EMOTIONAL-SOCIAL COMPETENCIES THAT ENHANCE WELLNESS IN TEACHERS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

MIRNA F VAN WYK

Master's thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Education in Educational Psychology (MEd Psych)

at the

University of Stellenbosch
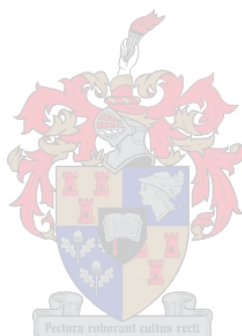
Supervisor: Ms L Collair

December 2006

DECLARATION

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

....

Signature

....

Date

ABSTRACT

Stress has become endemic amongst teachers globally. Although there are common factors that account for the increased levels of stress among teachers, the particular factors involved differ from country to country. South Africa has gone through more than a decade of political and social change. Coping with the extended transitions within the educational system has affected teachers' wellness.

Emotional intelligence or emotionalsocial competencies, the term used in the study, offers a way of viewing the means of primary prevention as a whole, rather as loosely related elements. This offers a practical way of describing the key range of competencies that make it possible to modulate emotions, to solve social problems creatively, to be effective leaders or collaborators, to be assertive and responsible, or to be able to ask evocative and/or social questions that lead to new learning. This study focuses on the need for teachers to develop specific social and coping skills, as well the need for them to have the necessary environmental support, to prevent stress and promote wellness in teachers.

This interpretive study used questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and "a day in the life of" interviews to explore the perceptions of Life Orientation teachers about the emotionalsocial competencies that improve and support their wellness.

The South African teachers surveyed consider that certain emotionalsocial competencies enhance their wellness. In their view, all teachers would benefit from having a toolkit emotionalsocial competencies. They also expressed the need for pre-service teacher education to offer training in these competencies.

OPSOMMING

Die voorkoms van stres toon 'n toenemende nadelige uitwerking op onderwysers wêreldwyd. Tog wissel die oorsake tussen lande. Die politieke en sosiale veranderinge in Suid-Afrika die afgelope dekade, stel nuwe eise en uitdagings aan Suid-Afrikaanse onderwysers. Nie alleen moet hulle hierdie eise die hoof bied nie, maar ook by die oorgang in die opvoedkundige sfeer aanpas. Hierdie opeenhoping van eise en druk affekteer hulle menswees en daaglikse funksionering direk.

Emosionele intelligensie vaardighede of emosioneelsosiale vaardighede, soos dit in hierdie navorsingsprojek genoem sal word, bied nou 'n gekonsentreerde aanslag aan voorsorgmaatreëls ter ondersteuning van onderwysers se totale funksionering. Dit word deesdae gesien as 'n stel praktiese vaardighede wat ons kan help om ons emosies te reguleer, om sosiale probleme kreatief op te los, om effektief leiding en samewerking te bied, om assertief en verantwoordelik op te tree, en om uitdagende en/of sosiale vrae te stel. Emosioneelsosiale vaardighede kan as 'n holistiese struktuur dien vir alle voorkomende strategiee vir positiewe funksionering van onderwysers want dit fokus op spesifieke sosiale en streshanteringvaardighede, en bied ook probleemoplossende vaardighede.

Hierdie interpretiewe navorsing het van vraelyste, semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude en 'n-dag-in-die-lewe-van onderhoude gebruik gemaak om die belewing van hoe emosioneelsosiale vaardighede LWO onderwysers help om meer effektief en omvattend-gesond te funksioneer, te verstaan.

Suid-Afrikaanse onderwysers gebruik sekere emosioneelsosiale vaardighede ter bevording van hulle daaglikse funksionering. Die meeste onderwysers sal moontlik baat vind by sekere emosioneelsosiale vaardighede en die opleiding daarvan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NOTE

I have chosen to use *she* and *her* in this work to simplify writing. The pronouns *he* or *his* will only be used where the gender of the person in question is known.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 5

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

CONTEXTUALISATION AND RELEVANCE OF THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Popular interest in emotional intelligence (EI) has at times tended to obscure *emotional intelligence* (Goleman, Salovey & Mayer), *emotional quotient* (Cooper), and *intra- and interpersonal intelligence* (Gardner) used, but also *emotional-social intelligence* or *emotionalsocial* intelligence (Bar-On) (Zeidner, Matthewes & Roberts, 2004:373). Throughout this research report, I shall refer to the construct popularly known as *emotional intelligence* as **emotionalsocial intelligence (ESI)** and work within the Bar-On model of ESI.

The research project attempts to understand teachers' perceptions of the emotionalsocial competencies that help them in dealing with the pressures of being a teacher.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION FOR STUDY

The South African educational system is in a transitional stage and South African teachers have to cope with constantly changing interpersonal and intrapersonal circumstances (Olivier & Venter, 2003:186).

The first research on the stress teachers experience was done in the 1960s. By the end of the1990s a large body of research had been done. This showed that not only is teaching perceived as stressful, but is actually considered as one of the "high stress" professions (Kyriacou, 2001:28). Research done worldwide indicates that teacher stress is becoming endemic (Jacobsen, Pousette & Hylefors, 2001:8; Tang, 2001:892; Van Dick, Phillips, Marburg & Wagner, 2001:258). Studies done between 1988 and 2000 (Biggs, 1988:44; Patel, 1991:115; Van Wyk, 1998:5; Saptoe, 2000:5) found that South African teachers complained of low morale, illnesses such hypertension, and diabetes before taking early retirement.

The 2004 HSRC and MRC's study into the reasons for attrition amongst South African educators revealed that 55% of teachers intend to leave the educational profession. The study also showed that aspects related to absenteeism and unhealthy days, are low morale at the educational institution, intention to quit teaching, low job satisfaction and high job stress (HSRC & MRC Press Release, 2005:1).

This study attempted to gain an understanding of Life Orientation teachers' perceptions of the emotionalsocial competencies that help them deal with the pressures of teaching. Life Orientation teachers were chosen because they are the teachers mainly concerned with counselling and emotionalsocial training in South African schools. It was hoped that this would contribute to an understanding of the particular occupational well-being of school counselling teachers, a little researched area (Mills & Huebner, 1998:104; Mann, 2004:206).

I have been a teacher myself since1989 and can identify with the tribulations of the profession. I have seen many excellent teachers leave or be dismissed because of stress. Schools need these professionals; every part of the educational structure is weakened by the departure of experienced and highly-skilled teachers.

South Africa can ill-afford an educational corps that has been depleted and demoralised.. South African teachers might benefit from empowerment, enrichment, revitalisation and support so they are in the best position to cope with the enormous educational demands in South Africa.

1.3   ROOTS OF ESI

Many of the early studies focused on describing, defining and assessing socially competent behaviour (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001:16). The first was the work of Edward Thorndike, professor of educational psychology, on *social intelligence* in 1920.

The early definitions of social intelligence influenced the way **EI** was later conceptualised. Contemporary theorists like Peter Salovey and John Mayer originally viewed EI as part of social intelligence (Bar-On, 2005:1).

Reuven Bar-On developed perhaps the first attempt to assess EI in terms of well-being in 1988. Bar-On now defines EI in terms of **ESI,** which is composed of a

number of intrapersonal and interpersonal competencies, skills and facilitators that combine to effectively cope with environmental demands. The five domains in Bar-On's model are intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management and general mood (Bar-On, 2005:26).

For a number of years, Bar-On has referred to this construct as "emotional and social intelligence" which he has recently abbreviated to "emotional-social intelligence" or even "emotionalsocial intelligence" (Bar-On, 2005:2).

Finally in 1990, Peter Salovey and John Mayer published an article "Emotional Intelligence," the most influential statement of EI theory in its current form. The original model has been adapted over the years and their current model is predominantly cognitive in focus.

In this model, ESI comprises four tiers of abilities that range from basic psychological processes to more complex processes integrating emotion and cognition (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001:17).

In 1995, William Goleman, then a science journalist, published the book *Emotional Intelligence,* which popularised ESI globally as a construct (Bar-On, 2005:1). Although it was primarily based on Mayer and Salovey's research, it differed greatly in construct from theirs.

Since the time of Thorndike, a number of different conceptualisations of ESI have appeared which have created an interesting mixture of confusion, controversy and opportunity regarding the best approach to defining and measuring this construct. In an effort to help clarify this situation, the *Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology* (Spielberger, 2004) recently suggested that there are currently three major conceptual models:

(a)   the **Salovey-Mayer model** (2001) which defines this construct as the ability to perceive, understand, manage and use emotions to facilitate thinking, measured by an ability-based measure,

(b)   the **Goleman model** (1998) which views this construct as a wide array of competencies and skills that drive managerial performance, measured by multi-rater assessment and

(c)   the **Bar-On model** which describes a cross-section of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilitators that impact intelligent behaviour, measured by self-report within a potentially expandable multi-modal approach including interview and multi-rater assessment (Bar-On, 2005:2).

Since the 1980s teachers and policy makers have found ESI a catalyst during thinking and planning processes. According to Goleman (in Salovey & Sluyter, 1997:xv) it offers a unified way of looking at the means of primary prevention as a whole rather than as only loosely related elements. It is now seen as a practical way of thinking about a key range of skills that make people not just employable but distinguishes highly effective performers from mediocre ones.

1.4   RESEARCH PROBLEM

Differences in what teachers perceive to be stressors are due to a unique interplay between their personality, values, skills and circumstances. Success in coping with these pressures and so maintaining wellness depends in part on the different competencies teachers possess (Kyriacou, 2001:29).

The research project attempted firstly to understand teachers' perceptions of the emotionalsocial competencies that help them to deal with the pressures of teaching.

Secondly, it attempted to understand what teachers perceive to be pressures in their lives and the possible support systems that help them cope better and so enhance wellness.

The research sample of Life Orientation teachers was chosen because no research had yet been done on the particular emotionalsocial pressures, needs and competencies of Life Orientation teachers.

1.5   RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question for the study is:

What emotionalsocial competencies do teachers perceive to help them deal with the pressures of teaching?

1.6   RESEARCH PARADIGM

I believe that the reality of teachers' experience of their emotionalsocial competencies is a subjective reflection of their external and internal worlds. The constructs of their experienced realities are therefore meaningful and valid.

Qualitative research seemed most appropriate for the study of this particular phenomenon. Qualitative research is naturalistic, holistic and inductive in nature. It studies real-life situations as they naturally unfold, and the phenomenon is understood as a complex system with subtle interplays.

Such a study begins by exploring genuinely open questions, and the researcher collects data through an immersion into the detailed accounts of the unit of analysis (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:43).

This study is situated with the interpretive paradigm. The interpretive paradigm is characterised by a particular ontology, epistemology and methodology. The interpretive paradigm assumes that people's subjective experiences are real and should be taken seriously (ontology), that we can understand other's experiences by interacting with them and listening to what they tell us (epistemology) and that qualitative research techniques are best suited to this task (methodology) (Terre Blanche & Kelly, in Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:123).
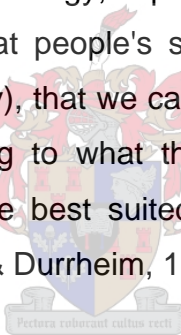
1.7   RESEARCH DESIGN

1.7.1 Type of research

The study undertaken is a basic interpretive study that explores the personal construct of a group of Life Orientation teachers of how their emotionalsocial competencies contribute to their wellness. The study will focus on the influence of their emotionalsocial competencies, the pressures they experience and possible sources of support in the maintenance of their wellness.

1.7.2 Data collection methods

A combination of methods, such as a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, and "a day in the life of" interviews were used to gather data.

1.7.2.1   Literature study

The literature study provided the theoretical basis for the research and guided the research process. The research questions arose out of the gaps in information in the literature. There are a number of conflicting constructs and claims about ESI. It took a great deal of reading, sifting and contemplation to clarify my own understanding and position within the realm of what is understood as ESI.

1.7.2.2   Questionnaire

The data from the questionnaire that was constructed were used qualitatively rather than quantitatively. The questionnaire consisted of questions designed to provide an insight into the teachers' perceptions of their own emotionalsocial management. There are also questions to gain an understanding of the teachers' acquisition and need for certain emotionalsocial competencies. The questionnaire also provided information on the teachers' self-reported general health and demographic information.

1.7.2.3   Semi-structured interviews

A semi-structured interview was conducted with each of the eight participants who had indicated that they would not mind participating. A semi-structured interview guide comprising of six questions (see Appendix A) was used to guide the interview. The opening question was that they should narrate a "typical day in their teaching lives". Mamphela Ramphele used "a day in the life of" account in her study about the influence that living environment has on migrant labourers (in Babbie & Mouton, 1998:305). She found that it was a non-threatening way to gain insight into the meaning people have constructed about their existence and their experiences.

I listened carefully to their accounts and, where necessary, asked clarifying questions about their experiences during a day of teaching. I also asked about their emotionalsocial competencies and strategies that helped them through such a day. If necessary I also asked questions related to their questionnaire responses.

1.7.3   Research population and sample

The research sample was drawn from Life Orientation teachers in schools in and around a small rural town about 50 km from Cape Town. The population for the

study comprised of the teachers from seven high schools in and around this small rural town.

The sample of Life Orientation teachers was drawn from this population and represents a convenience sample. In other words, the initial participants were selected because they were readily available (Mertens, 1998:265). The final sample was a purposive sample because only those participants that agreed to interviews were included.

1.7.4 Research instrument

The researcher was the main research instrument as the research took the form of a qualitative study.

1.7.5 Data analysis

Data from the interviews and documents were analysed on an ongoing basis using content analysis. The themes derived from observations and the literature became the unit of analysis.

1.8   DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.8.1 Emotionalsocial Intelligence (ESI)

The definition of ESI given here is that of Reuven Bar-On.

From Darwin to the present, most descriptions, definitions and conceptualisations of ESI have included one or more of the following key components:

(i)   The ability to recognise, understand and express emotions and feelings;

(ii)   The ability to understand how others feel and relate with them;

(iii)   The ability to manage and control emotions;

(iv)   The ability to manage change, adapt and solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature; and

(v)   The ability to generate positive affect and be self-motivated (Bar-On, 2005:3).

Bar-On ESI is thus a cross section of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilitators that determines how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand others and relate with them, and cope with daily demands (Bar-On, 2005:3). This construct is elaborated on in Chapter Two.

1.8.2 Emotionalsocial competency

Goleman and Mayer, Salovey and Caruso have agreed that by itself ESI probably is not a strong predictor of job performance. However, it provides the bedrock for **competencies** that are. For instance, the ability to recognize accurately what another person is feeling enables one to develop a specific competency such as being able to influence others. Similarly, people who are better able to regulate their emotions will find it easier to develop a competency such as being able to use one's initiative or achievement drive. Goleman has tried to represent this idea by making a distinction between ESI and emotionalsocial competence (Cherniss, 2000:3).

According to Mayer and Salovey (1997:15) so-called Social Emotional Learning and other competency training is more focused on the educational environment, whereas ESI as a concept is more focused on psychological aptitude. Emotionalsocial competence refers to the personal and social skills that lead to superior performance in the world of work. The emotionalsocial competencies are linked to and based on ESI, while a certain level of ESI is necessary to learn the emotional competencies (Cherniss, 2000:3).

Emotionalsocial competence is defined as the demonstration of self-efficacy in emotion-eliciting social transactions (Saarni in Salovey & Sluyter, 1997:38). In simple terms it suggests that emotionalsocial competence is evident when a person can display an emotional response which simultaneously and strategically also utilises knowledge about emotions and their emotional expressiveness to relationships with others.

Emotionalsocial competencies that allow us to modulate emotions, to solve social problems creatively, to be effective leaders or collaborators, to be assertive and responsible, or to be able to ask evocative and/or social questions that lead to new learning, are described by Elias, Bruene-Butler, Blum and Scuyler (2000 in Cohen, 1999:11) as necessary emotionalsocial competencies in an educational setting.

1.8.3 Life orientation teachers

The Life Orientation learning area consists of two components: Life Skills and Physical Training. In some schools one teacher is responsible for both these areas. In others schools one teacher is responsible for the Physical Training component and others teach Life skills.

In my research sample, two of the participants were purely responsible for Physical training. Six participants were responsible for both Religious study and Life skills, and one teacher was responsible for both areas of the Life Orientation learning area. Four of the teachers were subject heads of Life Orientation.

Traditionally Life Orientation teachers are also responsible for career development of learners. This often includes administrative and organisational responsibilities, especially when being the subject head.

In many schools LO teachers also perform, formally or informally the roles of counsellors to learners.

1.8.4 Wellness

The concept of wellness incorporates both a concern to optimise human behaviour and functioning and to integrate body, mind, and spirit as part of this process. Wellness implies a holistic approach to the enhancement of a person's quality of life.

Archer, Probert and Gage (1987, in Myers & Williard, 2003:145) define wellness as "the process and state of a quest for maximum human functioning that involves the body, mind, and spirit." More recently, Myers and Willard (2003:146) have defined wellness as:

> [A] way of life oriented toward optimal health and well-being in which body, mind, and spirit are integrated enabling the individual to live life more fully within the human and natural community. Ideally, it is the optimum state of health and well-being that each individual is capable of achieving.

1.9   STRUCTURE OF PRESENTATION

CHAPTER 1 briefly elucidates the purpose of the study, research problem and design and the theoretical framework, defines certain terms, and outlines the research undertaken.

CHAPTER 2 deals with a theoretical exposition of the meaning and value of ESI. Major criticism against some aspects of the construct and the work of some of its chief proponents are described. The link between EI and education and the possible significance of the role of ESI in education and life success are also explored.

CHAPTER 3 outlines the research design and methodology used for this research and documents the fieldwork.

CHAPTER 4 presents the results of this study and discusses the outcomes.

CHAPTER 5 provides a summary of the findings and suggests recommendations for future teacher education.

1.10 SUMMARY

This chapter contextualised the reasons for undertaking the study and provides a condensed history of the origins of ESI or emotionalsocial competencies, as I prefer to call it. In addition, the chapter briefly describes the major conceptual models in the study of emotionalsocial competencies. The research questions, aim of the study and the methods used were explained and the central concepts were defined.
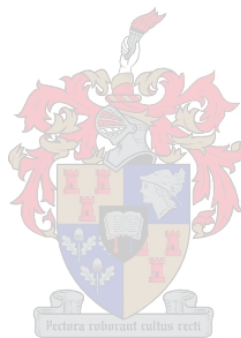
CHAPTER 2

A THEORETICAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF EMOTIONALSOCIAL INTELLIGENCE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

2.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the relevant literature on ESI. Its purpose is to provide a critical review of the available research on the construct of ESI and an in-depth understanding of this concept. The possible significance of emotionalsocial competencies in education will also be investigated.

2.2   BACKGROUND OF ESI

ESI has become a major topic of interest in scientific circles as well as among the lay public since the publication of the bestseller, *Emotional Intelligence*, by scientific journalist Daniel Goleman, in 1995. The actual construct, whose earliest beginnings can be traced to the nineteenth century, was the object of study for most of the twentieth century. In the last decade, however, interest has intensified.

In what follows, the discussion of Goleman's contribution and the popularisation of ESI will be preceded by a short summary of the development of ESI.

According to Bar-On (2005:1), publications began appearing in the twentieth century with the work of Edward Thorndike on social intelligence in 1920. Many of these early studies focused on describing, defining and assessing socially competent behaviour.

Bar-On (2005:1) suggests that Thorndike and others possibly influenced David Wechsler to include two subscales ("Comprehension" and "Picture Arrangement") in his well-known test of cognitive intelligence that seems designed to measure aspects of social intelligence. In the first of a number of publications in 1943, Wechsler argued that our models of intelligence will not be complete until we can adequately describe these social factors influencing intelligence. In 1952, during the ongoing

development of his widely used IQ test, Wechsler accepted "affective capacities", as part of the human repertoire of capabilities.

Scholars then began to shift their attention from describing and assessing social intelligence to understanding the purpose of interpersonal behaviour, and the role it plays in effective adaptability. This line of research helped define human effectiveness from the social perspective in addition to strengthening a very important aspect of Wechsler's definition of general intelligence: "*The capacity of the individual to act purposefully".* In addition, this helped to establish social intelligence as part of general intelligence.

The early definitions of social intelligence influenced the way *EI* was later conceptualised. Contemporary theorists like Peter Salovey and John Mayer originally viewed EI as part of social intelligence, which suggests that both concepts are related and may, in all likelihood, represent interrelated components of the same construct.

The literature reveals various attempts to combine the emotional and social components of this construct. For example, Howard Gardner's influential model of multiple intelligences which he presented in 1983 includes two varieties of *personal intelligences, intrapersonal* (emotional) *intelligence* and *interpersonal* (social) *intelligence.*
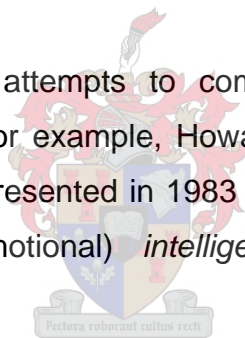
In the period from 1970 to 1989, the previously separate fields of intelligence and emotion were integrated in the field of "cognition and affect". Certain researchers occasionally used the term EI but gave no clear explanation of what they were referring to. Other researchers gave fairly clear descriptions of what today is understood to be emotional intelligence, but they did not define the concept (Mayer, 2001). Reuven Bar-On developed perhaps the first attempt to assess ESI in terms of well-being. He used the term emotional quotient (EQ) in his doctoral thesis (Bar-On, 1988), long before Salovey and Mayer had published their first model of ESI. Bar-On used this model to assess ESI in terms of a measure of emotional well-being (Bar-On, 1988).

Two models of ESI thus developed. The first, the so-called **ability model**, defines ESI as a set of abilities and makes claims about the importance of emotional information and the potential uses of reasoning well with that information. The

leaders in this model of thought are Salovey, Mayer, Caruso and Cobb (Cobb & Mayer, 2000:14-15; Landy, 2005:412).

