during initiation no matter what the cost.

If South African Churches, especially those located in areas where methamphetamine use is rampant, borrow a leaf (the example) of Malawian Churches to establish Church based initiations for adolescents; there will be a big positive impact on the youth. This will be possible because in comparison to traditional initiations, Church organised initiations<sup>158</sup>, as seen in the Malawian case study, do not give negative advice to children

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<sup>158</sup> Having church organised “initiations” will show communities how much the church is committed to being present and relevant in the lives of its members even in terms of raising their children. Being committed in this case, will not just be a matter of providing material resources for the functioning of the initiation ceremonies but also the provision of properly trained counsellors. In order to have properly trained counsellors, the church pastors will be tasked with the responsibility of training those who will be chosen by the church to be counsellors. It has to be noted that the initiation being proposed here is not just about rituals like 16<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> birthday celebrations, church confirmation, baptism and the like. This initiation will involve a temporary withdraw of the children from society to

as their aim is to help children make the most of their Christian life. For this to happen, those Church members who belong to concerned cultures should give room for change in the way they handle the traditional rites associated with their cultures. This may seem to be an uphill task, but it is a possible task because if members (especially leaders) of particular cultures allow themselves to be agents for energising the culture, possibilities are high that their cultural traditions can be refined.

Considering the fact that the area under investigation is a coloured community, the researcher proposes that they should not shy away from introducing initiation programs into their communities. Introduction of initiation programs will help those children growing in these communities to have a proper channel through which they can ease the anxieties and energies that come with development. As argued in chapter two of this research (cf. footnotes 51 and 59), if a culture does not have proper ways of welcoming children into the world of adulthood, the children will release the energy which comes during development through participation in various negative behaviours like joining and forming gangs and using drugs. Initiation will be of great importance to coloured people because unlike black people, coloureds do not have traditional/cultural values on which they stand. Most black people have been able to build some values in their children because of their strict adherence to their traditional customs and values which motivate black parents to enforce them on their children. It is this adherence to traditional values and customs, which makes black children to think twice before engaging in things that may be seen as improper by those belonging to their cultural group. Without traditional value systems, it will be difficult for communities to instil values in children because as it was argued by Freud (cf. page 28 of this research) every person's identity is influenced by not just his/her past but also traditions of that person's race and the people around him. As the person's identity is being influence by the cultural values and surrounding people, the growing person selects models from those people that had an influence in his life. When this happens, the first people that a person will choose will undoubtedly be those who instilled cultural values into his/her life. In order for these interventions to be of any value to the youth, the Church will have to

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a secluded place (e.g. Church premises or a camp) where they will be given instructions before going back home to join their families. (see Mbiti 1969:121).

make it a point that the task of counselling children be given to Church-based counsellors. These counsellors will have to be people chosen by the church membership in the same way they chose church elders or deacons<sup>159</sup>. Allowing the Church membership to choose the counsellors will be important because it will give the Church members a sense of ownership for the program.

Taking into cognisance that it is difficult to engage in serious and meaningful community programmes without guidelines, the church will have to come up with a comprehensive set of guidelines to be followed by the counsellors in administering their duties.

In addition to having Church based counsellors for the initiation programs; Churches should make initiation of children part of their core teachings. This can be done by incorporating initiation programs in their confirmation curriculum and making the programs compulsory for all youth seeking confirmation as members of respective Churches. The Churches will have to make sure that no child gets confirmed as a Church member unless they have attended initiation programs organised by their Church.

It can be argued that for the initiations to help youth people to abstain from indulging in *tik* use, those organising the Church based initiations should include, in their programs, presentations on the dangers of using *tik* and ways of saying no to the temptation of using the drug.

## **7.2. Conclusion**

In chapter 1 of this research, it was argued that most adolescents living in South Africa are being exposed to methamphetamine, a drug that has immense effects which makes it difficult for one to be rehabilitated once they get addicted to it. It was further argued that, most adolescents are attracted to the drug for a number of reasons. The following were the suggested reasons:

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<sup>159</sup> After the members have nominated candidates for positions of counsellors, the church leadership will have to scrutinise the names before endorsing them. The reason for scrutiny will be to make sure that they have people who are committed Christians with high moral standing and who can command respect in the community.