The second, which is referred to as the **mixed model**, mixes ESI as an ability with social competencies, traits, and behaviours. Daniel Goleman and Reuven Bar-On are the champions of this approach.

The article entitled 'Emotional Intelligence' in 1990 is widely viewed as the first influential exposition of ESI theory (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2000; Goleman, 2001). In this article Salovey and Mayer describe ESI as "the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action".

The period 1994-1997 marked the sudden popularisation and a dramatic rise in interest in ESI. The book by Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, in which he used a fair amount of the research that had been done by scientists like Salovey, Mayer and others, was presented to the public in a format that was interesting and easy to read. Unfortunately, a number of the extraordinary claims made by Goleman about ESI, which played a major role in popularising the concept, are now seriously questioned by other researchers (Hedlund & Sternberg, 2000; Matthews, Zeidner & Roberts, 2002; Conte, 2005; Locke, 2005). A number of definitions of ESI were developed at about the same time. The conflicting notions in some of the definitions confuse those new to this field of study (Mayer, 2001; Landy, 2005:412).

In the period from 1998 to the present, a great deal of research has taken place to refine the existing body of knowledge in this field (Mayer, 2001). The contrasting and conflicting statements made by different researchers are typical of the development in a new field of study. The expectation is that over the next few years a lot of time and effort will be expended to clarify the existing ambiguities.

2.3   THE PRESSURES OF TEACHING

The South African educational system is in a transitional stage and teachers have to cope with ever-changing inter- and intrapersonal challenges (Olivier & Venter, 2003:186). Lack of discipline, high pupil-teacher ratios and a new approach to the curriculum have all increased the pressures on teachers (Saptoe, 2000:6). According to Saptoe, the new educational approach of Outcomes-based Education (OBE) that

is being implemented gradually with the aim of transforming all school education from R to grade 12 is adding to the burden. He adds that inconsistency of education department policy and guidelines, lack of support from education departments and corruption in state departments are also major concerns of South African teachers. And last but not least, the high crime rate has also increased the level of stress amongst South African teachers.

The 2004 HSRC and MRC's study into the reasons for wear and tear amongst South African teachers showed that 55% of teachers surveyed intended to leave teaching. The study also showed that the aspects which are related to absenteeism and illness, are low morale at the educational institution, intention to quit teaching, low job satisfaction and high job stress (HSRC & MRC Press Release, 2005:1).

The HSCR study indicates that teachers' intention to leave, mainly concern problems with teaching methods and administration and, to a lesser extent, problems with the education system.

Crute (2004:24) reports that the huge amount of research that was done on teachers' stress since the 60s shows that teachers face unique circumstances. The often unmanageable combination of overcrowded classrooms, the pressure to do ongoing assessment, paperwork, anxious parents and the behaviour of unruly and challenging learners has placed teachers' wellness at very great risk. She adds that the fact that many teachers do not know when – or how – to stop and refuel exacerbates the problem. It is linked closely to the fact that many teachers see their work as a vocation and are highly committed (at a cost to self) to their work. She warns that if teachers do not strengthen themselves by adopting positive lifestyles and healthy strategies, their wellness will suffer.

Taylor (in Crute, 2004:35) warns that women are especially vulnerable to stress in teaching because they wear three hats – that of mother, wife and professional. These pressures and expectations place almost unbearable strain on some female teachers.

Research done worldwide indicates that teacher stress is becoming endemic, and is seen as the main factor contributing to job dissatisfaction, job-related illness and early retirement in England (Van Dick, Phillips, Marburg & Wagner, 2001:258). A study by Tang (2001:892) indicates that the inadequate self-efficacy and negative

attitude of Chinese teachers contributes to burn-out and is negatively linked to their mental health. Work demands, pupil misbehaviour and negative feedback are the main contributors to teacher stress in Sweden (Jacobsen, Pousette & Thylefors, 2001:8).

Studies done between 1988 and 2000 (Biggs, 1988:44; Van Wyk, 1998:5; Saptoe, 2000:5) found that South African teachers complain of low morale, illnesses such hypertension, diabetes, and take early retirement. Van Wyk (1998:5) found that teachers claim more regularly from medical insurance than persons in other professions, have a four-year shorter life expectancy than the national average and often blame stress as reason for needing sick leave from school.

It seems that people under-perform in stressful situations. Maree and Eiselen (2004:499) found that some highly capable people display impaired levels of self-confidence as well as feelings of inferiority when faced with drastic life-changing circumstances. Such people obtained low scores for impulse-control on Bar-On's EQ-i^{TM}. Destructive thoughts, low morale and hampered actualisation of intellectual potential may even have a negative effect on the well-being of such people (Maree & Eiselen, 2004:500-501).

This study will attempt to gain an understanding of Life Orientation teachers' perceptions of the emotionalsocial competencies that help them in dealing with the pressures of teaching. There is a dearth of research concerning the occupational well-being of school counselling teachers (Mills & Huebner, 1998:104; Mann, 2004:206) or as they are better know in South Africa, Life Orientation teachers. Life Orientation teachers are mainly responsible for counselling and emotionalsocial training (also called Life Skills Training) in South African schools.

Biggs (1988:44) shows that persons in the support professions are particularly prone to stress, because of their idealistic goals. Sandi Mann (2004:214) reports that counselling staff within the helping professions have triple burdens to carry. Firstly they interact with others mainly at level of high emotional intensity for long periods of time. Secondly they may usually not show their negative emotions. These factors lead to a feeling of emotional labour which saps their ability to function. Lastly, when these counselling staff are confronted with the distractions of their own personal lives or feel ill or fatigued, they often experience feelings of dissonance. This sense of

emotional labour often seems to affect their self-esteem, self-efficacy and wellness. Mills and Huebner (1998:115) found that school counselling staff who are at the point of burnout often display introverted behaviours (withdrawn, passive, reserved reactions) or disagreeable responses (e.g. uncooperative, irritable, suspicious behaviours). For example, members of the school counselling staff who are emotionally exhausted may become less effective at managing their daily job demand and fall behind on their caseloads and associated work. In turn, this backlog may facilitate increased feelings of emotional exhaustion (Mills & Huebner, 1998:103).

Studies reporting sources of teacher stress indicate that the main sources of stress facing teachers are:

- Teaching pupils who lack motivation

- Maintaining discipline

- Time pressures and workload

- Coping with change

- Being evaluated by others

- Dealing with colleagues

- Self-esteem and status

- Administration and management

- Role conflict and ambiguity

- Poor working conditions (Kyriacou, 2001:29).

However, Kyriacou warns that it is important not to generalise: the main source of stress will be peculiar to the particular teacher.

Huberman (in Kyriacou, 2001:29) reports that amongst the most common motives cited for leaving teaching were fatigue, nervous tension, frustration, wear and tear, difficulties in adapting, personal fragility and interruption in routine. There is a high correlation between these findings and those of the HSCR study into reasons for attrition amongst South African teachers (HSRC & MRC Press Release, 2005:5).

In South Africa 1 100 teachers were absent in 2003 due to stress or depression (Merton, 2004:6). Following international trends, The Western Cape Education Department responded by implementing a toll-free counselling phone line for teachers who are having trouble coping. The Western Cape Minister of Education, Cameron Dugmore, cited the rapid change in the South African educational system and the working conditions of teachers as the reason for this supportive intervention (Merton, 2004:6).

2.4   DEFINITIONS OF ESI

2.4.1 Mayer, Caruso and Salovey's definition of ESI

According to the ability theory of Mayer, Caruso and Salovey, ESI comprises of four tiers of abilities namely:

- The ability to perceive and express emotions accurately

- The ability to use emotions to facilitate thought

- The ability to understand emotions and meanings

- The ability to manage emotions (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2000:99).

2.4.2 Goleman's definition of ESI

Goleman (1998:317) views ESI as: "The capacity for recognising our own feeling and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships". The ESI of any person is a measure of the person's self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills.

2.4.3 Bar-On's definition of ESI

Bar-On (2005:3) describes emotionalsocial intelligence as follows:

1. The ability to be aware of, to understand, and to express oneself

2. The ability to be aware of, to understand, and to relate to others

3. The ability to deal with strong emotions and control one's impulses

4. The ability to adapt to change and to solve problems of a personal or social nature

5. General mood that reflects optimism and happiness.

To be emotionalsocial intelligent is to effectively understand and express oneself, to understand and relate well with others, and to successfully cope with daily demands, challenges and pressures. This is based, first and foremost, on one's intrapersonal ability to be aware of oneself, to understand one's strengths and weaknesses, and to express one's feelings and thoughts non-destructively. On the interpersonal level, being emotionally and socially intelligent encompasses the ability to be aware of other's emotions, feelings and needs, and to establish and maintain cooperative, constructive and mutually satisfying relationships. Ultimately, being emotionally and socially intelligent means to manage personal, social and environmental change effectively by realistically and flexibly coping with the immediate situation, solving problems and making decisions. To do this, we need to manage emotions so that they work for us and not against us, and we need to be sufficiently optimistic, positive and self-motivated.

2.5   ESI AS VIEWED BY BAR-ON

According to Bar-On ESI is "a multifactorial array of interrelated emotional, personal, and social abilities that help us cope with daily demands" (Bar-On, 2001:87). The Bar-On model of emotional and social intelligence consists of 10 factorial abilities, and 5 facilitators of ESI which are grouped into the following categories as shown in Figure 2.1:
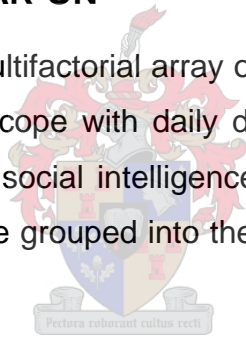
➲ **Intrapersonal skills**

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

- *Self-regard*: The ability to accurately perceive and appraise ourselves

- *Assertiveness*: The ability to constructively express our emotions and ourselves

- *Independence*: The ability to be self-reliant and free of emotional dependency on others (facilitator)

- *Self-actualisation*: The ability and drive to achieve goals and actualise our potential (facilitator).

➲ **Interpersonal skills**

- *Empathy*: The ability to be aware of and understand others' emotions

- *Social responsibility*: The ability to identify with and feel part of our social group (facilitator)

- *Interpersonal relationship*: *The* ability to relate well with others.

➲ **Adaptability skills**

- *Reality testing*: The ability to objectively validate our feelings and thoughts

- *Flexibility*: The ability to adapt and adjust our feelings and thoughts to new situations

- *Problem-solving*: The ability to solve our personal and interpersonal problems.

➲ **Stress management skills**

- *Stress tolerance*: The ability to effectively manage our emotions

- *Impulse control*: The ability to control our emotions.

➲ **Motivational skills (facilitators)**

- *Optimism*: The ability to be positive and to be at the brighter side of life

- *Happiness*: The ability to feel content with ourselves, others, and life in general (Dann, 2001:11).

Bar-On proposes that if one develops one's ESI skills on the lines of the flow chart, (see Figure 2.1) then one will be more successful in life than another person with a similar IQ to oneself (Dann, 2001:11).

FIGURE 2.1: Reuven Bar-On EI Model
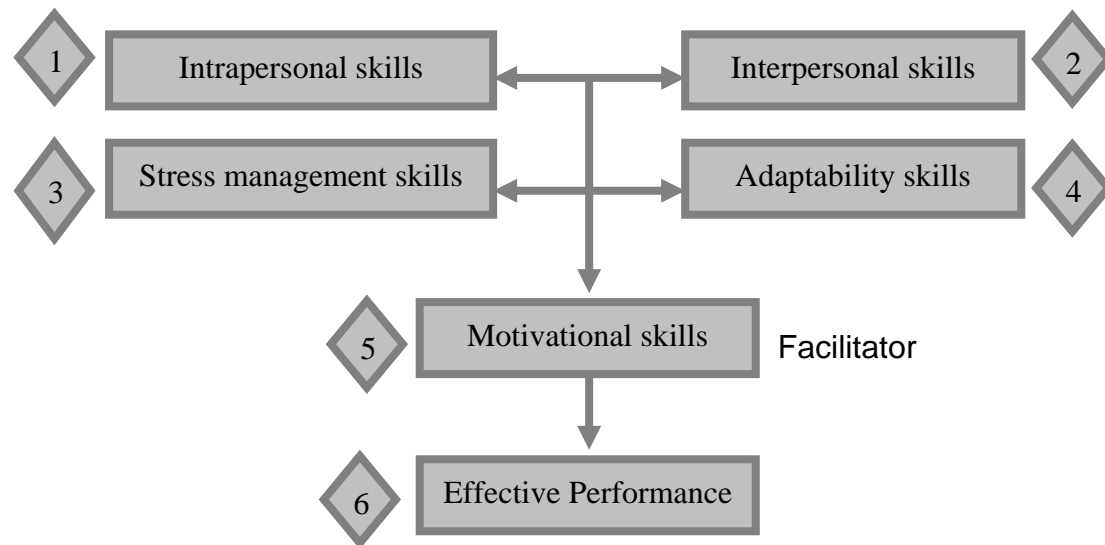
Source: Dann (2001:11)

The following section will include an elaboration of each of the above-mentioned ESI skills.

2.6   INTRAPERSONAL REALM

The importance of high intrapersonal competence is obvious in the statement made by Bar-On (in Ciarrochi *et al*., 2001:85) that interpersonal competence is directly dependent on intrapersonal intelligence. This means that our ability to understand others and to relate to them depends on our ability to understand and express our own emotions. A combination of both our intrapersonal and interpersonal competencies makes it possible for us to deal with everyday life. The better these components are developed, the greater our chance will be to succeed in life.

According to Bar-On's model, intrapersonal ESI can be divided into five *categories, namely: emotional self-awareness, self-regard, assertiveness, independence and self-actualisation.* The purpose of the next section is to give a brief explanation of each category, indicate the advantages of each and also ways of improving one's competence in the category.

2.6.1   Emotional self-awareness

Whilst there are differences in the way ESI is defined relating to the particular model or mode of measurement, there is general consensus that self-awareness is the cornerstone of ESI (Slaski & Cartwright, 2003:235).

People with strong emotional self-awareness are realistic as well as honest with themselves or others about their abilities. Emotional self-awareness refers to the ability to be aware of, recognise, and understand one's emotions.

Emotional self-awareness is a skill fundamental to many of the key features of ESI, including impulse control, self-motivation, empathy and interpersonal relations (Lane in Bar-On & Parker, 2000:186). Only after having developed the skills of self-awareness can one develop other ESI skills.

According to Stein and Book (2000:246) who in their publications elucidate the academic work of especially Bar-On, teachers with top ranking during the evaluation scored consistently highest in this competency. Self-awareness is the first step to effective self-management and staying motivated in a taxing profession. Teachers who can reflect on emotions evoked during daily interactions with others are more likely to respond after reflection than to react on the spur of the moment (Zins, Travis & Freppon in Salovey & Sluyter, 1997:260). Once again it is important to note that emotional self-awareness refers to becoming aware of one's emotions, recognising and understanding these emotions.

2.6.1.1   Awareness of emotions

According to the popular South African work of Le Roux and De Klerk (2001:18), the first step in emotional self-awareness is becoming aware that we are experiencing an emotion or a combination of emotions. Here the definition of 'emotion' is "an internal physical reaction to something you experience (a stimulus)"

The stimulus could either be a perception by the senses or a thought that is generated by the person. Feelings can be generated consciously, but in most cases are generated unconsciously. In some cases, people are totally unaware that they are experiencing emotions, even though they experience the physical sensations that accompany these emotions. This condition is called somatisation. In other cases, due to previous traumatic experiences, some people learn to block out

emotions (McBride & Maitland, 2002:23). Alexithymia is the term used to describe the inability to recognise, understand and describe emotions (Bar-On, 2005:1).

Being aware that one is experiencing emotions, allows one the opportunity to identify and understand those emotions.

2.6.1.2   Identification of emotions

The emotion that is being experienced has to be identified and labelled as falling into one of the following basic categories: joy, anger, sadness or fear; or any other secondary emotion which would develop into one of these four primary emotions. Identification of emotions also refers to the ability to determine the intensity of a specific emotion or combination of emotions. Stein and Book (2000:55) suggest that few people are aware of what emotions they are experiencing and even those people are not aware of the intensity of these emotions. Depending on the emotion and the intensity of the emotion, certain physical symptoms are experienced in the body. If one is able to correlate certain physical symptoms with specific emotions, one would be able to predict the feelings one is about to experience and proactively make decisions on the appropriate behaviour (Le Roux & De Klerk, 2001:21).

2.6.1.3   Understanding emotions

An individual with a high sense of self-awareness understands what the causes of her/his emotions are, and what behaviour usually results from that emotion.

The limbic portion of the brain automatically generates emotions based on the stimuli it receives. McBride and Maitland (2002:18) postulate that the evaluation of a stimulus by the limbic system is based on the sum of all the previous emotional experiences of the individual. The strength of a previous emotional experience will determine the influence it has on the generation of future emotions.

Current events are thus evaluated on the sum of all previous emotional experiences. Le Roux and De Klerk (2001:21) suggest that if one understands which previous situations have given rise to certain emotions, one can take steps to avoid the situations or prepare to handle these situations more effectively.

According to Slaski and Cartwright (2003:235), through increased self-awareness, individuals are more able to detach themselves from events and regulate their

emotions in order to prevent them from becoming 'immersed in' and 'carried away' by their emotional reaction.

Understanding the effect of one's emotional state on one's own and others' behaviour enables one to avoid situations that could lead to alienation of others. Emotional self-awareness is the first step in modifying our otherwise alienating behaviours.

2.6.1.4 *The utility of negative emotions*

ESI competence training should never attempt to deny negative emotions in order to accomplish a type of 'nirvana'; it should rather aim at recognising and regulating such emotions to the benefit of the individual.

Parrott (in Barrett & Salovey, 2002:356) explains that negative feelings should not be suppressed or ignored, as they fulfil a vital function of protecting and propelling the human psyche. He argues firstly that some negative emotions warn and thus protect people against threat. Secondly, by managing the type, intensity and enactment of one's emotions one can regulate them so they become beneficial. Thus ESI involves perceiving the emotion accurately, using the emotion consciously to steer thinking in a beneficial manner, knowing how to manage emotion and fourthly, being able to adjust one's emotional intensity to achieve an intended goal.
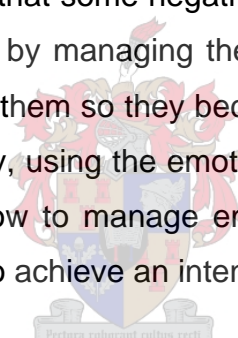
2.6.2 Assertiveness

One is behaving assertively if one communicates one's feelings, thoughts and beliefs clearly and honestly in a manner that is still respecting the needs and integrity of others. The ESI South African writers Le Roux and De Klerk (2001:79) state that "self-assertiveness means to have self-confidence about what you want and to be able to communicate this effectively". Assertiveness involves showing respect for both one's own needs and those of others (Gowing, 2001:116). Assertiveness further implies that one has to have certain boundaries, which have to be communicated effectively through language and actions. These boundaries indicate the kind of behaviour that would be acceptable to one, as well as what kind of behaviour one is prepared to express. According to Stephen Covey (1989:316), these boundaries should be based on one's most inner values and beliefs and be stable (not change from one situation to another).

Certain other emotional factors in ESI have an influence on assertiveness and in some cases improvement of assertiveness leads to the improvement of other emotional intelligence competencies.

- Self-awareness is needed for the process of becoming self-assertive. Firstly, this enables one to recognise feelings before they are expressed. Secondly, one has to be aware of situations where other people assert themselves and alert to ways in which one can assert oneself.

- Sufficient impulse control is needed to express negative feelings like disapproval or anger with the appropriate intensity.

- Assertiveness and self-regard are influenced by one another. High self-regard enables one to assert oneself and as increased ability to assert oneself leads to increased self-regard.

- Empathy – to know and understand that one's needs and views are different from those of others – is essential for assertive behaviour. Being self-assertive means one also respects the right of others to assert themselves. The moment one expresses one's feelings without having regard for the feelings of others, behaviour changes from being assertive to aggression (Le Roux & De Klerk, 2001:79).

Assertiveness should not be confused with aggressive behaviour. In the process of being assertive, one communicates one's position taking into consideration the views of others and then working towards a compromise or win-win situation. Aggressive behaviour leaves no room for compromise (Stein & Book, 2000:70).

2.6.2.1 Reasons for not acting assertively

Some of the reasons for people's inability to act assertively are fear of reprisals from people in authority, the need to please others, low self-esteem and lack of confidence (McBride & Maitland, 2002:182). Teachers with little experience report that it is difficult to act assertively towards learners, colleagues and parents at the beginning of their careers (Cherniss, 1995:139).

2.6.2.2 Advantages of assertiveness

Assertiveness leads to success in achieving one's goals because one has the ability to articulate these goals clearly and unambiguously to those involved, yet taking their

position into consideration. Passive people who are not able to voice their wishes or who back down as soon as they are questioned may feel unhappy and defeated.

Assertive behaviour in unpleasant or uneasy situations allows both parties to still feel respected and accepted, whereas aggressive or passive behaviour always leaves one person feeling violated. Some of the people who express passive-aggressive behaviour are subservient most of the time with fairly irregular intermittent bursts of aggression (times when they have had enough). This kind of behaviour leads to problems such as anger being expressed inappropriately or even worse, anger being directed at the wrong person at the wrong time (Stein & Book, 2001:77).

If the advantages of acting assertively are taken into account and also the influence assertiveness has on improving other ESI competencies, it becomes clear that improving one's ability to be assertive may lead to a remarkable increase in personal well-being.

2.6.3 Independence

Independence is the ability to be self-directed and self-reliant in one's thinking and actions and to be free of emotional dependency (Vermeulen, 1999:166). This could be interpreted that true independence of character empowers us to act rather than be acted upon (Covey, 1989:76).

Emotional dependence on others leads to indecision. Independence means that one has to have one's own set of values or a paradigm from which one makes decisions (Covey, 1989:35). Independent people consult others to get their opinion or to collect as much information before making a decision, but they make their own decisions and take the responsibility for those decisions. Self-confidence and self-regard are prerequisites for independence. People who lack self-confidence depend on others to make decisions because they are always afraid of making mistakes. Independent people know that making mistakes is a natural consequence of independent thinking. One has to know one's abilities and have confidence in those abilities to pursue one's goals (Vermeulen, 1999:166-173).

New teachers, who have weathered the initial storms of teaching, find the experience of being in an executive position in their own class exhilarating. They find it empowering to be able to be in control in their classes, lesson content and

presentation. Cherniss (1995:139) found this sense of independence is a critical factor in combating burnout in teachers.

2.6.4 Self-regard

Bar-On (1988) defines self-regard as the ability to view oneself as basically good and to be able to respect, accept and feel confident about oneself. According to this definition self-regard is dependent on self-acceptance and self-confidence.

Self-acceptance refers to the ability to accept oneself exactly as one perceives oneself to be. People with a capacity for self-acceptance like themselves with all their perceived positive and negative aspects (Stein & Book, 2001:90). Self-acceptance requires self-awareness, the ability to determine one's strengths and weaknesses, to appreciate the strengths and accept the limitations, and not feel doubtful about one's inner identity. Cherniss (1995:69) found that difficult classes and learners affect the self-regard of teachers. Difficult classes cause self-doubt in teachers and are upsetting.

The second component of self-regard is self-confidence. Self-confidence implies a more positive feeling about oneself than self-acceptance. Self-confident people believe that they are inherently capable and strong. They believe that they are able to take on new challenges and master new skills (Goleman, 1989:69). Confidence in one's own abilities depends on self-esteem or self-efficacy. According to Goleman (1989:70) and Vermeulen (1999:62), self-efficacy is the positive judgment of one's own capacity to perform. Self-efficacy is not the same as actual skills, but the belief of what can be achieved with those skills. This self-belief allows people with high self-regard to make tough decisions despite opposition. They are decisive without being arrogant, and they stand by their decisions (Vermeulen, 1999:64). Stein and Book (2001:92) acknowledge the advantages of high self-esteem, but warn that creating artificially high self-esteem in a child will always be detrimental for the emotional well-being of the individual. Someone who unrealistically believes that she is capable of achieving, but continues to fail, will eventually be robbed of all her self-confidence.

According to Cherniss (1995:69), when teachers grow in self-confidence it enables them to become more open and compassionate towards their learners. Self-

confidence leads to self-tolerance, which helps them to become more tolerant and compassionate towards learners.

Whist self-awareness is the cornerstone of ESI, self-confidence and self-acceptance are key factors in its development (Slaski & Cartwright, 2003:235).

2.6.5 Self-actualisation

Abraham Maslow, with his hierarchy of needs theory, pioneered the concept of self-actualisation. In the mid-1930s, Maslow postulated that self-actualisation could only be achieved after one had satisfied other basic needs, namely survival, safety, social and personal needs (Stein & Book, 2001:100).

Self-actualisation is the process of striving to actualise one's potential capacity, abilities, and talents. It requires the ability to enthusiastically commit oneself to the achievement of long-term goals. It is characterised by being involved in and feeling committed to various interests and meaningful activities. Self-actualisation is a life-long effort leading to a meaningful, rich and full life (Stein & Book, 2001:90).

2.6.5.1 Self-actualisation and job success

According to Bar-On (2001:83) studies have indicated the importance of self-actualisation in predicting successful occupational performance. In a study using the Bar-On EQ-i™ to create profiles for approximately 70 different occupations, people were asked to indicate their success in their jobs. The results of the study, which included approximately 50 000 adults, indicated a strong positive relationship between self-actualisation and job success. In 80% of the groups studied, self-actualisation ranked as one of the top eight factors responsible for distinguishing between employees who are successful and those who are less successful.

Although studies indicate a significant relationship between actualisation and occupational performance, it is unclear what the cause and effect pattern is. Is self-actualisation a cause of occupational success, or is high self-actualisation the result of occupational success? According to Bar-On (2001:85) self-actualisation is motivational for successful performance, and on achieving success the individual's self-actualisation increases.

2.6.5.2 Self-actualisation and emotional well-being

There is a strong relationship between self-actualisation and general well-being. Studies done in North America, Holland and Israel indicated a correlation of 0,60 and higher between self-actualisation and happiness scales (Bar-On, 2001:86). Again, as in the case of actualisation and job success, it is not clear which factor is the cause and which the effect. The belief is that happiness influences our motivation, which in turn increases our achievement drive to self-actualise. An increase in self-actualisation leads to a happier individual. In view of these studies it is important to note that if we are able to increase a person's happiness, a subsequent increase in the person's self-actualising will take place, and vice versa, being able to increase a person's self-actualisation would have a positive influence on his/her happiness.

Stein and Book, who worked closely with Bar-On to elucidate his concepts to the general public, report that secondary school teachers who reported that they consider themselves as above average teachers scored highest in self-actualisation in the Bar-On EQ-i[TM.] This competence was followed by problem-solving, self-awareness and happiness (2000:247).

A further important deduction made from studies was that the lack of self-actualisation was connected to the presence of emotional disorders (Bar-On, 2001:87). Many symptoms of emotional disorders like depression are similar to the characteristics revealed by people with low self-actualisation. These people do not try to improve themselves, may be uncertain about their futures, and feel dissatisfied and useless. Vermeulen, states that the emotional energy needed to self-actualise and reach the goals that we set, are absent in those suffering from depression (Vermeulen, 1999:142).

Developing methods to improve self-actualisation of people could lead to a marked improvement in people suffering from emotional disorders such as depression. Preliminary results from present studies indicate that self-actualisation could even help people to recover from certain medical conditions (Bar-On, 2001:88).

2.7   THE INTERPERSONAL REALM

For the purpose of this study, interpersonal ability refers to understanding and appreciating the feelings of others as well as establishing and maintaining mutually satisfying interpersonal relationships (Gowing, 2001:84).

2.7.1 Empathy

According to Covey (1988:192) empathy is meaningful only if guided by The Golden Rule, which says, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

Establishing good social relationships requires from us to first understand other people's feelings before expecting them to understand ours.

According to Stein and Book (2001:111) empathy can be defined as "… the ability to be aware of, to understand and appreciate the feelings and thoughts of others." Individuals who have empathy are sensitive towards others and are capable of understanding their behaviour.

Self-awareness is a prerequisite for empathy. Only when one is able to perceive and understand one's own emotions, will one be able to perceive and understand the emotions of others.

Two basic types of empathy may be distinguished, namely cognitive empathy and emotional empathy. Cognitive empathy refers to seeing the perspective of the other person and emotional empathy implies having the same emotional reaction as the other person. ESI focuses on the use of cognitive empathy – understanding the feelings of others but not sharing the emotions (McBride & Maitland, 2002:103).

Furthermore, empathy does not stop at identifying and understanding the feelings of others, it involves using these insights in such a manner that it could be useful to oneself, as well as to the individual or group with whom one is involved. If the emotional information received from others is incorrect, it would lead to problems in relationships because the different parties would misunderstand one another. Empathy therefore is extremely powerful because if used correctly it gives one accurate emotional data to use in relationships. Le Roux & De Klerk, sum it that empathetic people often have the ability to intuitively sense what the other person is feeling (2001:91).

Empathy is a competence in ESI which is needed in most jobs, but more so in professions involving education and training. If one is to help others in their goal of being better educated, it is imperative that one should be constantly aware of how that person's emotional state can influence performance from day to day. Being sensitive to the subjective feelings of others and understanding the impact of these emotions on their performance, is essential for successful coaching or teaching (Wood & Tolley, 2003:97).

2.7.1.1 What empathy is not …

Empathy is not being 'nice' in the sense of always making pleasant remarks. Seeing the other person's view and indicating that one understands his/her emotions is being *honest* and not necessarily nice.

Empathy is not sympathy. Stein and Book (2001:113) explain that sympathy expresses one's own feelings while empathy expresses an understanding of another person's feelings. On the one hand, sympathising with someone expresses one's own feelings of sadness or joy with regard to the situation the other person finds himself/herself in. On the other hand, empathising is an attempt by one to describe how one perceives the other party's feelings in a specific situation. Whilst sympathetic statements begin with "I", for example: "I was saddened by the news of your loss", empathetic statements begin with "you", for example: "You must feel terrible after hearing the bad news".

Empathy is not a skill or technique to be used for manipulation of others to get our own selfish needs fulfilled. Rather it is, according to Covey (1989:240) the sincere desire to understand others. In cases of insincere behaviour, relationships degenerate very quickly instead of growing a meaningful relationship based on trust and understanding created by true empathy.

Following is a short summary of some of the advantages of empathy.

2.7.1.2 Advantages of empathy

- The ability to see things from other people's viewpoints leads to deeper and better relationships with friends, colleagues and family, because they feel respected and understood. Failure to see other's perspective very often leads to difficulty in personal relationships (Wood & Tolley, 2003:96).

- If there is empathy between the members of the team, each of the group members makes the effort to understand the feelings and views of the other members, which means they can align their own personal goals to the common goal of the group. The result is a group of highly motivated individuals collectively performing at their peak. Failure to understand the perspectives of others in a team will negatively affect the morale and efficiency of the team.

- In negotiations, the feeling of trust that results from a common understanding of the opposite party's emotions and views, leads to compromises and win-win results, instead of winner takes all.

2.7.2 Social responsibility

The ability to demonstrate that one is a cooperative, contributing and constructive member in one's social group (Bar-On, 1988:91) reflects one's social responsibility.

Socially responsible people have an increasing capacity to give and enjoy giving (Bar-On, 1988:91) even though they stand to gain no personal benefit by doing things for others (Stein & Book, 2001:126). Social responsibility means being sensitive to other people's needs and being able to use one's talents for the good of the group, not just for oneself. Acting in a socially responsible way requires upholding the customary restrictions of society.

While social responsibility focuses on one's relationship to one's social group, interpersonal relationship focuses more on the person-to-person relationship (Bar-On, 1988:91).

2.7.3 Interpersonal relationships

For the purpose of this study, the term interpersonal relationship skills refers to the ability to accept and respect fellow human beings, and to establish and maintain mutually satisfying relationships that are characterised by emotional closeness and intimacy (Bar-On, 1988:93; Stein & Book, 2001:134).

Accepting and respecting others exactly as they are, and not judging them, are the basic ingredients of sound interpersonal relationships. According to the South African author, Vermeulen (1999:173) the acceptance of others, especially those who differ from us is important. She also contends that the ability to enjoy a close relationship is one of the most satisfying experiences any individual can encounter.

The ability to have good interpersonal relationships does not refer to the number of relationships one has, but to the quality of the relationships. The quality of interpersonal relationships depends on the degree of intimacy a person is prepared to invest into the relationship. According to Vermeulen (1999:173), good, close relationships come about when two or more people immerse themselves in a deep friendship, sharing feelings of warmth and affection.

2.8   THE ADAPTABILITY REALM

The only sure thing is change. Change and how one adapts to change affects, like a pebble in a pond, the entire system one moves in. Change and one's ability or inability to adapt to it, is costly both in emotional and monetary terms. A US Bureau of Labour Statistics study shows that the direct consequence of organisational change leads to up to a 75% drop in productivity, social chat and gossip increase by more than 100% and retraining occupies nearly 25% of the employee's time (Childre & Cryer, 1999:16). Recent psychoneuroimmunlogy has helped to understand the cause-and-effect of stress on human functioning. Stress is caused when the individual perceives a person or situation as threatening. The release of hormones such as cortisol causes people to make ineffective decisions, impairs listening skills, and constrains creativity and hampers learning (Childre & Cryer, 1999:33-40).

2.8.1 Problem-solving

Stein and Book (2001:145) describe problem-solving as the ability to identify and define problems, as well as, to generate and implement potentially effective solutions.

According to Bar-On (1988:71), the researchers Jahoda, D'Zurilla and Goldfriend were pioneers in developing approaches to problem-solving. Other approaches to problem-solving are adaptations or simplifications of the following six phases proposed by these researchers

- Phase 1 – Being aware that a problem exists and dealing with it. At this stage one becomes consciously aware of the existence of the problem, and makes a decision to deal with it.

- Phase 2 – Clearly defining and formulating the problem. This implies collecting the maximum available data about the problem in an attempt to describe it as accurately and realistically as possible.

- Phase 3 – Generating as many solutions as possible. This is referred to as brainstorming. The feasibility of solutions is not evaluated at this stage, they are simply proposed without judgment.

- Phase 4 – Deciding which one of the considered solutions will be implemented. The person has evaluated the pros and cons of each solution and now decides to implement the most suitable solution. Ideas that seem to be ineffective are eliminated and, where it is useful to do so, ideas are combined.

- Phase 5 – Implementing the selected solution through focused and relevant activity. At this stage the decision has already been made and no room is left for uncertainty. All one's energy has to be focused on making the proposed solution work.

- Phase 6 – Assessing the outcome of the solution. If the solution to the problem did not solve the problem, the process is repeated. Bar-On (1988:72) states that if the implemented solution is considered to be successful, the method of solving the problem will be added to one's repertoire of solving similar problems in future.
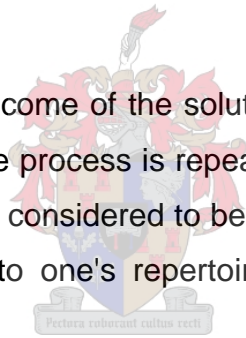
Successful completion of each stage is dependent on the skills developed in the previous stage. If a specific stage presents any difficulties, it becomes necessary to return to the previous stage before proceeding.

2.8.2 Reality testing

Reality testing indicates the degree to which one is able to determine the difference between the way things are and the way one fears or hopes they might be. In essence it is the ability to assess the congruity between what is experienced and what objectively exists (Stein & Book, 2001:154).

People with a strong capacity for reality testing see the world around them in an objective, clear-eyed manner. People with low capacity for reality testing do not have the ability to look at situations objectively. They either have the tendency to

catastrophise the situation for no apparent reason or conversely look at the situation with false optimism in spite of clear evidence to the contrary.

If one has a good capacity for reality testing one has the ability to evaluate a situation objectively without understating or overstating it. This will enable one to take the correct course of action. Catastrophising a problem at hand could lead to drastic actions in situations in which it is uncalled for, whilst minimising it could lead to ignoring it until the problem is completely out of control (Stein & Book, 2001:156).

Cary Cherniss (1995:39) states that many new teachers are too idealistic when they start their careers. When the gap between real and ideal remain wide, their ideals become a source of pain. He advises that by lowering their sights to more realistic ones, new teachers will find it easier to succeed.

2.8.3 Flexibility

Flexibility is the ability to adjust one's emotions, thoughts and behaviour to changing situations and conditions (Stein & Book, 2001:161). People with this competence are able to handle change well. Instead of fearing change, they enjoy it.

Experience tells us that the pace at which change is taking place accelerates daily. This rapid tempo at which change happens is visible in all spheres of life; business, education, technology and many others. Adapting to this change means having to contend with new and unfamiliar circumstances. People who lack flexibility are ruled by fear, anxiety, and a deep personal discomfort with change (Goleman, 1989:98). Low flexibility leads to the following two problems:

- People who lack flexibility adapt with great difficulty to new situations and this rigidity negates any possibility for them to take advantage of new opportunities.

- Clinging to fixed views and persevering with typical behaviour irrespective of the new direction others are taking lead to distress for oneself and others (Wood & Tolley, 2003:37).

Stein and Book (2000:246) reports that secondary teachers who rated themselves as below-average teachers lacked flexibility according their results in Bar-On's Bar-On EQ-i[TM]. According to Bar-On lacking flexibility affects one's ability to cope with change and excessive rigidity does not enhance adolescents' readiness for learning (in Stein & Book, 2000:246).

Stein and Book (2001:165) postulate that being flexible does not imply that one lacks assertiveness. On the one hand, being highly flexible means that one is prepared to evaluate and change deep-rooted beliefs and values if confronted with suitable evidence. On the other hand, an unassertive person changes his/her mind purely on the request or pressure from someone else, without taking any new information into account. Giving in to the demands of others, even if these demands are in conflict with one's values, is not being highly flexible, but very unassertive.

Impulsiveness is also not a reflection of a good sense of flexibility. Impulsive people can be flexible, but they are rather noted for making decisions or changes without considering all the necessary information available to them (Stein & Book, 2001:165).

Flexible people are those who have the ability to change their perspectives and behaviour if the evaluated circumstances suggest that changes are needed. They do not arbitrarily change their minds, but do so based on new evidence which suggest that the ideas they had are no longer feasible. An essential competence for being flexible is self-confidence, the belief that one has the ability to overcome difficult situations.

2.9   THE STRESS MANAGEMENT REALM

According to the US Department of Labour, the workplace is the greatest single source of stress, no matter what you do or earn (Childre & Cryer, 1999:16). The pressures resulting from change seems to lead to the highest form of stress. The second serious source of stress is experienced when people have to shift concepts, shift intention and focus, do many different tasks, many times an hour (Childre & Cryer, 1999:51). This phenomenon is called multi-tasking and is the daily reality of teachers' working experience. Different classes, different subjects and different tasks all clamour for one teacher's attention, and very often, at the same time.

2.9.1 Stress tolerance

Lazarus and Folkman (in Slaski & Cartwright, 2003:233) argue the importance of seeing the close relationship between stress and emotion:

> Although we have usually referred to stress, coping theory and research, we think that we should now speak less of stress and more of emotion. Stress, which primarily concerns negative person-

environment relationships, cognitive appraisals and emotional response states such as fear, anger, guilt and shame, falls under the larger rubric of emotion.

Stein and Book (2001:171) define stress tolerance as the ability to withstand adverse events and stressful situations without falling apart by actively and positively coping with stress. This definition implies the need for flexibility, optimism and high self-regard for a person to have good stress tolerance. Flexibility is needed to be able to cope with rapid changes in the environment; optimism is needed to remain in a positive mood in the face of difficulty; and high self-regard to believe that one has the ability to cope with the difficult situation at hand. Furthermore, the definition suggests that the person with high stress tolerance will be able to devise suitable methods for dealing with stressful situations and devise suitable methods to relieve the effect of stress on the human body (develop suitable mechanisms to deal with stress). People with good stress tolerance have the ability to stand up to stressful situations instead of giving in to feelings of helplessness. People with resilience to stress have:

- A plan of action to limit or contain stress

- The ability to be optimistic even if circumstances change suddenly for the worst

- The feeling that they have control or influence over stress-inducing events (Stein & Book, 2001:171).
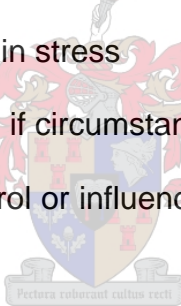
All stress is not bad. Without stress one would never be able to function at optimal efficiency. The experience of stress is the manifestation of negative emotions triggered by danger, threat or challenge and which signal to the body the need to prepare for actions of defence and protection. This was first described by Cannon in 1931 as the 'fight' or 'flight' response (Slaski & Cartwright, 2003:234).

According to Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2002), being under mild stress focuses one's attention and energy on attaining one's goals, but prolonged distress can reduce performance by diminishing the brain's ability to process information and respond effectively. Therefore it becomes important to distinguish between "good stress" and "bad stress".

2.9.1.1 *Eustress and distress*

Eustress (Fisher, in Olivier & Venter, 2003:186) or "good stress" is the correct amount of stress that is needed for a person to be fully motivated to complete the

task at hand. Vermeulen (1999:143) explains that good stress exists when we are motivated to achieve our set goals. In eustress chemicals called catecholamine are secreted by the body and regulate the brain so it remains at an aroused, energetic state of attention and concentration (Goleman, 1998:89). Good stress is a source of stored energy that is used productively when we strive to achieve our goals. Some writers refer to the state of aroused energy levels and intense concentration as flow. Flow occurs in the zone between boredom and immobilising anxiety (Goleman, 1998:89; Stein & Book, 2001:204).

If there is an increase in stress to the point where the person feels overwhelmed and at a loss of control, this is referred to as distress. In the case of distress, the increased anxiety leads to the secretion of the hormone cortisol, a hormone that is supposed to get the body in the correct state for fighting or fleeing. In this state the ability of the working brain diminishes, impeding one's ability to perform optimally. The person becomes overwhelmed, paralysed mentally and demoralised (Goleman, 1998:89).

The level of stress necessary to cause eustress or distress in a person depends on the hardiness of the person. Hardiness is described by Goleman (1998:88) as "the ability to stay committed, feel in control, and to be challenged rather than threatened by stress." The following example should suffice to explain this phenomenon: When two people are faced with the same challenge, one may see it as an invigorating challenge, whilst the other person sees it as a devastating threat.

In the inevitable event of stress building up, it is important to note that self-awareness plays a significant role in reducing stress.

2.9.1.2   *Self-awareness and stress management*

Self-awareness, as is the case with so many other ESI factors, is again a key competency in the management of stress (Slaski & Cartwright, 2003:234). To manage stress efficiently, one has to be able to identify the physical and mental symptoms of stress (Stein & Book, 2001:174). This makes it possible to determine when and to what degree one is stressed and what specific actions have to be taken to relieve the stress. The clearer we are about our emotional state when we are troubled, the better we can manage the bad moods and the sooner we can recover from the distress.

2.9.1.3   Coping with stress

According to Lazarus and Folkman coping refers to a person's efforts to manage, control, or regulate threatening or challenging situations (in Matthews *et al.*, 2002:283).