1. Medication: It is considered as a medication which helps people to lose weight therefore, a lot of girls who look at beauty as being defined by a small body have no choice but to use the drug so that they achieve their desired looks.
2. Cheap cost: The drug is sold at a very cheap price as it is made from home laboratories using chemicals that are easy to get.
3. Peer influence: Some of those using the drug got involved with the drug because of peer influence.

As a way of finding solutions to the problem, the research explored the following issues:

1. Environment in which mid-adolescents are raised: The research discovered that as children are growing, their life is greatly influenced by the environment in which they are raised. In this case, the environment includes how strong their family is, the way the adolescents are interacting with each other and other grownups, the way modern technology affects their choices in life, and the impact of culture on their general well-being.
2. The impact of methamphetamine on the lives of mid-adolescents and how their (mid-adolescents' involvement in it) affects the communities to which the mid-adolescents belong: In the investigation, it was revealed that methamphetamine abuse has led most children into behaviours that are harmful to themselves and those near them. It was also discovered that most mid-adolescents involved in methamphetamine, steal from their families and communities in order to support their habits. Those (mostly girls) who cannot afford to steal from their families and/or neighbours have sometimes gone to the point of having sex with drug lords in exchange for drugs.

The research discovered that communities have tried various efforts like staging marches on suspected drug lords and in some cases collaborated with the police through policing forums, to help stop the flow of drugs in the Cape.

Most of the efforts of the community have bared little fruits because of various reasons ranging from police corruption and the violence, which communities use against suspected drug dealers. This then has resulted in more and more children being involved in the use of the drug.

The research came up with the following as a prevention strategy for combating methamphetamine abuse in Lavender Hill and surrounding communities:

1. Liaising with local communities in healing the social system in which methamphetamine abuse is taking place.
2. Prevention Care and Family enrichment programs.
3. Promoting youth groups as locus for shaping mid-adolescents' behaviours and attitudes/growth and experiential groups.
4. Using the media and modern technologies in disseminating information about the dangers of using methamphetamine.
5. Introducing Church organised initiation ceremonies.

This research attests that the proposed strategies have the potential to help in combating methamphetamine abuse if the Church as a community of believers will remember the mandate given to it by Jesus Christ to be "salt and light of the world". In this line of reasoning, if the Church will live in line with its teaching, it will be able to help the youth living in areas affected by the influx of methamphetamine abuse. If individual Christians will remember that they are created in God's image and therefore have a responsibility, as God's image bearers to protect other God's image bearers; no one will use another for selfish gains but will rather show them love and help them with their needs. This help will be offered by showing a concern for those struggling with methamphetamine and by offering guidance to mid-adolescents who are not yet addicted to the drug. Knowing that there have been unsuccessful attempts to come up with programs aimed at combating methamphetamine abuse. It is suggested that the Church should make it a point that its programs on protecting mid-adolescents from methamphetamine abuse involve families and the youth. If children and their families are part of the programs, the programs will be effective as there will be a sense of ownership for the programs on the part of those on whom the programs are targeted.