According to Goleman (1998:84) people best equipped to handle stress often have developed certain stress management techniques, for example: a long warm bath, physical workout, yoga or meditation. These methods should not only be applied in the face of extreme stress, but should be part of a person's everyday routine for a healthier and happier lifestyle. Goleman further advises that constant use of these methods will not lead to the eradication of distress, but to fewer occurrences of distress and faster recovery from an emotional state of anxiety.

Vermeulen perceives stress as the draining of energy from the body or otherwise, i.e. energy is not used positively. Stress management involves self-control by governing the choices we make in respect of four energy areas which Vermeulen (1999:146-153) classifies as physical, emotional, mental and spiritual areas:

- **Physical area**

If one is not in good physical condition, any form of stress will quickly break one down. Therefore, in correctly managing stress, one must adopt healthy eating habits, sleep enough, avoid dependency on habit-forming drugs, and be able to relax.

- **Emotional area**

Emotional stress develops because we abdicate our control to outside forces Vermeulen (1999:153). Too much power is invested in a relationship, a career, or even our fears; and instead of having control, we are being controlled. This feeling of loss of control leads to anxiety or distress.

FIGURE 2.2: Covey's circles of concern and influence
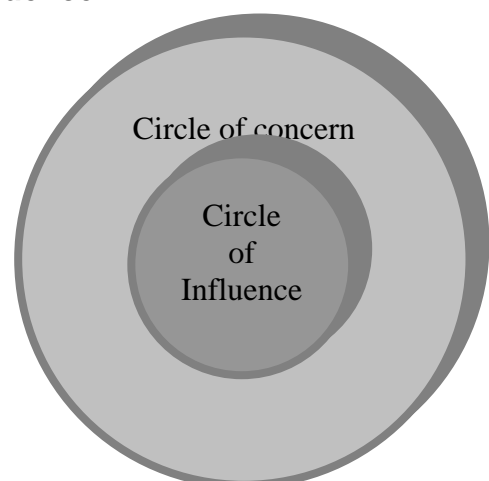
Source: Covey (1989:83)

Covey (1989:83) contends that the emotional stress develops from a feeling of loss of control, and according to him this is due to a wrong focus. In figure 2.2 Covey demonstrates his point by referring to the circles of concern and influence that we all face.

Stress arises from focusing on one's circle of concern, which relates to problems from the environment over which one has no control. Proactive people focus on their circle of influence, using their energy positively to change the things they can and at the same time getting the feeling that they are in control. Being in control relieves emotional stress (Covey, 1989:83).

- **Mental area**

Mental stress arises from elevating the importance of certain things like money, time or one's ego out of proportion. Too much energy is then spent on these areas. Vermeulen (1999:146) states that mental stressors, like money, have grown so out of proportion that people are prepared to kill for them. She advises that one should place these stressors in the correct perspective and devise a plan to address them.

- **Spiritual area**

Spiritual stress occurs when we feel that our life has no meaning. If much of one's personal power is invested in transient things such as status, money, a spouse or children, one will be hard hit by spiritual stress the moment the reason for one's existence is removed.

Lastly, if nothing can be done to eliminate the stress in a certain area, Vermeulen (1999:153) recommends that one should strive to minimise stress levels in other areas. This releases energy and improves the ability to handle the stress better.

Kyriacou (2001:30) points out that there are two main types of individual coping strategies for teachers: direct action techniques (direct techniques aimed at source of stress) and palliative techniques (techniques aimed at lessening the feeling of stress). Schools can also focus on preventative measures to lessen the possibility of stress. These include: management decisions based on consultation, whole schools policies that are in place, good levels of resources and facilities to support teachers, red tape and paperwork are minimised, additional duties are matched to teachers' skills and senior management makes good use of forward planning.

The second skill relating to stress management is the ability to control impulses. Following is a brief explanation of this concept.

2.9.2   Impulse control

Goleman (1998:92) refers to impulse control as the ability to delay gratification. Gowing (2001:110), on the other hand, sees impulse control as the ability to control one's emotions and resist or delay impulse, drive, or temptation to act. Stein and Book (2001:183) provide more detail, stating that managing a wide range of volatile emotional states and urges with wisdom and calmness is an outcome of high impulse control. They further state that impulsiveness is the translation of one's feelings into actions without having evaluated the significance of the actions.

People with impulse control have the self-restraint to evaluate the consequences of their potential actions and assume responsibility for those consequences (Goleman, 1998:93; Stein & Book, 2001:186). In the process of evaluation they weigh the advantages and disadvantages of different options in the light of the information available, before they take action.

Roger and Hudson (in Kyriacou 2001:32) found that a key feature in prolonging the experience of stress is a tendency for emotional rumination or not letting go of the feelings of tension and source of tension. They pointed to the need for teachers to be helped to learn 'emotion control' in order for them to maintain wellness.

2.9.2.1   *Advantages of impulse control*

The result of delaying gratification is that the eventual reward is greater than the immediate reward. Mischell's marshmallow test, an experiment with four-year-old children, has been quoted by many writers to indicate that people with greater impulse control are more successful in life (Goleman, 1998:79; Vermeulen, 1999:130; Stein & Book, 2001:189). Mischell found that the four-year-old learners who could delay their gratification for longer than their peers were more successful, had better social skills, and performed better academically twelve years later.

A lack of impulse control has many disadvantages. Impulsiveness, or immediate satisfaction of needs, brings no lasting happiness (Le Roux & De Klerk, 2001:106). Our need for instant gratification interferes with our ability to achieve more meaningful long-term goals (Vermeulen, 1999:130).

Stein and Book (2000:246) report that primary teachers who rated themselves as below-average teachers lacked impulse control according to their results on Bar-On's Bar-On EQ-i^TM. Lacking impulse control leads to problems with their tempers, lack of patience and poor organisational skills.

Low impulse control leads to compulsive, arbitrary and thoughtless behaviour that will continually place one in situations that are stressful. Impulsive action usually leads to someone getting hurt. It could be hurting oneself in that one's impulsiveness jeopardises one's chances of attaining long term goals or hurting someone else by acting in anger, in which case one's social relationships deteriorate. In extreme cases a lack of impulse control leads to violent crimes. Spousal abuse, date rape and violent incidents due to road rage are all tragic manifestations of a lack of impulse control (Stein & Book, 2001:186).

The control one achieves over oneself by delaying gratification and controlling impulses immediately puts one at an advantage. Vermeulen (1999:130) states that the ability to control impulses is one of the hallmarks of emotionally intelligent people. For one to control impulsiveness, one has to formulate clear, attainable goals and often remind oneself of these goals.

2.10 THE GENERAL MOOD REALM

2.10.1 Happiness

Happiness is the ability to feel content with oneself, others and life in general and consequently express positive emotions (Stein & Book, 2001:197). Happy people are cheerful and enthusiastic; they are spontaneous and have fun. They have the ability to enjoy the small things in life. People very low in happiness show symptoms of depression.

Happiness leads to success. People underestimate the importance of having fun. Elias (2001) is adamant that laughter and high achievement go hand in hand. According to Vermeulen (1999:27) being happy releases a constant injection of energy, which can be used for whatever we have to do. Therefore, if we are happy and full of energy we tend to be productive and successful. This sets the cycle for more happiness and greater success.

After one has attained the correct frame of mind to be susceptible for happiness, certain external factors can further enhance the level of happiness:

- Healthy lifestyle.

- Developing goals which when achieved makes life meaningful.

- Having meaningful relationships with friends and family.

Stein and Book (2001:199) state that the two main reasons for people not being happy are:

- Hoping that something they desire will happen. When these desires are not fulfilled, they feel disappointed. Repeated unfulfilled desires or expectations create the expectancy that they are not made to fulfil their desires and this creates unhappiness.

- Expecting bad things to happen. If some of these fears materialise, these people accept that this is what life is all about.

According to the advice of Stein and Book (2001:199) adjusting our expectations could lead to a higher success rate at achieving our goals and result in increased happiness. Therefore, through reality-testing, we may find that we are setting unreal or unreasonable targets, and decide to adjust or replace them.

True happiness comes from within oneself, and although circumstances around us can influence our level of happiness, the main generator of happiness is oneself. Covey (1989:41) writes: "In all my experience, I've never seen lasting solutions to problems, lasting happiness and success, come from the outside in." For one to have happiness one has to change oneself before attempting to change one's circumstances.

2.10.2 Optimism

Stein and Book (2001:210) define optimism as the ability to look at the brighter side of life and maintain a positive attitude even in the face of adversity. Optimism or pessimism is an indication of how we interpret setbacks (Goleman, 1998:126). Optimists see setbacks as being the result of factors over which they have the power to control. Pessimists see setbacks as being the result of an unchangeable personal flaw.

Consequently, optimists believe that even though their present circumstances are bad, with renewed effort they can turn things around. Therefore, when faced with a setback, an optimist will chart a different course in pursuit of success and a pessimist resigns in helplessness.

Stein and Book (2000:246) reports that elementary teachers who rated themselves as above-average teachers scored highest in optimism of Bar-On's Bar-On EQ-i[TM]. They also scored significantly higher in problem-solving, self-actualisation, stress tolerance and happiness.

True optimism does not imply blindly believing that anything is possible. The true optimist hopes that the future will be better, but this hope is within the parameters of reality.

2.11 CONCLUSION

ESI and its subsequent competencies are both complex and multifaceted. It is complex in that it involves the adaptive integration of emotions, cognitions, and behaviours to address critical developmental issues, transitions, and stressors at different points in life. Emotionalsocial competence is multifaceted in that it encompasses multiple domains of functioning (intrapersonal, interpersonal, academic and professional) within multiple contexts (home, school, peer group, community) (Graczyk *et al.* in Bar-On & Parker, 2000:397).

The impact of a teacher's professional and private domains is just as complex because of its reciprocity. Personal problems will impact on a teacher's professional life and vice versa. Emotionalsocial competencies, or the lack thereof, will therefore fundamentally influence on a teacher's wellness.

2.12 CRITICISM OF ESI

Few topics in organisational research and psychology have been as controversial as ESI. Debate rages about the definition and nature, measurement, and application of ESI. Controversy exists not only between ESI researchers and their critics, who doubt the value of the concept, but also among ESI researchers themselves, who have quite different views of the nature of ESI. On the one side of the divide, there are the more academic researchers (e.g. Salovey, Caruso, Mayer & Bar-On); on the other side, there are the more commercial researchers (e.g. Goleman). Exaggerated

claims for the importance of ESI job performance, leadership, and other areas of organisational life have helped fuel opposition to the construct.

Major criticism against ESI include:

- The popular interest in ESI has, at times, caused confusing and even contradictory definitions, models and claims for the construct (Zeidner, Matthews & Roberts, 2004:373).

- Locke (2005:430) argues that ESI as a so-called 'intelligence' is an invalid concept but concedes that intelligence can be applied to emotions as well as to other life domains.

- Some claims of the benefits of ESI to students, schools and beyond were made without much empirical justification (Cobb & Mayer, 2000:15). Much of the data necessary for demonstrating the unique association between ESI and work-related behaviour appears to reside in proprietary databases (Landy, 2005:411). Therefore much of the 'so-called evidence' lacks scientific credibility.

- Evidence suggests that self-reported ESI is to some extent unrelated to actual ability (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2000:396-420).

- According to Cobb and Mayer (2000:174) academic reviewers of this field agree that there is little published at present that indicates that ESI is "twice as important" as traditional intelligence in predicting success.

- Popularising and the claim of grand results have lead to some schools organising their entire curriculum around the notion of ESI. One state in the United States of America (Rhodes) even attempted to integrate emotional learning into all its social, health, and education programme (Cobb & Mayer, 2000:15).

- Some SEL programmes emphasise learners getting along with one another. This could stifle creativity, healthy scepticism, or spontaneity. ESI should include knowing when to be tactful but also when to be cold or hard (Cobb & Mayer, 2000:15).

2.13 ESI AND TEACHERS

2.13.1 Introduction

According to Stone, Parker and Wood, there is growing empirical evidence that the type of competencies most closely linked with ESI are strongly linked with an individual's ability to cope with environmental demands and uncertainties (2004). Therefore, ESI has come to be viewed as an important factor in the quality of one's general emotional well-being, as well as an important predictor of one's ability to succeed in the classroom and on the job.

2.13.2 Teachers and the application of emotionalsocial competencies

A variety of factors that has been identified are responsible for the occupational stress teacher's face. These factors include: interpersonal demands, the diversity of tasks required, lack of professional recognition, and discipline problems in the classroom, administrative red tape, bureaucracy, and lack of support, workload and time pressure (Mearns & Cearns, 2003:71).

The relationship between ESI and subjective well-being was demonstrated in a recent study by Reuven Bar-On. Well-being was defined in this study as a subjective state that emerges from a feeling of satisfaction (a) with one's physical health and oneself as a person, (b) with one's close interpersonal relationships, and (c) with one's occupation and financial situation. It appears that the following competencies, skills and facilitators are the primary contributors to this subjective state: (a) the ability to understand and accept one's emotions and oneself, (b) the ability to strive to set and achieve personal goals to enhance one's potential, and (c) the ability to verify one's feelings and put thing in their correct perspective (Bar-On, 2005:17).

People with above average levels of ESI tend to have above average communication skills (often at both verbal and non-verbal levels). This is an essential skill when a teacher needs to communicate goals and objectives to learners or when managers communicate with subordinates (Stone *et al.,* 2004).

When teachers exhibit ESI, many people seem to benefit from it. Not only does the teacher manage herself and her learners better, but parents, colleagues and support staff also seem to benefit. According to George (2000:1035), people with above average levels of ESI are usually above average in their ability to cope with stress.

This is an ability that is very important for generating and maintaining enthusiasm, confidence, and cooperation in the schools. Stress is an inevitable part of schools, but over the long term, people are more optimistic and trusting if they work around or for individuals who know how to cope under pressure.

The Ontario Principals' Council (OPC) leadership study aimed at identifying key emotionalsocial competencies required by school administrators (principals and vice-principals) to meet the demands and responsibilities of their positions successfully. The results of the study suggest that professional development programs would be wise to focus on promoting or developing the following abilities:

- Emotional self-awareness (the ability to recognise and understand one's feelings and emotions)

- Self-actualisation (ability to tap potential capacities and skills in order to improve oneself)

- Empathy (ability to be attentive to, understand, and appreciate the feelings of others)

- Interpersonal relationships (ability to establish and maintain mutually satisfying relationships)

- Flexibility (ability to adjust one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviour to changing situations and conditions)

- Problem solving (ability to identify and define problems as well as to generate potentially effective solutions)

- Impulse control (ability to resist or delay an emotional behaviour) (Stone *et al*., 2004).

Interpersonal relationships and subsequent conflict are part and parcel of every teacher's day. Certain words and actions of others are more likely to "push personal buttons" and result in reaction. Teachers who can reflect on these emotions and control their impulses are more likely to learn about themselves, and manage themselves more effectively than other teachers (Zins *et al*. in Salovey & Sluyter, 1997:260). Such teachers can respond, instead of react, to provocation.

Teachers need to develop a framework to guide daily decision making within the real world of the school that is based on reflection and inquiry. Self-awareness and Problem-solving are strategic competencies to guide teachers in decision making.

However, many teachers are unable to explain the reason for their actions. Indeed, studies of teachers' decision making frequently find it to be "more reactive than reflective ... and more routinized than conscious" (Zins *et al.*, 1997:257).

There is also a growing awareness of the importance of teachers' role in enhancing the emotionalsocial skills of learners (Graczyk *et al.* in Bar-On & Parker, 2000:400). A teacher who can manage her own life with emotionalsocial competence can model such competencies more convincingly and teach such competencies effectively.

According to Raczyk *et al* (in Bar-On & Parker, 2000:400) teachers with strong emotionalsocial competencies have a greater capacity to connect with learners – to see, hear, and understand their learners thoroughly, with focus and intention. This is necessary to form a relationship of trust, cooperation, and collaboration, which, in turn, is necessary to effectively empower learners with the necessary skills and knowledge.

Because individuals with well-developed ESI are able to identify and control their own emotions and those of others, they are less likely to be paralyzed by fear, hijacked by negative emotions, and strangled by anxiety, all of which have negative effects on both individual and team performance (Seipp in Lam, 2002:141).

Greater emotionalsocial competence can serve as the framework for all prevention and wellness enhancement objectives because it focuses on promoting specific social and coping skills as well as providing the necessary environmental support that are conducive to both prevention and wellness efforts (Graczyk *et al.*, in Bar-On & Parker, 2000:397).

2.14 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the concept of ESI was investigated. Various definitions of ESI were presented, but finally the elucidation of the concept as well as the discussion of the advantages of ESI were based on the Bar-On's view. The pressures of teaching were also explored.

The study of literature related to Bar-On's model of ESI shows that despite the criticism of the construct of ESI, ESI enhances individuals' personal, social and professional lives.

ESI focuses on the important effect emotions have on the reasoning process and during interaction with others. Because of their ability to become aware of, identify and understand their emotions, emotionalsocially intelligent people are able to manage these emotions effectively. This leads to enhanced cognitive functioning as well as better social interactions. The information collected on emotionalsocial skills in this chapter further supports the view that emotionalsocial competencies influence an individual's effective functioning and coping with pressures. It seems that people who possess superior skills in the different realms of ESI have advantages that lead to greater wellness. It is possible for individuals to learn and achieve core ESI competencies.
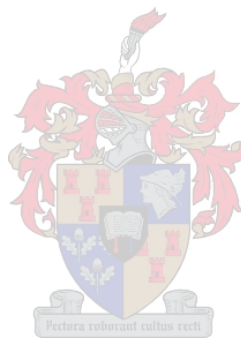
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter unpacked the history, significance and various constructs of ESI. It then concentrated on the Bar-On model of ESI. This chapter focuses on the theoretical basis for the research methodology used and the nature of the study.

3.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study focuses on the question:

- What emotionalsocial competencies do teachers perceive to help them deal with the pressures of teaching?

Secondary questions are:

- What do teachers perceive to be pressures in their lives?

- What do teachers perceive to be possible support systems that help them cope better with the demands of teaching?

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

A basic interpretive design which falls within the interpretive/qualitative paradigm was chosen for the research project. Qualitative research is naturalistic, holistic and inductive in nature. It studies real-life situations as they naturally unfold and the phenomenon is understood as a complex system with subtle interplays. Such a study begins by exploring genuinely open questions and the researcher collects data through immersing herself in the detailed accounts of the unit of analysis (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:43). The qualitative research design recognises that humans are extremely complex beings that are influenced by both internal and external factors. Humanity is not a fixed, unchanging and predictable entity but is a dynamic interplay of historical and social circumstance. A person's gender, age, race, ethnicity, class or sexual orientations are constant influences on any given action and thought.

Zins, Travis and Freppon advocate (in Mayer & Sluyter, 1999:268) that researchers and teachers must collaborate more often to generate questions and develop relevant implications for research. "The voices of practitioners must be heard and their input valued so that it becomes more likely that 'real' problems are addressed." The qualitative paradigm is the appropriate approach to explore such narratives.

For Seidman (in Babbie & Mouton, 2002:42) qualitative research should be described as an "event-based narrative that is densely contextual". Often an entire activity will be reported in detail and depth because it represents a representative experience. These descriptions, says Patton (1987:147), are written in narrative form to provide a holistic picture of what has happened in the reported activity or event.

The researcher working within a qualitative interpretive paradigm tries to harness and interpret ordinary language or narratives in order to understand the social world we live in better.

Qualitative research designs have several key characteristics in common. Merriam (2002:4-5) lists them thus:

- The researcher strives to understand the meaning people have constructed about their world and their experiences.
- The researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis.
- The research process is inductive, in other words, the researcher gathers data to build concepts.
- The product of qualitative inquiry is richly descriptive.

The present study incorporated all of the above features as is evident in this and the next chapter.

According to Merriam (2002:6-10) there are several designs to be used within qualitative research. For example, basic interpretive study, phenomenology, grounded theory, case study, ethnographic study, narrative analysis, critical qualitative study and postmodern research.

3.4   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.4.1   Basic interpretive qualitative study

The essential difference between quantitative and qualitative research is that quantitative research presents its data in numerical form whereas qualitative research is language based. Qualitative researchers study issues in depth, openness and detail as they identify and attempt to understand the categories of information that emerge from the data (Babbie & Mouton, 2002:42). It supports the search for concrete, context-specific, and historically situated narratives that are considered within the social and political interests of concrete people.

The research question of this study directed me to use the basic interpretive design in researching the personal understanding of the emotionalsocial competencies teachers use in coping with daily pressures. According to Durrheim   (in Terreblanche & Durrheim, 1999:40) the findings from *basic* research are typically used to advance our fundamental knowledge of the social world. I have used Merriam's definition of the basic interpretive research as the guide to conduct this study.   According to Merriam (2002:38) the basic interpretive study would be interested in (1) how people interpret their experiences, (2) how they construct their worlds, and (3) what meaning they attribute to their experience. The overall purpose is to *understand* how people make sense of their lives and their experiences.

Basic interpretive research assumes that people's subjective experiences are real and should be taken seriously, that we can understand other's experiences by interacting with them and listening to what they tell us (Terre Blanche & Kelly, in Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:123) I believe that the reality of teachers' experience of their emotionalsocial competencies is a subjective reflection of their external and internal worlds. The constructs of their experienced realities are therefore meaningful and valid.

Interpretive research emphasises rich experiential data. The anthropologist Cliffort Geertz describes the purpose of interpretive data collection as the provision of 'thick description', by which is meant a thorough description of the characteristics, processes, transactions and contexts that constitute the phenomenon being studied, couched in language not alien to the phenomenon, as well as an account of the

researcher's role in constructing this description (Terre Blanche & Kelly, in Terre Blanche & Durrheim 1999:130). The eight participants had unique ways to describe the pressures they experience during teaching. The particular diction and vernacular each used provided a rich backdrop to the meaning that they attach to day to day experiences (See 4.3.2, p 70).

Interpretative analysis of data has internal coherence and is rooted in the text, which refers to the meaningful everyday experiences of the people being studied. Interpretive research gives the reader a feel for another's social reality. The research does this by revealing the meanings, values, interpretive schemes and rules of living used by people in their daily lives (Neuman, 1991:73).

The study undertaken was exploratory in the sense that it explores the personal construction of a group of Life Orientation teachers on how their emotionalsocial competencies contribute to their wellness.

In summary, all qualitative research is interested in how meaning is constructed and how people make sense of their lives and their worlds. The *primary* goal of a basic interpretive study according to Merriam (2002:39) is to uncover and interpret these meanings.

3.4.2 Population and sample

The population for the study comprised of the teachers of seven high schools in and around a small rural town approximately 50 kilometres from Cape Town.

The sample, namely Life Orientation teachers, was drawn from this population and represents a convenience sample because participants were selected because they were readily available (Mertens, 1998:265). The final sample was purposive because it comprised of those in the group who indicated that they would not mind having a follow-up interview with the researcher.

3.4.3 Research instrument

In interpretive research the researcher is the primary instrument for both collecting and analysing research material. Skills such as listening, interpreting and meticulously recording of information are needed to ensure optimal data collection and validity thereof.

Merriam (1998:7) notes that "certain characteristics differentiate the human researcher from other data collection instruments." Namely, the researcher

- is responsive to the context

- can adapt techniques to circumstances

- can consider the total context

- can expand what is known about the situation through sensitivity to nonverbal aspects

- can process data immediately, can clarify and summarise as the study evolves, and can explore anomalous responses.

During the interviews I had to allow the participant to give her own meaning to her life as a teacher, but had to guide the participant's focus back to issues relevant to the research project. I had to follow verbal and non-verbal cues as well as record tone of voice, teaching circumstances and physical appearances of teachers.

The research sample of Life Orientation (LO) teachers was chosen because of my own involvement in the LO learning area.

I am a mature teacher with broad-based educational experience, who is a relative newcomer to the cluster of LO teachers which forms the research sample. I can be described as living within the community of study. I was slightly acquainted with most of the participants before the research study, which made it easier to establish rapport during interviews.

3.4.4 Data production methods

A combination of methods, such as a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, and "a day in the life of" interviews were used to gather data. This was done in order to achieve triangulation. Merriam (1998:148) states that interviewing, observation and document analysis are the three major data collection techniques in qualitative research. The various data collection methods that were used are elaborated below:

- **Literature review**

A literature review involves the identification and analysis of literature related to the research project. This process includes identifying potentially relevant sources. The

research proposal and research report rely heavily on such a literature review (Kaniki, in Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:17).

The research questions arise out of the gaps in information in the literature. Very little is known about teachers' emotionalsocial competencies and how they might enhance a teacher's wellness.

According to Mouton (2001:87) the literature review is important because it

- ensures that one does not merely duplicate a previous study;

- helps to discover what the most recent and authoritative theorising about the subject is;

- helps to identify the most widely accepted empirical findings in the field of study;

- helps to identify the available instrumentation that has proven validity and reliability;

- helps to ascertain what the most widely accepted definitions of key concepts in the field are.

I found this part of the process most important in my research project. The confusing and conflicting theories, terms and claims related to the constructs ESI or ESI/Competencies/Learning forced me to read and research widely in order to define the parameters of the study. The literature review largely guided the research question, methodology and analysis of data.

- **Questionnaires**

Kanjee (in Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:293) defines a questionnaire as a group of written questions used to gather information from respondents, and it is regarded as one of the commonest tools for gathering data in the social sciences.

The aim of the questionnaire was to test the teachers' understanding of their own emotionalsocial management and to gain the participants' demographic information. Questions contained both multiple choice questions and open-ended questions (see Appendix B).

When constructing the questionnaire I relied heavily on what I had researched and have come to know about the Bar-On EQ-i[TM.] I wanted to stay as close to the Bar-

On's EQ-i^TM because I used Bar-On's construct on emotionalsocial competencies to guide my research. Financial restraints forced me to compile my own questionnaire.

The multiple choice questions of the first part of the questionnaire were followed by 5 questions to understand the teachers' acquisition and need for specific emotionalsocial competencies. The third and final part of the questionnaire gathered demographic information and invited the respondant to participate in the research by agreeing to a semi-structured interview. The interview was important to me in order to achieve data triangulation.

I piloted the questionnaire on four teachers and found that the results were informative. I was especially pleased to find that it introduced Bar-On's terms and concepts on emostionalsocial competencies to the respondants. They asked informed questions and the questionnaires provided valuable data that I could follow up during our informal interviews. I therefore decided to keep the questionnaire as it was. I did not find it strange at the time that almost all four respondants' answers of part 1 of the questionnaire were the same. In retrospect I now know that my sample of the pilot study probably should have been larger.

I hoped that the first and second parts of the questionnaire would cross-refer, in order to validate data. The first part of the questionnaire, however, provided little information. Participants' data differed very little and they seem to provide data that would reflect positively on themselves. The information did prove helpful, however, when used in triangulation with the interviews. The questionnaire also provided information on the teachers' self-reported general health and demographic information. Respondants were given the option to participate in the interviews and that provided the opportunity for a purposive research sample.

The questionnaire was mainly used to inform the researcher on the content for the interview. Secondly it also provided demographic information. The questionnaires were not used quantitatively but purely qualitatively.

Informal observations of the schools and teachers also provided confirmatory data. Interviews, however, were the primary source of data.

- **Interviews**

Patton (1987:109) states that interviews add an inner perspective to outward behaviours. Therefore interviews are a source of interpreting of and elaboration on observation. In interviews the researcher can learn about things she cannot directly observe. Interviews are therefore opportunities to learn about:

- Feeling, thoughts and intentions

- Behaviours that took place at some previous point in time

- How people have organised their world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world.

The interviews generated data on all these areas. The questions asked in the interviews originated from questions that arose as a result of reading the literature, as well as keeping the research problem in mind.

The development of the interview guide was challenging. It was difficult to phrase questions in a way that elicited the required information and yet kept the questions open-ended.

The interview guide (see Appendix A) consisted of six questions covering the research problem. The interviews were guided by an initial question: "What does a typical taxing teaching day look like for you, from the time you get up until you go to bed?". Each teacher had the freedom to approach this question in her own way and I directed the conversation only when respondents drifted away from the relevant topic.

The questions were not asked as they appeared in the interview guide or in the same order, but were merely used to steer the process. The participant's response dictated the question order and format.

Mamphela Ramphele used "a day in the life of" accounts with great success (in Babbie & Mouton, 1998:305) because she found that it was a gentle way to gain understanding about the meaning people have constructed about their existence and experiences. I listened carefully and if the information was not clarified in their narratives, I would ask questions such as:

> *When does your day start? What happens before school starts? How many classes do you have? How big are your classes? What other*

> *learning areas do you teach? What problems do you experience? What strategies and emotionalsocial competencies do you employ to make life easier for yourselves? Where and from whom did you acquire these strategies and competencies? Who have dependants and what other responsibilities do you have? When and where do you relax? When do you go to bed?*

After exploring some of the issues that they raised in the accounts of their days, I also asked clarifying questions related to their answers to the questionnaire.

Each interview took an average of thirty-five minutes. The interviews conducted were transcribed verbatim removing any identifying information (see Appendix B). In accordance with Terre Blanche and Kelly (in Terre Blanche & Durrheim 1999:130) suggestion that one should attempt to draw the interviewee into becoming rather a co-enquirer than the research subject, I tried to have more of a conversation than a question-and-answer session with participants.

It is interesting to note that although the interviews were guided by the same questions for the participants, each interview had its own dynamic. However, this is not surprising in qualitative research involving people, as each individual brings her own reality and her experience of it to the interview.

I set up individual meetings with each of the eight respondents. I first asked them for permission to tape-record our conversation and explained the concept of confidentiality. I also explained the aim of my research and I invited them to ask me questions that they might have about my research project.

Although it proved difficult for participants to find time for the interview, all participants were helpful and patient, when having the interview. One interview had to be rescheduled five times because of the teacher's many responsibilities. Participants seemed eager to tell their story of being a teacher, a woman and often a mother, in the South African context.

Seidman (in Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:130) suggests that the interviewer keep the following in mind:

- Avoid leading questions.

- Ask questions when you do not understand.

- Keep participants focussed and ask for concrete details.

- Tolerate silence and allow the interviewee to reflect

- Listen more, talk less.

Care was taken to phrase questions in an unambiguous manner. Another difficulty encountered was covering the topic as widely as possible without leading the interviewee and the questions overlapping too much. I found it extremely difficult to ask questions in a focused way and also not to respond in an emphatic way as in a session with a client.

Patton (1987:142-143) states that although there is no recipe for effective interviewing, there are guidelines, which can enhance the interviewing process. The most important which are:

- Throughout the process of interviewing, keep centred on the purpose of the evaluation.

- Communicate clearly what is desired, why that information is important, and let the interviewee know ho the interview is progressing.

- Interview, do not interrogate.

- Establish personal rapport and a sense of mutual interest.

- Maintain neutrality toward the specific content of responses.

- Observe while interviewing.

- Use a tape recorder but also take notes.

- Check the tape recorder to see that it runs during the whole interview and that the recording is clear.

- As soon as possible after the interview review notes for clarity; elaborate where necessary; and record observations.

These guidelines proved helpful, especially after I forgot to check whether the tape-recorder was running during one interview. Luckily I did check it after a while, but had to ask the participant to repeat her response so that it could be captured on tape.

- **Researcher's journal / Field notes**

Martin Terre Blanche and Kevin Kelly (in Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:138) note that there are essentially two kinds of field notes. Firstly, those that describe as fully as possible what people said and did. Secondly, there are those that are concerned with your unfolding analysis, reflections and uncertainties.

My field notes were more of the second type mentioned above. They were incorporated in my research journal. The journal contained reflections on the research process observations about the interviews and any questions that arose from these.

Observations had to be factual, accurate, and thorough. According to Patton (1987:73) the advantages of taking detailed notes the researcher might be able to understand the context within which narrative occur, the researcher as an observer may see beyond the awareness of participants and the researcher may learn things about the participant which she might be unwilling to speak about. Through reflection and introspection the researcher might gain valuable insight into the reality of the participant, even beyond the participant's own understanding.

The "field notes" or "process notes" jotted down before, during and after interviews, proved especially helpful in the day-in-the-life-of accounts because participants seemed to become drawn into the emotion the moment as they described their day from moment to moment. Some became animated and gestured emphatically. Sometimes they would show expression through other non-verbal language such as grimacing or other facial expressions.

3.4.5 Participants

All the eight participants were female. At the time of the study, the youngest participant was 26 years old and the oldest 50 years. The participant with least experience in teaching had been teaching for 3 years and the participant with the longest experience had been teaching for 23 years. The interviews had an average duration of thirty minutes each. Two interviews were conducted in English and six in Afrikaans. All participants indicated in their questionnaires that they were willing to participate in interviews. Whilst the questionnaires and observations provided some

data, the interviews were used as the primary source of data.

(See Appendix C for a summary of the demographic data of participants.)

3.4.6 Data analysis

The purpose of analysis was to discern and report "how people construe their world of experience from the way they talk about it" (Frake in Patton, 1987:151).

Content analysis is the process through which the complexity of data is organised and simplified into some meaningful and manageable themes or categories. As Merriam (1998:178) explains:

> … [d]ata analysis is the process of making sense out of the data. Making sense out of data involves consolidating, reducing, and interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read ... These meanings or understandings or insights constitute the findings of a study."

Some of the possible categories were identified *a priori* from existing literature and other catergories were derived from the data, i.e. *a posteriori*. Wellington describes this mixture of *a priori* and *a posteriori* " *the most rational approach to analysing qualitative data" (2000:142). This was not done intentionally but was a natural progression of the process of data analysis and I only recognised it after data analysis was completed.*

Corbin (in Strauss & Corbin, 1990) reports that there are three approaches to qualitative data analysis that can be seen as a continuum, ranging from a low level of interpretation and abstraction to the high level of interpretation and abstraction required for theory building:

> The first approach is that taken by a researcher who intends to present the data without any analysis ... The second approach is that of the researcher who is primarily concerned with accurately describing what she has understood, reconstructing the data into a recognisable reality for the people who have participated in the study ... The third approach to data analysis, the development of theory, requires the highest level of interpretation and abstraction in order to arrive at the organising concepts and tenets of a theory to explain the phenomenon of interest.

Merriam (1998:196) describes the range of these three approaches as "organising a narrative description, to constructing categories or themes that cut across data, to building theory".

In terms of the above, my research falls within the parameters of the second descriptive approach to data analysis. Although some selection and interpretation of

data is required, the main intention of study is to describe as accurately as possible my understanding of the data. The data produced are thus reconstructed into a recognisable reality for the participants and others interested in the study.

FIGURE 3.1: The process of data analysis
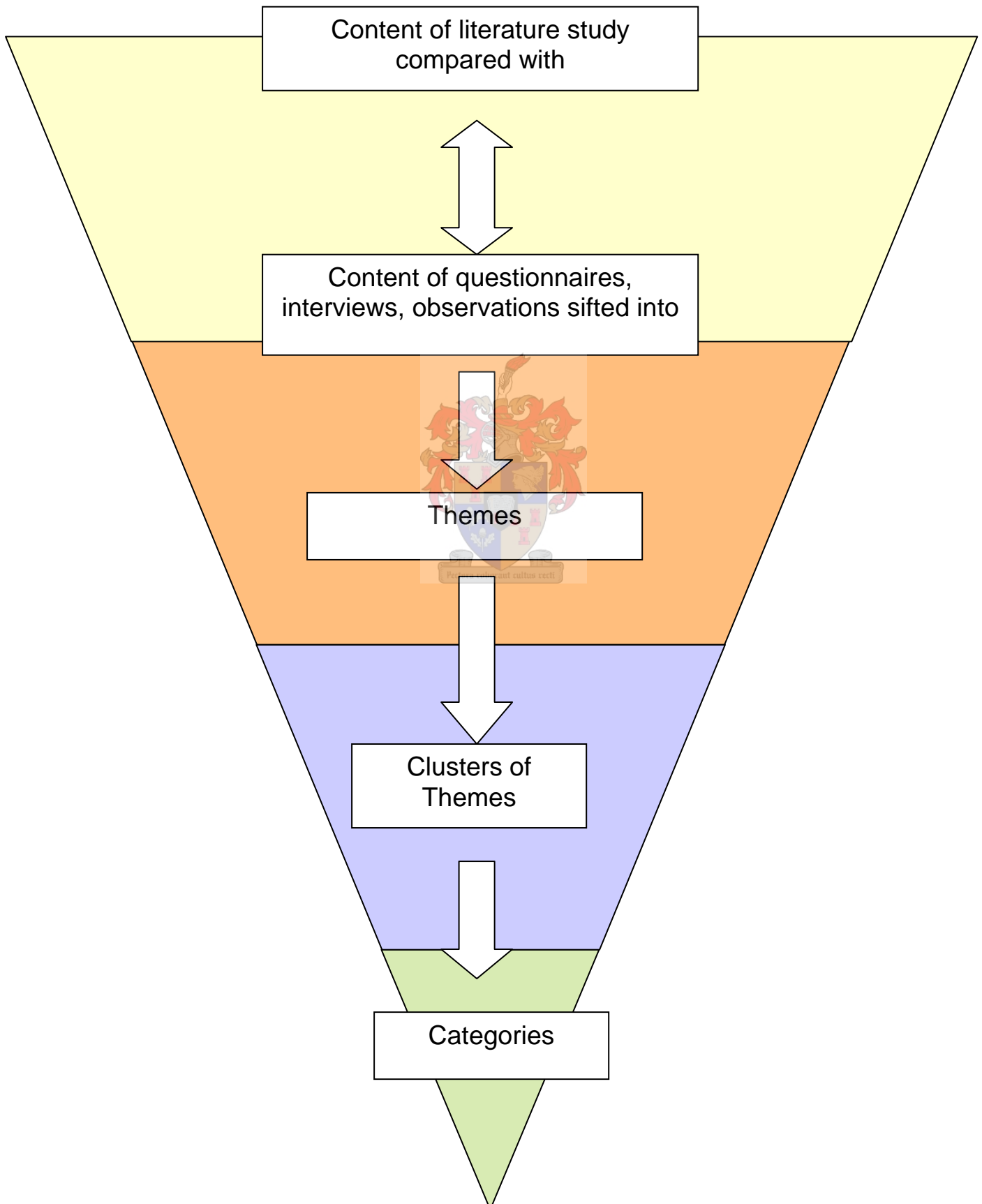
The data from the questionnaires, interviews and observations were analysed using a combination of content analysis, with themes as the unit of analysis, (see Appendix A ii for an example of the interview transcripts) and the constant comparative method.

In a sense all qualitative data analysis is content analysis. The content of interviews, field notes, and documents can be analysed qualitatively for themes and recurring patterns of meaning (Merriam 1998:160). These themes can be linked to themes derived from the observations and the literature reviewed by constantly comparing the themes across data and creating categories that encompass the clusters of themes. I followed Merriam's description of content analysis throughout the analysis of the interviews and questionnaires.

Using the constant comparative method, I as the researcher constantly compared particular data. These comparisons led to tentative categories that were then compared to each other (Merriam, 1998:159). Data from the interviews, questionnaires and observations were analysed on an ongoing basis using content analysis. The themes derived from observations and the literature became the units of analysis.

In short, the process of data analysis firstly consisted of categories that were identified according to the literature study and studying the contents of the interviews. Secondly, recurring themes were identified within the transcripts of the interview. The third step was to code these recurring themes. These cluster of themes lead to catergories which became the units of analysis studied. Findings were captured from this information and reported in Chapter 4 (see Appendix D for examples of the identification of categories, themes and coding).

3.4.7 Validity and reliability

Babbie and Mouton (2002:40) emphasise the openness of exploratory studies:

> Exploratory studies are designed as open and flexible investigations. They adopt an inductive approach as the researcher makes a series of particular observations, and attempts to patch these together to form more general but speculative hypotheses.

Qualitative research contrasts 'reliable' and 'objective' measures. Social phenomena are context-dependent and therefore to a certain extent subjective. Subjectivity is both part of the unit of analysis and the instrument of observation - the researcher.

Qualitative research aims at providing valid observations. *Validity* is defined in terms of the degree to which the researcher can produce observations that are believable for herself, the subjects being studied and the eventual readers of the study.

Internal validity asks the question, How congruent are one's findings with the experienced realities of the participants? There are certain strategies that a qualitative researcher can build into the research process to ensure trustworthiness of the data.

Triangulation is used to improve internal validity of a study this means using multiple investigators or ways of data collection. Other methods of triangulation include:

- Member checks – taking back the data and tentative interpretations to participants to check for plausibility.

- Peer review – discussions with colleagues and experts on research process.

- Researcher's position or reflexivity – critical self-reflection by the researcher on assumptions, biases and attitudes.

- Adequate engagement in data collection – adequate time spent on collecting and analysing data.

- Maximum variation – to purposefully seek and allow for diversity in sample and findings.

- Audit trail – detailed account of the methods, process and reflections during the research process.

According to Terre Blanche and Kelly (in Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:128) triangulation is the process of collecting material in as many different ways and from diverse sources as possible. The different methods of data methods and several member checks of this study were done in order to enhance triangulation.

Rich, thick descriptions – providing enough description to contextualise the findings of the study such that readers will be able to understand the extent of which their situations match that of the research content (Merriam, 2002:31)

According to Jonathan Turner (in Babbie & Mouton, 2002:41) prediction is only possible in closed systems. Human beings are subjected to multitudes of variables, with an array of possible outcomes and can thus not be described as closed systems. At best, one can, as Cronbach (cited in Merriam, 2002:28) calls it, have 'working hypotheses' – hypotheses that reflect situation-specific conditions in a particular context. These hypotheses that take account of specific conditions can be monitored and evaluated "in order to make better decisions in the future" (Merriam, 2002:28).

By providing rich, thick description the researcher attempts to strengthen the *generalisability* (also called *external validity*) in qualitative study. This enables the reader to determine how closely situations match and thus how much of the findings can be transferred.

As a member of this particular cluster of LO teachers, I was acquainted with some of the participants, which ensured easy access to information and a degree of trust but at the same time it raises questions about bias and objectivity. The fact that I did not know them very well possibly helped the participants to give honest responses and may have helped me to maintain a degree of objectivity.

It is my intention to gain insight into the thoughts, competencies and needs of teachers, and in particular LO staff. Data produced were verified as far as possible during the interviews and discussed with participants after the data analysis had been done. The reliability in a qualitative study such as this is largely a function of the researcher as research instrument. Personal bias, lack of sensitivity (or oversensitivity) to the context and variables within it, as well as communication and interviewing skills may affect the quality and reliability of data. I attempted to enhance validity and reliability by means of triangulation, member checks, researcher's reflexivity in a research journal, an audit trial and rich descriptions of participants' perceptions about how emotionalsocial competencies enhance their wellness.

3.5   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Permission to carry out the research was obtained from the Western Cape Education Department and the principal of each school that participated. All interviewees were informed of the research project and permission was obtained to use the information

gained in the project. All identifying information was deleted to protect those involved in the study and confidentiality was ensured.

3.6   SUMMARY

The theoretical basis of the research methodology was discussed in this chapter.

The qualitative nature of the research allowed the researcher to describe and study emotionalsocial competencies in a group of Life Orientation teachers. This process, as well as that of the method of data collection and data analysis procedures, was examined. The validity of the study and ethical considerations were discussed.