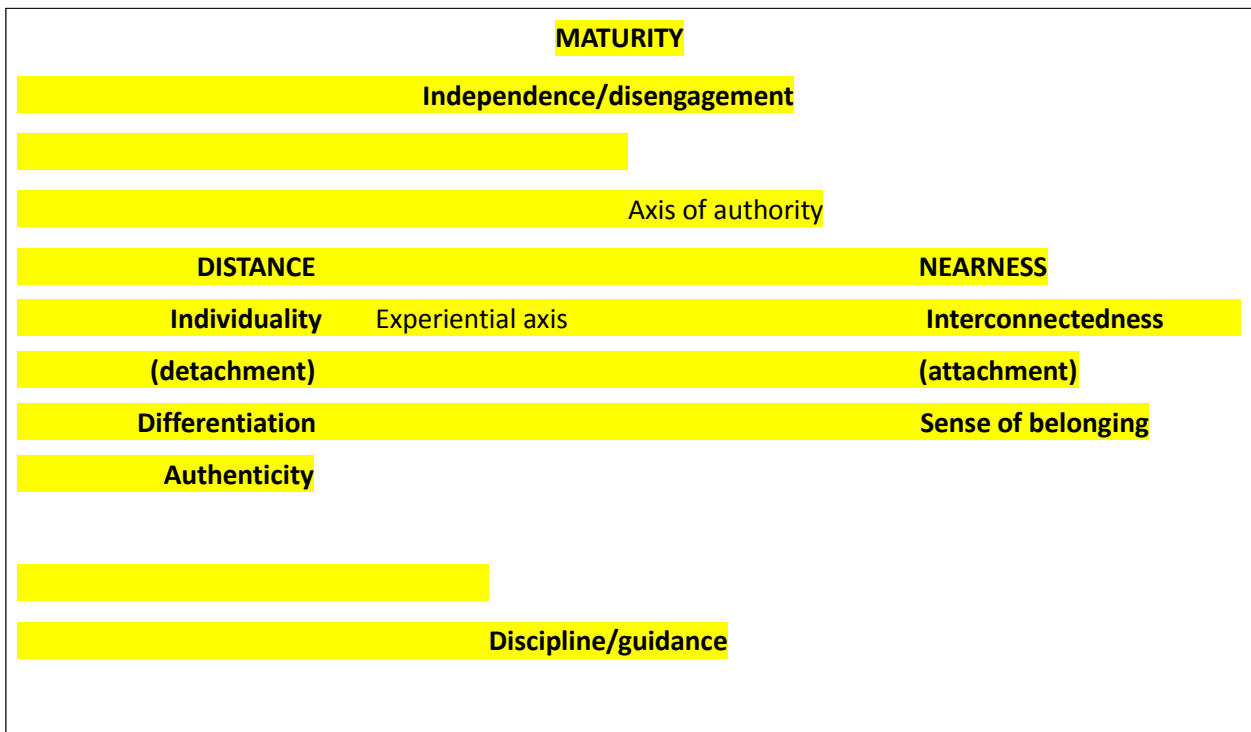
The proposal argued for a change in the way society handles issues of mid-adolescence methamphetamine abuse. The argument was to the point that, instead of helpers treating the results of methamphetamine abuse, they should rather work towards

preventing those that are not yet involved in use of methamphetamine by coming up with programs that will motivate them to stay away from the drug.



## ADDENDUM

### DIAGRAMMATIC OUTLINE OF PATTERNS OF INTERACTION WITHIN A FAMILY SYSTEM



Adopted from Daniël J Louw (2012:117): *Network of the Human Soul: On Identity, Dignity, Maturity and Life Skills*. Stellenbosch: SUN MeDIA

Louw (2012:117) explains that the bottom end of the vertical axis shows authority and functions as guiding components of parenthood. He further argues that without direction and authority of parents the family system becomes “confused, disordered and chaotic” (ibid.). Louw (ibid.) goes on to explain that in the case of family enrichment, authority does not stand for “status or domination” but “an indication of the quality of being-functions”. He postulates that authority in this case aims at “constructive autonomy, individual self-understanding, disengagement and not aggressive control” (Louw 2012:117). Although some may consider discipline as punishment, Louw (ibid.) argues that discipline does not in its strictest sense mean punishment but it is a representation

of “values and norms” aimed at educating and guiding children “towards the development of maturity”. Without values and norms, discipline is nothing but “merely imprisonment and the maintenance of authoritarianism”.

The top end of the vertical axis shows independence which according to Louw (2012:118) stands for freedom and responsibility. This end describes “the possibilities for, and limitations of, selfhood” (ibid.). The primary goal for the top end is “the development of maturity and the disengagement of members in order to make responsible decisions about fundamental life issues” (Louw 2012:118). According to Louw (ibid.) the horizontal axis of the diagram indicates “the bipolarity between attachment (nearness) (the space of interconnectedness and at-homeness; the sense of belonging in terms of cohesion) and detachment (distance) (uniqueness as an indication of identity and authenticity)”.

Louw (2012:118) argues that this kind of program has the ability of helping family members to understand what is meant by being a parent, being a member of family, importance of children in the family, the responsibility of family members toward one another, rules of family relationships and specific tasks designated to each member of the family.

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