Presentation and discussion of the research outcomes follow in the next chapter.
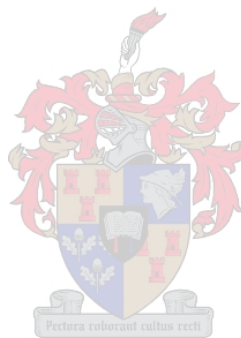
CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH OUTCOMES AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter gave a detailed description of the design and methodology used to conduct the study, gather and analyse data. In this chapter, the research findings will be reported in full, evaluated and discussed.

4.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.2.1 Literature review

The literature review revealed a number of recurring themes regarding the pressures teachers experience, their physical and psychological reactions to these pressures and the mechanisms that they use to cope with these pressures. Themes that emerged from the literature include:

- Teaching is considered one of the most stressful professions.

- Teachers' stress is a global phenomenon.

- South African teachers are experiencing a surge in responsibilities, pressures and stress.

- Teachers have different ways of coping with these pressures.

- Certain emotionalsocial competencies have been identified which are beneficial to teaching.

- The absence of certain emotionalsocial competencies is to the teacher's detriment.

- Emotionalsocial competencies are malleable – they can be learned.

Some of these themes re-surfaced in the other research data. The following were identified in the research process:

- Teaching is experienced as a highly taxing profession, especially in South Africa (EDU B).

- These pressures have a negative impact on teachers' wellness (EDU B).

- Teachers use different emotionalsocial competencies to enhance their wellness (EDU G).

- Teachers use certain strategies that support the regulation of emotionalsocial competencies and wellness (EDU G).

- The different emotionalsocial competencies have different origins

  (EDU A, EDU G).

These themes when consolidated can be reduced to a number of broad categories, for example:

- The Pressures of Teaching

- Reactions of Teachers to these Pressures

- Sources of support for teachers

- Teachers' use of Emotionalsocial competencies to enhance Wellness

- Emotionalsocial competencies that increase teachers' Wellness.

4.3   ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.3.1   Introduction

Themes were identified after studying the contents of the interviews in the light of the literature study. After recurring themes had been identified within the transcripts of the interview, they were coded. These became the units of analysis that were studied. The following findings were captured from the data.

4.3.2   The pressures of teaching

Teachers experience their job as highly stressful globally (Van Dick, Phillips, Marburg & Wagner, 2001:258; Crute, 2004:24) and teachers in South Africa are not an exception. It seems that not only do South African teachers need to cope with 'the normal' pressures of teaching but that they are carrying an added burden (Biggs, 1988:44; Van Wyk, 1998:5; Saptoe, 2000:5). Because of the unique transitions

occurring in South Africa, many South African teachers feel overburdened and overwhelmed (Olivier & Venter, 2003:186).

The literature study shows that the main sources of stress facing teachers are:

- Teaching pupils who lack motivation

- High pupil-teacher ratios

- The multi-tasking involved

- Time pressures and workload

- Maintaining discipline

- Coping with change

- The new curriculum

- Administration and management

- Inconsistency of Department of Education policy and guidelines

- Lack of support from education departments

- Dealing with colleagues

- Self-esteem and status

- Role conflict and ambiguity

- Poor working conditions

- The high crime rate (Saptoe, 2000:5; Kyriacou, 2001:29; HSRC & MRC Press Release, 2005: Mentz, 2002: 248; Smit, 2001:83; Swanepoel & Booyse, 2003: 99).
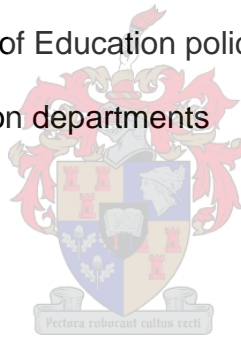
These pressures have put the wellness of all South African teachers at particularly high risk**, but women** seem to be especially vulnerable to stress in teaching (Taylor in Crute, 2004:35). All the participants in the research project who are married or/and have children indicated that these responsibilities put extra pressures on them (EDU B, EDU C, EDU D, EDU E and EDU H). They have to care for and assist their husbands and/or children. When there is conflict with or little support from their partners, they find the burden almost unbearable (EDU E and EDU H).

When faced with drastic life-changing circumstances, like the **recent political and educational changes** in South Africa, some highly capable people display impaired levels of self-confidence, feelings of inferiority and low impulse-control. Destructive thoughts, low morale and hampered actualisation of intellectual potential are other results of continuous stress (Maree & Eiselen, 2004:500-501). This corresponds with what South African teachers indicated in the 2004 HSRC and MRC study on reasons for attrition amongst South African teachers. Participants either referred to this change directly or indirectly (EDU C, EDU F and EDU G). Teacher F describes the change as 'hectic'. Those teachers that indirectly referred to the change did so by mentioning the extra marking and administration due to the recent change in educational policies. Teacher F indicates in her questionnaire that the biggest worry recently in teaching is "with all the changes we fail our learners" (EDU A, EDU B, EDU D, EDU E and EDU G).

Swanepoel and Booyse (2003:96) found that the main reasons the teachers indicated for their "task having become more difficult and time consuming" were the demands concerning lesson preparation, preparation in meeting the more diverse needs of classes and the demands that **OBE assessment** put on them. Teacher B states in her questionnaire that her biggest worry in teaching nowadays is "coping with the new syllabi." Teacher C said that she has learned to prepare during the holidays, because there is no other time she adds "Maar nou met die OBE training is dit moeilik". She went on to say that teachers need all the skills and competencies that can help them "om met die vinnige verandering te deal". In her questionnaire, Teacher A added the comment that her biggest frustration in teaching recently had been the fact that she had "te min tyd. Baie admin en organisering neem so baie tyd." Teacher C aired her frustration and worry in her questionnaire when she said that what worried her was "how long will it take to put all the new documents and systems in place" and said that her "biggest frustration in teaching is to put up with all the changes and demands of the Department [of Education]." Teacher G contended in her questionnaire that her biggest frustration "is the admin and red tape and an inefficient department of Education". The teachers' burden was raised by Teacher F when she stated in her questionnaire that "we are expected to accept all the changes, but do not receive adequate training to complete all the tasks given".

In their study on how South African teachers are experiencing the changed educational policy, Swanepoel and Booyse (2003:96) found that many of the respondents felt they did not have any time anymore for **interaction with colleagues** during a normal teaching day. Teacher G expressed this view when she said she missed the interaction terribly and that interaction "is verskriklik belangrik". Other participants described how they use their breaks in order to schedule meetings with learners and colleagues. These teachers not only miss out on valuable minutes of self-care to unwind, but also on building professional relationships.

Time pressures and their workload have made **multi-tasking** necessary in order to cope with the demands of their profession. Not only are teachers forced to cope with rapidly changed circumstances but, as Childre and Cryer (1999:51) report, another drain on people's health is having to shift concepts, shift intention and focus, to many different tasks, many times an hour. This phenomenon requires multi-tasking in order to cope and is the daily reality of teachers' working experience. This is also, according to six out of the eight participants the biggest source of stress and their biggest frustration in their teaching day (EDU A, EDU D, EDU F and EDU G). Multi-tasking very often creates role conflict and ambiguity.

Most of the participants have unique expressions or words to indicate **time pressures or pressures that the conflicting roles** they have to play, put on them. Teacher B referred to circumstances that "frazzle" teachers and Teacher H described repeatedly how she has to "jaag". Teacher A said that she sometimes has to "rondskarrel" and Teacher E also said she hates it when she has to "hardloop in die rondte" if it "gerook gaan". Teacher C stated that it "gaan dol" sometimes whilst Teacher F said she found her home a sanctuary from the "hectic" life of teaching. Teacher D described how a "wilde dag" could put her under strain and Teacher G explained how such a day "maak [haar] moeg van binne" (EDU A, EDU B, EDU C, EDU D, EDU F and EDU H).

Participants also pointed to **high pupil-teacher ratios and maintaining discipline** as sources of stress. Teacher D said," Dis net die terrible graad 8 klas. Hulle gooi my dag deurmekaar". The size of classes often leads to disciplinary problems. Teacher E reported in her questionnaire that her biggest frustration in teaching recently was "deterioration of class discipline and committed learners who suffer in the process." Teacher C reported that she could attest the influence of big classes on a teacher's

wellness. At her previous school she had had large classes, but at her present school her classes do not exceed thirty pupils per class. She says of the previous school, "Ek het baie merkwerk gehad, jy kry net nooit klaar nie. Jy is vir alles verantwoordelik jy moet kultuur doen en sport en jy moet self funksies doen".

Life Orientation teachers are particularly prone to stress, because of their idealistic goals, high emotional intensity work for extended periods, sense of responsibility and belief that their job is their vocation (Biggs, 1988:44; Mann, 2004:214). This emotional labour often seems to affect their self-esteem, self-efficacy and wellness (EDU D and EDU G). Teacher G, mentioned how she has to steel herself every time a learner was about to enter her office, and how psychologically tiring it was. She said: "Dis vir my erg, erg moeilik". Mann (2004:329) argues that there are emotional management issues for counselling and guidance professionals. It seems that for such professionals the failure to display an appropriate emotion or to reveal an inappropriate one can have serious implications for the well-being of the professional.

Maintaining **work-personal life balance** cause people to look for new jobs. Teacher A was doing further study because she "wil vir [haar] 'n agterdeur oophou" because she recognised that when she got home, she still had "honderde merkwerk en voorbereiding" to do. She felt that teaching was controlling her life in such a way that it did not allow her time to meet a possible life partner and so marry. In teaching it seems that the dictum "Only the dead have done enough" holds true. Although rather a cynical view, many teachers would agree with its sentiments.

Beginner teachers find it difficult to act assertively towards learners, colleagues and parents at the beginning of their careers (Cherniss, 1995:139). Teacher A confirmed this: "... maar jy weet nie hoe die dinge werk nie en jy voel simpel om aanmekaar te vra" and "dit is 'n ontstellende gevoel aan die begin". As they gained experience, learned and used skills and competencies, these teachers had developed self-confidence and the ability to be assertive. Teacher D says, "Ek kan sien nou vandat ek begin het, is ek meer in beheer. Ek het baie bygeleer". Cherniss (1995:139) found that this feeling of being in control of one's class, teaching material and oneself is a critical factor in combating burnout in teachers. Many teachers unfortunately leave the country or the profession before they can gain this experience. They find the going too tough (HSRC & MRC Press Release, 2005).

According to Teacher B, one of experienced teachers' biggest frustrations is **novice teachers**. She complains about arrogant young teachers who think they are "cock of the hoop". Their incompetence and ignorance create stress, which "older teachers … must sort out their classes for them".

Some of the participants felt that certain of their **personality traits** put extra strain on them. Teacher B felt that her inability to delegate has affected her health. She said: "It is very bad. Because you see, I can do it best. That's where the stress comes in". She had to land in hospital before she learned better stress management. Teacher E admitted that she tended to be " 'n verskriklike harde mens", who expected too much of her learners. She had to learn to exercise empathy and impulse control when working with her impoverished learners.

Organising events, especially at schools where parent support is absent, eats into teachers' private and preparation time. This creates stress and frustration (EDU C). One teacher described such a day where she had to organise an event on top of many other important tasks. Her first chance to go to the toilet was in the afternoon (EDU A).

Travelling to and from work, put strain on many participants, especially teachers with dependants (EDU D and EDU H). Four of the participants were responsible for transporting their children to and from school. This complicated their days and brought about stressful situations.

4.3.3 Reaction to the pressures of teaching

Participants indicated that they reacted in a manner of ways to the pressures put on them by teaching.

Many teachers **sacrificed their breaks** to finish tasks in order to relieve some of their workload. Teacher A said that the week before our interview "het ek in al my pouses gewerk". During a typical day's teaching Teacher B said they "usually have meetings at breaks" to which Teacher G added that "dit is sleg, erg sleg, want 'n mens het nodig om die bietjie oop tyd wat ek het, te gaan tee drink, drink bietjie tee met 'n personeellid en gesels" (see Appendix A interview (g), lines 71-74).

Participants also report **deprivation of family and / or friends** because of the pressures of teaching. Teacher A reported that a colleague of hers simply did not have time for her children and that "sy skeep haar kinders so af; sy kry haar kinders

eintlik jammer". Teacher C felt that " [haar] familie voel so afgeskeep". Until recently Teacher A was worried that she was so busy teaching, she did not have time to meet possible life partners; she now makes a concerted effort to also make time for social relaxation. Teacher G said that the responsibilities of teaching had changed her. She explained that "waar [sy] 'n lekker sosiale persoon was, sien [sy] [haar]self nie meer so by die skool nie, [sy] sien [haar]self ernstig besig met 'n frons tussen die oë" (see Appendix A interview (g), lines 84-86).

Participants reported that constant stress was detrimental to teachers' Impulse control. When they **lose control of their impulses** it creates an extremely negative atmosphere and a breakdown of relationships. Teacher H stated that she was so pressed for time that most of the time she ran on adrenalin. She went on to say that "as daar dan iets verkeerd gaan kan 'n mens baie maklik 'snap' … dan reageer ek aggressief. En dit skaad verhoudings". The researcher was a witness to this on the day of the interview. We had trouble finding time for the interview because of Teacher H's busy schedule. While we were busy with the interview, one of the participant's children wanted to ask her something. Teacher H sent the child away several times with the explanation that we were busy doing a tape-recorded interview. After several requests and warnings she sent the child on its way with a few smacks to the bottom with a ruler. Teacher H was living under several pressures and seemed at the end of her tether, both physically and psychologically. Teacher B explained that being "frazzled" resulted in a deterioration of teachers' self-control. She illustrated this statement by saying: "If you walk down this passage you should hear the screaming. There is the most negative atmosphere".

High stress levels often leads to **ill health.** Teacher A's doctor suspected that her physical complaints during school terms were most probably stress related. Teacher A reported in her questionnaire that she had been suffering from occasional feelings of helplessness, neck pains, sleeplessness and gastrointestinal disturbances for the past five years. It is interesting that she had been teaching for five years. Teacher B had experienced headaches, stomach ulcers, high blood pressures, heart disease and depression for the past 10 years. She had suffered from serious medical conditions that are probably stress related. She was admitted to intensive care for six weeks because she was contracted meningitis and had a light stroke. Teacher G provided the information that she had suffered from depression for the last five years

and from sleeplessness for the past six months. Teacher H had suffered headaches, extremely high blood pressure, stomach ulcers and sleeplessness for the past year. She had started teaching the year before after an absence from teaching. She had to start teaching because of the financial pressures after her divorce settlement. Teachers A and E suffered from occasional sleeplessness.

Teachers also suffer mentally. As Teacher H put it: "Behalwe dat dit 'n mens liggaamlik aftakel, doen dit geestelik ook". These teachers reported times of being utterly exhausted. Teacher A described how after an extremely taxing day she was tired and "baie na aan trane". Similarly, Teacher F stated: "I'm tired when I go home in the afternoon 'cause if you share so lot from yourself you are tired, apart from the work that you have to do". Three others reported in same vein. "Ek doen alles op 'n drafstap" says Teacher H "… as ek nou vir lank so aangaan … dan voel dit vir my, sjoe, ek is doodmoeg". At the time of the study Teacher A was considering resigning from her teaching job because "as jy die middag uit daardie gebou uitstap dat jy nie klaar is nie, jy het nog honderde merkwerk en voorbereiding". Teacher B estimated that "many teachers on [her] staff is on Prozac, tranquillisers, whatever … at least 60%".

After limited studies, Bar-On hypothesises that there appears to be a relationship between ESI and physical health. It would seem that (a) the ability to be aware of oneself, (b) the ability to manage emotions and handle stress, (c) the ability to solve problems of a personal nature, and (d) the ability to maintain an optimistic disposition are significantly related to physical health (Bar-On, 2005:13). He also found that there is a possible relationship between ESI and psychological health. Findings from limited studies suggest that the most powerful ESI competencies, skills and facilitators that impact psychological health are (a) the ability to manage emotions and cope with stress, (b) the drive to accomplish personal goals in order to actualise one's inner potential and lead a more meaningful life, and (c) the ability to verify feelings and thinking (Bar-On, 2005:13).

4.3.4 Sources of support for teachers

Teacher A reported that living in her school's hostel acts as a support for her. She did not have to prepare meals and found learners generally supportive and helpful.

She said that living in the hostel helped "verskriklik. She also sometimes asked **learners** for help.

Teacher C is very aware of how **parents' support** and involvement in school activities can lighten the load of teachers. At her previous school there had been very little parent participation and the circumstances were "verskriklike stresvolle".

The support of **colleagues** is also beneficial for the effective functioning and improved wellness of teachers. Teacher A ascribes the support of colleagues as the most important factor to pull her through on a particular taxing day. Colleagues not only lend practical help but also provide much needed emotional support, according to Teacher G (see Appendix A interview (g), lines 74-79).

Teachers who do not have dependants also found they were not as constrained. Teacher G said she was aware that her life is "minder gekompliseerd" than her friends with families. Teacher A explained that although she would want a family one day the fact that she was still **single** helped greatly.

Other participants revealed that their **families** provide considerable support. Teacher B asked her daughter to help her with certain tasks and she had transferred some of the skills she had developed by being a mother to her work as a teacher. Teacher D often asked her husband for advice. Teacher F was single and lived with her aged mother and brother. Her family provided much needed emotional and spiritual support. She contended that her family understood and accepted her completely.

Some participants found that **exercise** was essential for their wellbeing. Teacher C had very few physical complaints and she admitted that sport, particularly dancing, was her passion. Teacher G said she found exercise invigorating. Even after a tiring day, thirty minutes of exercise would provide her with "ongelooflike energie".

Associations, organisations and church also provided support and were often a source of guidance to teachers. Teacher E enjoyed participating in the welfare organisation of her church. Teacher F not only found solace in her religion, she also received valuable training from her church. Teacher C received considerable emotionalsocial training and support through the dance association that she belonged to.

The resource that many of the participants mentioned was **experience and age**. Teachers A and D were the youngest participants and could already see how much

they had improved and relaxed over the couple of years that they had been teaching. They both put it down to experience. Teacher C presented a similar view when she said there was "sekere goed wat [sy] deur die jare agter [ge]kom het en ontwikkel het. Experience was one of Teacher B's most important resources. She called some of the skills that she had developed "an age related thing".

4.3.5 Emotionalsocial competencies used by teachers to improve wellness

ESI has come to be viewed as an important factor in the quality of one's general emotional well-being, as well as an important predictor of one's ability to succeed in the classroom and on the job (Stone *et al.*, 2004).

Teachers possess and use certain emotionalsocial competencies and coping mechanisms to guide and assist their personalities and self-management in order to maintain efficiency and general wellness. The participants of this research study revealed certain emotionalsocial competencies in their narrations of a typical taxing day and they referred to their ESC directly during the interviews. They had a clear understanding of the ESC they lacked.

Empathy was most often mentioned by participants in their narration of a taxing teaching day. Teacher A empathised strongly with teachers with families to care for. Teacher B empathised with the learners and how learners were treated by teachers. She had this advice to offer to teachers: "Remember what it was like to be a child and be little, have somebody in front treating you like you are a bloody idiot. Just because you don't understand doesn't mean you're an idiot. And you are distracted by all these people around you or you're not comfortable or hungry". Teacher E also empathised with learners and their "verskillende omstandighede". Teacher D displayed her empathy with children when she said she had " 'n passie om met kinders te werk wat sukkel. [Sy] verstaan hulle".

Cherniss (1995:69) found that when teachers grow in self-confidence it enables them to become more open and compassionate towards their learners. Self-confidence leads to self-tolerance; self-tolerance helps them to become more tolerant and compassionate towards learners.

Emotional self-awareness is a skill fundamental to many of the key features of ESI, including impulse control, self-motivation, empathy and interpersonal relations (Lane, in Bar-On & Parker, 2000:186). Several participants displayed emotional self-

awareness. This refers to the ability to be aware of, recognise, and understand one's emotions. Teacher E described how impatient she sometimes was because she expected too much of learners. She expressed remorse and admitted that it was not in the best interests of the learners. She also said she wanted to have the necessary skills to cope better with the demands of teaching. Teacher F admitted that she got upset and hurt by colleagues that "overstep the boundaries". She expected them to know and respect her after sixteen years in the same staffroom. Teacher G expressed the view that the pressures of work had changed her personality. She said: "… waar ek 'n lekker sosiale persoon was, sien ek myself nie meer so by die skool nie, ek sien myself ernstig besig met 'n frons tussen die oë" (see Appendix A interview (g), lines 84-86). Teacher H had learned that she was too unsympathetic and she realised that sometimes when she was too pressured she reacted in ways that damages important relationships. She admitted: "Dan is dit soms vir my moeilik om myself te beheer. Dan reageer ek aggressief. En dit skaad verhoudings". She had also realised that she had to look after her own wellness in order to support her children: "Mens moet soms erken dat ek net so diep geraak is, en ook na myself kyk". According to Stein and Book (2000:246) teachers that were rated top during evaluation scored consistently highest in self-awareness in the Bar-On EQ-i[TM.]. It is the first step to effective self-management and staying motivated in a taxing profession. Self-awareness, as is the case with so many other ESI factors, is again a key competency in the management of stress (Slaski & Cartwright, 2003:234).

Stein and Book (2001:210) define **optimism** as the ability to look at the brighter side of life and maintain a positive attitude even in the face of adversity. Many of the participants declared that their optimism saw them through tough times. Teacher E contended: "Ek probeer maar vir myself êrens moed kry. Ek weet nie hoe ek dit reg kry nie maar ek gaan aan". Teacher F enjoyed teaching because she compared it to her first job as a radiographer. She was also motivated to look on the bright side of things by her religious commitment. Teacher H demonstrated her self-declared optimism when she said she looked forward to the future. Teacher C said that "[Sy] dink hulle sien [haar] altyd positief. [Sy] lag altyd". Stein and Book (2000:246) report that elementary teachers who rated themselves as above-average teachers scored highest in optimism of Bar-On's Bar-On EQ-i[TM]. They also scored significantly higher in problem-solving, self-actualisation, stress tolerance and happiness. The true

optimist hopes that the future will be better, but this hope is within the parameters of reality.

Through **reality-testing**, we may find that we are setting unreal or unreasonable targets, and decide to adjust or replace them. Teacher E said that she had learned to say: "… dit kan nie alles op een dag gedoen word nie dit is onmoontlik, maar jy kan net doen wat jy moet doen" when she felt that circumstances were overwhelming. Teacher A described how she had to assess the expectations that others had of her to what she knew to be possible. She acted assertively because she realised that the demands were unrealistic. Teacher A says: "… hoe langer 'n mens skoolhou dink ek 'n mens se selfvertroue neem toe. Toe ek begin skoolhou was dit ook vir my 'n baie moeilik … dit is moelik om daardie balans te hou. Jy moet nie vir alles ja sê nie, maar jy moet ook nie te veel nee sê nie". Teacher B was critically ill before she had realised that the expectations that she has for herself is detrimental to her health; she had decided that "this year[she][is] simply a leaf on a stream. [She will] try to worry less and allow things to happen without worrying or controlling them. And it's OK". Reality testing may help many teachers, and especially new ones, to prevent disappointment, help in managing stress and avoid ultimate disillusionment with teaching as a career (Cary Cherniss, 1995:39). Teacher B comment sums this up: "[Teachers] should know what they're in for".

Social responsibility means being sensitive to other people's needs and being able to use one's talents for the good of the group, not just fort oneself. Teacher B had to raise her siblings when her mother passed away. She had to be the "mommy". She credited this experience with sensitising her to social responsibility. In her comment she said that "… people don't understand each other. They don't understand others' cultures, they don't understand the social hierarchy, the homes people come from, they don't understand age related issues, they absolutely don't have any empathy for other people and their responsibilities towards society". Teacher C focused on her colleagues. She felt strongly that she had a social responsibility towards her colleagues. She explained: "Ek voel om op te bou en om saam te werk en dan is dit vir my baie minder stresvol". Teacher F, on the other hand, spoke of "[her] children", which reflected her commitment and her sense responsibility towards her learners.

Teacher A had to learn to be more assertive towards learners and staff in order to survive the demands of teaching. She felt very strongly that **assertiveness** was one

of the most important ESC to have in teaching. She contended that teachers should not be afraid to say 'no' when they saw that colleagues, parents and or learners were manipulating or using them. Teacher F's comments were concerned with classroom discipline. She said that discipline in the class was not possible if the teacher could not be assertive. She herself had definite borders and rules that she would not allow to be crossed.

After Teacher B had been very ill the previous year one of the decision to benefit her wellness had been that "[she] [has] also learned to say no to people and their requests".

Stein and Book (2000:246) report that secondary teachers who rated themselves as below-average teachers lacked **flexibility** according their results in Bar-On's Bar-On EQ-i[TM]. Teacher F admitted that although flexibility did not come to her naturally, she was forced by her health to be more flexible. As she puts it: "So this year I am simply a leaf on a stream. I try to worry less and allow things to happen without me worrying or controlling them. And it's OK". Teacher E felt that sometimes the situation overwhelmed her. She said: "Sommige kere ek ek weet nie waar ek is nie, maar sê vir myself aag wat môre is nog 'n dag dit sal maar beter gaan".

People with **impulse control** have the self-restraint to evaluate the consequences of their potential actions and assume responsibility for those consequences (Goleman, 1998:93; Stein & Book, 2001:186). Stein and Book (2000:246) report that lacking impulse control leads to problems such as loss of temper, lack of patience and poor organisational skills. Teacher C said that some mornings her four-year-old son really frustrated her. She said: "So dan moet ek die tyd wat ek skooltoe ry eers weer myelf agtermekaar kry". She added that she was not usually a moody person, "Ek haal nie my frustrasies op enige een by die skool uit nie". Teacher C said when she became upset it helped "Haal … diep asem, en dink aan al die dinge wat ek die dag moet doen.

Stein and Book (2001:171) define **stress tolerance** as the ability to withstand adverse events and stressful situations without falling apart by actively and positively coping with stress. This definition implies the need for flexibility, optimism and high self-regard for a person to have good stress tolerance. Teacher A had come to realise through attending a Covey course that "[haar] lewe is heeltemal skeef getrek.

Dis net skool, skool, skool. Nou maak [sy] tyd vir stap en kuier. En dit gaan baie beter". Teacher G did exercise to manage her stress.

Other ESC that were mentioned or reflected in their narrations by the participants were **self-regard** (EDU E), **happiness** (EDU E and EDU F), **problem-solving** (EDU A and EDU B) and **self-actualisation** (EDU C).

Participants felt there are **definite practical skills** that support emotionalsocial competencies and enhance the wellness of teachers. The skill that received the biggest support was **working in an organised way**. Participants explained that in an occupation which expects so many diverse tasks from teachers, this skill is not only important for the effective completion of tasks but also for general well-being (EDU A, EDU B, EDU C, EDU D, EDU E, EDU F, EDU G and EDU H).

Teachers have many masters and therefore many participants felt strongly that **multi-tasking** is a skill that is essential to the wellness of teachers. Multi-tasking requires one to plan and manage one's time effectively, to problem-solve and to manage one's stress levels. Several participants feel that multi-tasking is a very important skill for a teacher's survival (EDU A, EDU B, EDU D, interview (g), lines 57-77).

According to the participants of this research project the emotionalsocial competencies that they used have **different origins**. Many emotionsocial competencies **were learned by them or they received training** (EDU A, EDU C, EDU D, EDU F and EDU G). Other teachers felt they learned some competencies from a **mentor** in teaching (EDU A, EDU C and EDU E). Some teachers felt that they were **naturally inclined** to develop some of these competencies, as if they were born with it (EDU A, EDU B, EDU G and EDU H.

One participant felt that the competencies she acquired by **being a mother** helped her greatly in teaching (EDU B).

4.3.6 Emotionalsocial competencies that would support wellness in teachers

Participants expressed strong opinions about the **emotionalsocial competencies that would support wellness in teachers** in general and themselves. Although one participant felt that all the competencies as set out in Bar-On's model on ESI, would benefit teachers (EDU D), other participants were more specific. The emotionalsocial competencies that they felt help most to enhance teachers' wellness were

assertiveness, stress management, empathy, problem-solving and stress tolerance.

To conclude: teachers do use emotionalsocial competencies to cope with the pressures of teaching. The competencies the participants reported most were **empathy, assertiveness, optimism, self-awareness, reality-testing, social responsibility, flexibility, impulse control and stress tolerance**

They also felt that certain skills support emotionalsocial competencies in coping with the pressures of teaching. The most important were working in an organised way and multi-tasking.

The emotionalsocial competencies the participants thought would enhance teachers' wellness overall, were **assertiveness, stress management, empathy, problem-solving and stress tolerance**.

4.4   SUMMARY

The research findings were listed, analysed and discussed in this chapter. A number of themes emerged across the research study. These were condensed into a handful of themes, namely:

- The Pressures of Teaching

- Reactions of Teachers to these Pressures

- Teachers use emotionalsocial competencies to enhance Wellness

- Emotionalsocial competencies that would improve teachers' Wellness.

The themes were then analysed, organised into categories and discussed in greater detail.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The previous chapters described the purpose of this study, provided a review of salient literature, outlined the research design and methodology and discussed the research findings of a qualitative study done on the emotionalsocial competencies that teachers perceive to use in coping with the strains of teaching

This chapter attempts to draw together the many threads and present (in summary form) an authentic picture of the meaning that teachers make of the emotionalsocial competencies they use to enhance their wellness in the face of the many pressures they experience.

5.2   SUMMARY OF RESEARCH AND FINDINGS

This study set out to investigate the primary research question, What emotionalsocial competencies do teachers perceive to help them deal with the pressures of teaching?

Secondary, the researcher attempted to answer the secondary research questions, What do teachers perceive to be pressures in their lives, and, What are the possible support systems that help teachers cope better and enhance wellness?

5.2.1 What emotionalsocial competencies do teachers use to enhance their wellness?

Teachers do use emotionalsocial competencies to cope with the pressures of teaching. The competencies the participants reported most were empathy, assertiveness, optimism, self-awareness, reality-testing, social responsibility, flexibility, impulse control and stress tolerance.

They also felt that certain skills support emotionalsocial competencies in coping with the pressures of teaching; the most important were: working in an organised way, and multi-tasking.

The emotionalsocial competencies the participants believed would enhance teachers' wellness overall, are: assertiveness, stress management, empathy, problem-solving ability and stress tolerance.

5.2.2 What are the pressures of teaching?

Teachers experience a multitude of pressures. The sources of pressure mentioned most often are: role conflict and ambiguity; multi-tasking; time pressures and workload; coping with change; a new curriculum approach; administration and management; inconsistency of Department of Education policy and guidelines; and lack of support from educational departments.

The pressures that teachers face often have a deleterious effect on the individual teacher, her support system and the teaching profession as a whole. Their working circumstances affect wellness, resulting in bad health, exhaustion, sleeplessness and their leaving the profession.

5.2.3 What are possible sources of support for teachers?

The following are considered to aid teachers in fighting attrition and strengthening wellness: teaching experience, exercise, colleagues, family and friends, being single and association with organisations e.g. religious and cultural organisations.

5.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to support teachers during a difficult time of transition, teachers can be strengthened and empowered. It seems that some schools that can afford it and are enlightened are doing this already. However, most participants in this research project felt that the initiative should come from the Department of Education.

5.3.1 Training in emotionalsocial competencies

Cherniss (1995:81-82) found that change brings about higher levels of psychological stress in teachers. Without support, forced change may even lead to greater rigidity. South African teachers are not only forced to cope with recent drastic changes in their educational system but also have to face a variety of complex challenges every

day, many of which are related to students' social and emotional needs. The degree of success these professionals have in addressing issues depends on how well they can simultaneously reflect, make judgements, and act effectively, which directly or indirectly influence learners.

Teachers need to develop a framework to guide daily decision-making within the real world of the school that is based on reflection and inquiry. However, many teachers are unable to explain the reason for their actions. Indeed, studies of teachers' decision making frequently find it to be "more reactive than reflective ... and more routinized than conscious" (Zins *et al.* in Salovey & Sluyter, 1997:257). For example, certain words and actions of others are more likely to "push a personal button" and result in reaction. Teachers who can reflect on these emotions are more likely to learn about themselves, and they manage themselves more effectively as teachers (Zins *et al.* in Salovey & Sluyter, 1997:260).

There is growing empirical evidence that the type of competencies most closely linked with ESI are strongly linked with one's ability to cope with environmental demands and uncertainties. Thus ESI has come to be viewed as an important factor in the quality of one's general emotional well-being, as well as an important predictor of one's ability to succeed in the classroom and on the job (Stone *et al.***,** 2004)

There are basically two ways to increase ESI in an organisation: 1) hire people who are emotionalsocially intelligent or 2) develop ESI in the current members (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001:6).

Regardless of the differences in approaches on ESI, most theorists believe that the relevant emotionalsocial competencies or abilities are quite malleable (Bar-On, in Bar-On & Parker, 2000), that is, it is assumed that emotionalsocial competencies can be developed and enhanced via appropriate interventions.

Only one of the participants in this research project felt that she did not want training in any emotionalsocial competencies. Teacher B said of such training: "You know, that is half an hour out of my day that I could have done something more important. Motivational things like that don't do it for me". All the other participants expressed a need for training in emotionalsocial competencies. Teacher G said succinctly: "By die kursusse leer jy geweldig baie en jy kom regtig rejuvenated terug".

Teachers should have a choice which competencies they want to work at because: "Ek dink net wat belangrik is dat onderwysers altyd die keuse moet hê om sulke ontwikkelings by te woon, as hulle nie 'n keuse het nie, dan word dit 'n moet, dan is hulle nie gemotiveerd nie. M.a.w. sê liewer vyf van julle mag, of slegs vyf van julle mag gaan" (EDU G). Personal needs of teachers' differ and therefore they need to be able to choose which competencies they want to improve (EDU E).

The easiest way for government to create an effective and sustainable system to ensure emotionalsocial intelligent teachers, is to train them at tertiary level.

Teacher G said: "Die departement het 'n verantwoordelikheid ten opsigte van hul werknemers absoluut … ek dink as die departement van onderwys enigsins hulle sout werd is, sal hulle sorg dat daar sulke dienste is of kursusse is vir onderwysers"). She went on to say that the trainers at such courses should be well-chosen because "die departement [kan] sommer vir enige outjie in hulle diens sê, gaan bied gou hierdie kursus aan. Dan kom sê hy: ek het nou nie regtig kennis hieroor nie, maar my departement sê ek moet julle inlig hieroor".

According to Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002:158-159), in order to teach emotionalsocial competencies successfully, the teacher needs to develop her own competencies as well. These competencies are best learned by learners through modelling (of teachers and all significant others). In addition, training in emotions will provide teachers with a greater capacity to connect with the learners – to see, hear, and understand their learners thoroughly, with focus and intention. This is necessary to form a relationship of trust, cooperation, and collaboration, which, in turn, is necessary to effectively empower learners with the necessary skills and knowledge (Zins *et al.* in Salovey & Sluyter, 1997:260). Teacher D explains that "[sy] besef, [sy] leer lewensoriëntering vir kinders, so [sy] moet kan [weet hoe]! Daai skills laat leer 'n mens verskriklik baie daaruit".

For a school to promote ESI successfully, knowledge of these competencies and training in them should be integrated into all subjects and learning areas. It is not only the responsibility of LO teachers but of all the teachers and learning areas. A whole-school commitment and effort will be needed to effect this: staff development programmes can be used to develop the necessary competencies.

The Ontario Principals' Council (OPC) leadership study sought to identify key Emotionalsocial competencies required by school administrators (principals and vice-principals) to meet the demands and responsibilities of their positions successfully. The results of the study suggest that professional development programmes would be wise to focus on promoting or developing the following abilities:

- Emotional self-awareness (the ability to recognise and understand one's feelings and emotions)

- Self-actualisation (ability to tap potential capacities and skills in order to improve oneself)

- Empathy (ability to be attentive to, understand, and appreciate the feelings of others)

- Interpersonal relationships (ability to establish and maintain mutually satisfying relationships)

- Flexibility (ability to adjust one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviour to changing situations and conditions)

- Problem solving (ability to identify and define problems as well as to generate potentially effective solutions)

- Impulse control (ability to resist or delay an emotional behaviour) (Graczyk *et al.* in Bar-On & Parker, 2000:400; Stone *et al.*, 2004).
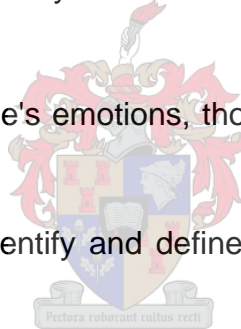
The present research study has found evidence that confirms the above findings.

Zins *et al.* (in Mayer & Sluyter, 1999:260) emphasise that basic knowledge of emotionalsocial competencies is not enough; teachers must "learn to apply it, as change enacted without adequate knowledge seldom accomplishes its intended goals." Teacher C said bluntly: "Maar my ding is dit. As jy nie die vaardighede oefen nie, help dit bitter min. So ek geniet dit om kursusse te doen soos om stap vir stap die vaardighede".

Teachers who wish to engage in training activities must often do so after hours or give up the little available time they have at school (e.g. lunch). Staff development sessions are ideal for training in such skills, because collaborative inquiry enhances

learning but also promotes the "letting go" of old patterns of behaviour (Zins *et al.* in Mayer & Sluyter, 1999:261

Emotionalsocial competence training can serve as the framework for prevention and wellness enhancement objectives because it focuses on promoting specific social and coping skills as well as providing the necessary environmental support that is conducive to both prevention and wellness efforts (Graczyk *et al.* in Bar-On and Parker, 2000:397).

According to George (2000:1035), people with above-average levels of ESI are usually above average in their ability to cope with stress. This ability is very important for generating and maintaining enthusiasm, confidence, and cooperation in the schools. Stress is an inevitable part of teaching, but over the long term, people are more optimistic and trusting if they work with or for individuals who know how to cope under pressure. It seems that South African teachers can benefit from such personal growth.

5.3.2 Support and supervision for counselling staff

Given the reports on stressors and the reported distress perceived by some LO teachers, it seems appropriate that LO teachers and their colleagues should be attentive to the behavioural signs of stress and burnout dimensions (e.g. physical ailments, withdrawal, disagreeableness) and be prepared to provide prevention and intervention service for those in need. Various intrapersonal, interpersonal and organisational strategies can be learned by these professionals.

5.3.3 Better support and training for the New Curriculum

Teachers are frustrated by the "demands and changes" the Department of Education is imposing on them (Mentz, 2002: 248; Smit, 2001:83; Swanepoel & Booyse, 2003: 99). They feel they are not receiving "adequate training" and that they are "failing [their] learners" (Questionnaire F). They also have a need for consistency. In her questionnaire Teacher C posed the question: "How long will it take to put all new documents and systems in place?"

5.3.4 Improved pre-service training for teacher

There is a failure to prepare educational students in the essential emotionalsocial skills that matter most for their success in schools. ESI training should be

incorporated as an elective in training, thus allowing, not only for the growth of ESI competencies, but also for the effective transmission of these essential life skills to learners. Teacher A said: "Ek voel baie keer van die dosente wat vir ons klas gee het nog nooit in die onderwys gestaan nie, hulle weet nie regtig hoe 'n onderwyser se dag lyk nie, so hulle moet 'n mens bietjie kan voorberei. Wat 'n mens daar leer is ver van die praktyk" (EDU A).

A second major implication for pre-service training is that university and college training programmes should address well-being issues, including emphasising understanding of transactional models of occupational stress, training in emotionalsocial competencies and effective stress management techniques. For example, the value of reflection must be instilled and supported skills during the professional training which begins at university. Too often these institutions focus only on information that can be directly applied to the curriculum, thus ignoring the need to understand the underlying emotions that future teachers will have to deal with in and outside their classes (Zins *et al.* in Mayer & Sluyter, 1999:260).

Teacher G said: "Daai studente gaan nie eintlik weet wat hulle leer nie ... ek dink jy moet vir hulle 'n emergency kit gee waaarmee jy hulle kan toerus as jy so voel. Bv. onder stress doen gou die volgende vier goed of draf gou deur hierdie vrae". Two of the participants speak from experience when they suggested that the Covey course on the *Seven Habits of Very Effective People* should be a compulsory component of pre-training. Teacher A said: "Ek dink nogal daai vraag is iets wat ek by daai Covey kursus geleer het. Teacher D commented: "In ons eerste jaar het ons die Covey kursus op universiteit gedoen. Dit help baie".

Teacher F suggested in her questionnaire that teachers should be prepared during pre-service training to "be assertive in the classroom" as "learners show no respect when they are confronted by a naïve student". She went on to suggest that student teachers should be trained and evaluated during their practice teaching on "classroom control, filling in a register, discipline in the classroom, conduct and interview/confronting a difficult learner". She considered that student-teachers were "very innocent about the reality of the social environment e.g. single parent, drug-abuse, etc."

Teacher A suggested that the transition from training to practice could be considerably improved if schools made sure that each beginning teacher had a mentor at her new school. She averred: "… ek dink iets wat geweldig kan help, as jy by 'n skool kom dat jy miskien met iemand sal kennis maak, 'n ervare onderwyser wat letterlik saam met jou deur die eerste kwartaal gaan, ek bedoel nou nie dat vir elke dingetjie wat jy doen moet sy daar wees nie, maar om vir jou bietjie leiding te gee. Om jou te help met vrae".

5.3.5 Support services for teachers

Teachers seem to have too much to do. The fact that most of them are very responsible and see their work as a vocation makes it difficult for them to decide what to leave and what to do. Although training in emotionalsocial competencies may help considerably, it is important for the Department of Education to decrease the student-teacher ratio so teachers can manage their tasks more effectively.

One practical suggestion comes from Teacher B who felt that schools should "… get a mommy at home, maybe an ex teacher, to mark [papers]".

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

The nature of the research, a basic qualitative interpretive study, limits the findings and application of the data. The insight gained and the feedback from the data, however, might offer an understanding of emotionalsocial competencies, and the way they impact on the general wellness of a large section of teachers.

Specific limitations of the study include me, the researcher. Being acquainted with some of the participants might have influenced the objectivity of the researcher and participants. I am also not happy with the some interviews (especially the first ones) that I conducted. I feel the phrasing of questions was clumsy in some instances. Questions could have been more refined, resulting in more precise and unambiguous questions and therefore richer responses. The ability to draw up of questionnaires and conduct interviews is obviously a skill to be honed.

The semi-structured interviews were most helpful in gaining knowledge of the subjective experience of the pressures and emosionalsocial competencies of the subjects but as Sutton and Wheatley (2003:335) warn, the semi-structured interview might also result in teachers only selecting what they saw as salient experience

rather giving a full picture of the daily experiences of the teachers. A day-to-day diary is most often better to gather that information.

Assessing ESI through self-report measures also presents the same dilemma one would face in trying to assess analytic intelligence by asking people, "Do you think you're smart?" Of course most people want to appear smart. In addition, individuals may not have a good idea of their own strengths and weaknesses, especially in the domain of emotions (Grewal & Salovey, 2005:336). The self-report measures (especially the questionnaires) of this study may therefore have had an impact on the results of the research.

Although the majority of teachers are female, the fact that *all* the respondents in this study were female may limit the generalisation of results.

5.5   CONCLUSIONS

The literature reviewed on this topic and the research study suggests that teachers experience a multitude of pressures that influence the wellness of individuals and systems, alike.

Teachers use certain emotionalsocial competencies that enhance their wellness. These ESC are often supported by organisational skills, such as *working in an organised way* and *multi-tasking*.
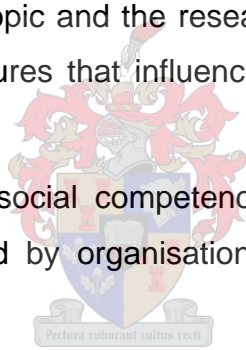
These emotionalsocial competencies and organisational skills can be learned, which would help teachers to function more effectively and efficiently. Many teachers mentioned teaching experience as one of the most important factors in being efficient. If that is taken together with the fact that the biggest loss of teachers happens within ten years of starting to teach, it suggests that there is a strong case for pre-service teacher education to include training in and development of emotionalsocial competencies.

Teachers are often sceptical of change or innovation. In South Africa particularly teachers feel that they have been subjected to too much innovation and change. Many have lost faith in the process because within months such innovations are revoked or changed once again. Careful research, adaptation and implementation need to be done so that leadership can endorse such programmes fully and influence teachers to participate fully in such training.

Further research needs to be done on the best time to empower teachers with ESC, and which competencies are needed before specific courses are developed for teachers. What seems clear is that it is better for schools to have a little empowerment than no empowerment at all.

Empowering and supporting teachers are critical issues which need urgent attention. This not only in the interests of teachers, but ultimately it is in the interests of each and every child.

Emotions can either be managed constructively or destructively. If teachers can manage and enhance their own ESI, their core business – developing the child – can occur in a constructive, positive and nurturing environment.
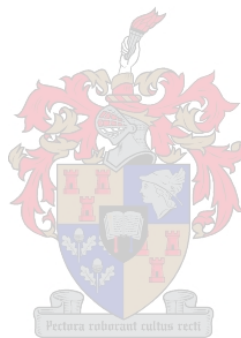
REFERENCES

Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. 2002. *The Practice of Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Barrett, F.E. & Salovey, P. (eds.). 1997. *Emotional Development and Emotional Intelligence: Educational Implications*. New York: BasicBooks.

Bar-On, R. 1988. The development of a concept of psychological well-being. Grahamstown: Rhodes University. (Doctoral dissertation)

Bar-On, R. 2001. Emotional Intelligence and self-actualisation. In: J. Ciarrochi, J.P. Forgas, & J.D. Mayer (eds.), *Emotional Intelligence in Everyday Life: A Scientific Inquiry.* Lillington, NC: Edwards Brothers: 82-97.

Bar-On, R. 2000. Emotional and Social Intelligence: Insights from the Emotional Quotient Inventory. In: Bar-On, R. & Parker, J.D.A. (eds.). *The Handbook of Emotional Intelligence* (363-388). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bar-On, R. 2005. The Bar-On Model of Emosional-Social Intelligence (ESI). *Psicothema,* 17:1-20.

Biggs, J. 1988. Stress and the school management team**.** *Neon*, 53:44-48.

Brackett, M.A., Mayer, J.D. & Warner, R.M. 2004. Emotional intelligence and its relation to everyday behaviour. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 36:1387-1402.

Cherniss, C. 1995. *Beyond Burnout – Helping Teachers, Nurses, Therapists and Lawyers from Stress and Disillusionment*. New York: Routledge.

Cherniss, C. 2000. Emotional Intelligence – what is it and why it matters? Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, New Orleans, LA, April 15, 2000 Consortium for Research in Emotional Intelligence in Organizations. http://www.eiconsortium.org.June.2005

Cherniss, C. 2000. Social and Emotional Competence in the Workplace. In: Bar-On, R. & Parker, D.A. (eds.). *The Handbook of Emotional Intelligence*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass/Wiley Publishers: 433-458.

Cherniss, C. & Goleman, D (eds.). 2001. *The Emotionally Intelligent Workplace: How to Select for, Measure, and Improve Emotional Intelligence in Individuals, Groups, and Organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass/Wiley Publishers.

Cherniss, C. & Goleman, D. 2001. An EI-based Theory of Performance. Consortium for Research in Emotional Intelligence in Organizations. http://www.eiconsortium.org.

Childre, D. & Cryer, B. 1999. *From Chaos to Coherence: Advancing Emotional and Organizational Intelligence Through Inner Quality Management*. Boston: Butterworth Heinemann.

Cobb, C.D. & Mayer, J.D. 2000. Emotional Intelligence: What the research says. *Educational Leadership,* 58:14-18.

Conte, J.M. 2005. A review and critique of emotional intelligence measures. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, 26:433-440.

Covey, S.R. 1989. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.* London: Simon & Schuster.

Crute, S. 2004. Stressed out. *NEA Today*, (22)4:34-35.

Daniels, W.M.U. 2003. Stress as a complication for Emotional Intelligence in the workplace: A neurochemical argument. Unpublished study project for MBA thesis. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.

Defalco, K. 1997. Educator's commentary. In: Salovey, P. & Sluyter. D. (eds.). *Emotional Development and Emotional Intelligence: Educational Implications*. New York: BasicBooks.

De Wit, H.B. 2002. Emosionele Intelligensie: 'n Oorsig oor die konseptualisering en meting daarvan. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch. (MA thesis)

Donald, D., Lazarus, S. & Lolwana, P. 2002. *Educational Psychology in Social Context* (2nd Edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Elias, M.J. 2001. Emotionally Intelligent parenting with Maurice Elias. http://www.eqtoday.com/elias.html

Elias, M.J., Bruene-Butler, L., Blum, L. & Scuyler, T. 2000. Voices from the field: Identifying and overcoming roadblocks to carrying out programs in social and emotional learning/Emotional Intelligence. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 11(2):253-272.

George, J.M. 2000. Emotions and leadership: The role of emotional intelligence. *Human Relations,* 53:1027-1055.

Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R. & McKee, A. 2002. *Primal Leadership: Realizing the Power of Emotional Intelligence.* Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Press.

Grewal, D. & Salovey, P. 2005. Feeling smart: the science of Emotional Intelligence. *American Scientist,* 93:330-339.

Groenewald, A.M. 2003. The need for emotional intelligence training in higher education: An exploratory study. Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch. (MBA thesis)

Gowing, M.K. 2001. Emotional Intelligence: Issues in paradigm building. In: Goleman, D. & Cherniss, C. (eds.) *The Emotionally Intelligent Workplace.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass: 83-113.

Hedlund, J. & Sternberg, R.J. 2000. Too many intelligences? Integrating social, emotional, and practical intelligence. In: Bar-On, R. & Parker, J.D.A. (eds.). *The Handbook of Emotional Intelligence.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass: 136-167.

HSRC & MRC Press Release, 2005. http://hsrc.ac.za/media/2005/3/20050331.html.

Jacobsen, C., Pousette, A. & Thylefors, I. 2001. Managing stress and feelings of mastery among Swedish teachers. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 45.

Kanjee, A. 1999. Assessment Research. In: Terre Blanche, M. & Durrheim, K. (eds.). *Research in Practice: Applied Methods for the Social Sciences*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Kelly, B., Longbottom, J., Potts, F. & Williamson, J. 2004. Applying Emotional Intelligence: Exploring the promoting alternative thinking strategies curriculum. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 20(3):221-239.

Kyriacou, C. 2001. Teacher stress: Directions for future research. *Educational Review*, 53(1):27-35.

Lam, L.T. 2002. Is Emotional Intelligence an advantage? An exploration of the impact of emotional and general intelligence on individual performance. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 142(1):133–143.

Landy, F.J. 2005. Some historical and scientific issues related to research on emotional intelligence. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26:411-424.

Lane, R.D. 2000. Levels of emotional awareness: Neurological evidence for emotional intelligence. In: Bar-On, R. & Parker, J.D.A. (eds.). *The Handbook of Emotional Intelligence*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass: 171-214.

Le Roux, R. & De Klerk, R. 2001. *Emotional Intelligence Workbook: The All-in-One Guide for Optimal Personal Growth!* Cape Town: Human & Rousseau.

Locke, E.A. 2005. Why emotional intelligence is an invalid concept. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26:425-431.

Mann, S. 2004. 'People-work': emotional management, stress and coping. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 32(2):205-222.

Maree, J.G. & Eisselen, R.J. 2004. The Emotional Intelligence profile of academics in a merger setting. *Education And Urban Society*, 36(4):482-504.

Mayer, J.D. & Salovey, P. 1997. What is emotional intelligence? In: Mayer, J.D. & Sluyter, D.J. (eds.). *Emotional Development and Emotional Intelligence.* New York: Basic Books: 3-31.

Mayer, J.D., Salovey, P. & Caruso, D.R. 2000. Models of emotional intelligence. In: Sternberg, R.J. (ed.). *Handbook of Intelligence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Matthews, G., Zeidner, M. & Roberts, R.D. 2002. *Emotional Intelligence: Science & Myth*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Mearns, J. & Cearns, J.E. 2003. Relationships between teachers' occupational stress and their burnout and distress: Roles of coping and negative mood regulation expectancies. *Anxiety, Stress and Coping*, 16(1):71-82.

Merriam, S.B. 1998. *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Merriam, S. 2002. *Qualitative Research in Practice: Examples for Discussion and Analysis.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mertens, D.M. 1998. *Research Methods In Education and Psychology.* London: SAGE Publications.

Merton, M. 2004. Onderwysers met stres kry nou hulp. *Die Burger*, 21 October: 6.

Mills, L.B. & Huebner, E.S. 1998. A prospective study of personality characteristics, occupational stressors, and burnout among school psychology practitioners. *Journal of School Psychology*, 26(1):103-120.

Mouton, J. 2001. *How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies: A South African guide and resource book.* Pretoria: J.L. van Schaik Publishers.

Myers, J.E. & Williard, K. 2003. Integrating spirituality in counselor preparedness: A developmental, wellness Approach. *Counseling and Values*, (1):142-155.

Neumann, W.L. 2000. *Social research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches.* Needham Heights: A Pearson Education Company.

Olivier, M.A.J. & Venter, D.J.L. 2003. The extent and causes of stress in teachers in the George region. *South African Journal of Education*, 23(3):186-192.

Parrott, W.G. 2002. The functional utility of negative rmotions. In: Barrett, L. F. & Salovey, P. (eds.). *The Wisdom in Feeling*. New York: Guilford Press: 341-362.

Patton, M.Q.P. 1987. *How to use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation*. London: SAGE Publications.

Sala, F. 2002. Do programs designed to increase emotional intelligence at work work? Consortium for Research in Emotional Intelligence in Organizations. http://www.eiconsortium.org.

Saptoe, C.W. 2000. Factors which cause stress to teachers in the South Cape. Port Elizabeth: University of Port Elizabeth. (Masters thesis)

Slaski, M. & Cartwright, S. 2003. Emotional intelligence training and its implications for stress, health and performance. *Stress and Health*, 19:233-239.

Spielberger, C. (Ed.) 2004. *Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology*. New York: Elsevier Ltd.

Stone, H., Parker, J. D. A. & Wood, L. M. 2004. Printed in EI Consortium 1 (3) Report on the Ontario Principals' Council Leadership Study. http://www.eiconsortium.org May 2005.

Stein, S. & Book, H. 2001. *The EQ Edge: Emotional Intelligence and your Success*. London: Kogan Page.

Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. 1990. *Basics of Qualitative Research – Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. London: SAGE Publications.

Sutton, R.E. & Wheatley, K.F. 2003. Teachers' emotions and teaching: A review of the literature and directions for future research. *Educational Psychology Review*, 15(4):327-358.

Tang, C.S. 2001. Mental health Outcomes of job stress among Chinese Teachers. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*, 22:887-910.

Terre Blanche, M. & Durrheim, K. (eds.) 1999. *Research in Practice: Applied Methods for the Social Sciences.* Rondebosch: University of Cape Town Press.

Terre Blanche, M. & Kelly, K. 1999. Interpretive Methods. In: Terre Blanche, M. & Durrheim, K. (eds.). *Research in Practice: Applied methods for the Social Sciences.* Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Thomsen, K. 2002. *Building Resilient Students: Integrating Resiliency into What You already Know and Do.* Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

Van Wyk, J. 1998. Stresbelewing by onderwysers. Port Elizabeth: Universiteit van Port Elizabeth. (DEd-proefskrif)

Van Dick, R. & Wagner, U. 2001. Stress and strain in teaching: A structural approach. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 71(2):243-259.

Vermeulen, S. 1999. *EQ: Emotional Intelligence for everyone.* Cape Town: Zebra.

Wrobel, G. 1993. Preventing school failure for teachers. *Preventing School Failure,* 37:16:20.

Zeidner, M., Matthews, G.M. & Roberts, R. 2004. Emotional intelligence in the workplace: A critical review. *Applied Psychology: An International Review,* 53:371-399.

APPENDIX A: i

Interview guide

1. What would a typical day for you as a teacher look like from the time you rise till you go to bed?
2. Which competencies or strategies are helpful in your life as a teacher/in a day as you have just described?
3. How and where have you acquired it?
4. Did you get any training or help during graduate studies or while teaching in these competencies?
5. If you could change anything within yourself to cope better with the pressures of teaching, what would it be?
6. Which of these competencies, if any, would help teachers to be happier and better teachers?

APPENDIX A: ii

Example of transcript of interviews

(Interviews have been transcribed verbatim, identifying data have been removed).
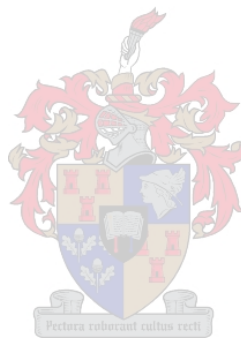
APPENDIX B

The questionnaire
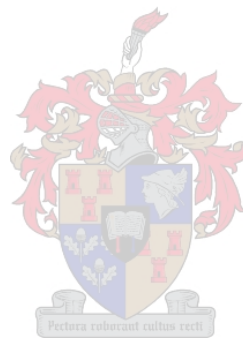
APPENDIX C

Table 1:
Summary of the participant's profiles as indicated by their questionnaires.

APPENDIX D

Examples of process of data analysis

RECURRING THEMES
PRESSURES
REACTIONS TO PRESSURES
SUPPORT
COMPETENCIES
ORIGIN OF COMPETENCIES
COMPETENCIES THAT WILL MAKE TEACHERS HAPPIER AND BETTER

RECURRING CATEGORIES

PRESSURES	Traditional tasks
	Extra work-related
	Extra personal
REACTIONS TO PRESSURES	No breaks
	Nutrition
	Deprivation of family/friends
	Stress
	Exhaustion
	Sleeplessness
	Health
	Impulse control
	Negative Atmosphere
	Departure
	Impact on relationships
SUPPORT	Hostel
	Learners
	Colleagues

	Family
	Single
	Experience
	Exercise
	Association with organisations
COMPETENCIES	Assertiveness
	Emotional Self – Awareness
	Empathy:
	Flexibility
	Happiness
	Impulse control
	Independence
	Interpersonal relationships
	Optimism
	Problem-solving
	Reality testing
	Stress tolerance
	Social responsibility
	Self-regard
	Self-actualisation
Skills to support ES regulations	
	Multi tasking
	Working in an organised way
	Multi tasking
	Goal orientated
	Time management
ORIGIN OF COMPETENCIES	
	Taught
	Mentor
	Nature
	Being Mother
COMPETENCIES THAT WILL MAKE TEACHERS	

HAPPIER AND BETTER	
	Assertiveness
	Emotional Self – Awareness
	Empathy:
	Flexibility
	Happiness
	Impulse control
	Independence
	Interpersonal relationships
	Optimism
	Problem-solving
	Reality testing
	Stress tolerance
	Social responsibility
	Self-regard
	Self-actualisation
	Multi tasking
	Working in an organised way
	Multi tasking
	Goal orientated
	Time management
RECOMMENDATIONS	
	Training
	Pre-service training
	In-service training
	Support from ex teachers

EXAMPLE OF CODING
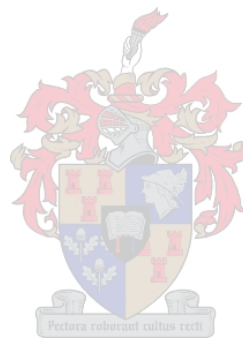
QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questionnaire consists of   questions. The contents concerns your way of coping with the pressures of teaching. Please answer them as honestly as possible. There is no right or wrong answers; answers are correct if it reflect your opinion truthfully.

- ALL INFORMATION WILL BE TREATED AS CONFIDENTIAL AND NO PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION WILL BE RECORDED IN THE SUBSEQUENT REPORT.
- ALL DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION IS OPTIONAL.
- I GUARANTEE CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY.

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

MF SLABBERT
Tel.nr. 082 699779 5
E mail address: slabs@isales.co.za
Masters student M.Ed.Psych (10910328)
University of Stellenbosch

1. Even when I do my best, I feel guilty about the things that did not get done.

    ☐ Most of the time
    ☐ Often
    ☐ Sometimes
    ☐ Rarely
    ☐ Almost never

2. When I am upset, I can pinpoint exactly what aspect of the problem bothers me.

    ☐ Most of the time
    ☐ Often
    ☐ Sometimes
    ☐ Rarely
    ☐ Almost never

3. I buy things that I can't really afford.

    ☐ Most of the time
    ☐ Often
    ☐ Sometimes
    ☐ Rarely
    ☐ Almost never

4. Although there might be things I could improve, I like myself the way I am.

    ☐ Strongly agree
    ☐ Agree
    ☐ Partially agree/disagree
    ☐ Disagree
    ☐ Strongly disagree

5. I say things that I later regret.

    ☐ Regularly
    ☐ Often
    ☐ Sometimes
    ☐ Rarely
    ☐ Almost never

6. I get into a mode where I feel strong, capable and competent.

    ☐ Regularly
    ☐ Often
    ☐ Sometimes
    ☐ Rarely
    ☐ Almost never

7.   I panic when I have to face someone who is angry.

☐   Regularly
☐   Often
☐   Sometimes
☐   Rarely
☐   Almost never

8.   I have a strong need to make a difference.

☐   Very true
☐   Mostly true
☐   Somewhat true
☐   Mostly not true
☐   Not true at all

9.   I do my best even if there is nobody to see it.

☐   Most of the time
☐   Often
☐   Sometimes
☐   Rarely
☐   Almost never

10.   I am not satisfied with my work unless someone else praises it.

☐   Very true
☐   Mostly true
☐   Somewhat true
☐   Mostly not true
☐   Not true at all

11.   I do what people expect me to, even I disagree with them.

☐   Most of the time
☐   Often
☐   Sometimes
☐   Rarely
☐   Almost never

12.   People tell me I overreact to minor problems.

☐   Regularly
☐   Often
☐   Sometimes
☐   Rarely
☐   Almost never

13.   I finish what I set out to do.

☐   Most of the time
☐   Often
☐   Sometimes
☐   Rarely
☐   Almost never

14.   When I fail at a task or do worse than I would like to, it is usually due to:

☐   lack of preparation or effort on my part.
☐   lack of concentration or attention on my part.
☐   lack of ability on my part.
☐   external factors, i.e. things that have nothings to do with me, such as an unreasonably difficult task, bad weather/timing.
☐   Internal factors (i.e. my traits and characteristics, such as IQ, talents, etc.) beyond my control.
☐   a combination of factors, mostly things that I can change.
☐   factors beyond my control – I would have done everything in my power to succeed.
☐   a combination of external and internal factors, mostly things that I can't change.

15.   When there is something unpleasant to do, I:

☐   do it right away and get it over with.
☐   postpone it until I feel like doing it.
☐   postpone it until I have nothing else to do.
☐   postpone it until it is too late and it gets dropped.
☐   wait until I have no other choice but to do it.
☐   decide how I will reward myself for doing it and then do it.
☐   break the task into small steps and do them one by one.
☐   find an acceptable, valid reason why I cannot do the task and get rid of it somehow.
☐   find someone else to do it for me.

16.   When I am upset, I:

☐   can tell exactly how I feel, i.e. whether I feel sad, betrayed, lonely, annoyed, angry, etc.
☐   can usually tell how I feel(i.e. whether I feel sad, betrayed, lonely, annoyed, angry, etc.), but sometimes it is difficult to distinguish what exactly I am feeling.
☐   usually cannot distinguish what I am feeling exactly.
☐   don't waste time trying to figure out what exactly I am feeling.

17.   When someone snaps at me

- [ ] I quickly retaliate.
- [ ] I panic.
- [ ] I withdraw, feeling hurt.
- [ ] I ask for an explanation.
- [ ] I get very upset.
- [ ] I get very angry.
- [ ] I feel hurt and start crying.
- [ ] I let it go without confronting the person.
- [ ] I ignore it.

18. When I get frustrated,

- [ ] I almost always drop what I am doing and use my time more productively.
- [ ] I usually drop what I am doing and use my time more productively.
- [ ] I sometimes drop what I am doing and use my time more productively.
- [ ] I sometimes persist and finish the task.
- [ ] I almost always persist and finish the task.
- [ ] I take a break and then continue the task.

19. Speaking out about negative emotions is:

- [ ] always unhealthy, regardless of circumstances.
- [ ] generally unhealthy, but necessary in some circumstances.
- [ ] healthy for some people, unhealthy for others.
- [ ] generally healthy, but inappropriate in some circumstances.
- [ ] always healthy, regardless of the circumstances.

21. I find change

- [ ] scary
- [ ] frustrating
- [ ] exciting

22. I am simply unhappy without any apparent reason

- [ ] Regularly
- [ ] Often
- [ ] Sometimes
- [ ] Rarely
- [ ] Almost never

23. I try to do the right thing no matter what.

- [ ] Most of the time
- [ ] Often
- [ ] Sometimes
- [ ] Rarely

☐ Almost never

24. When I experience tragedy or a very big disappointment I

☐ have trouble overcoming it for a long time
☐ have trouble overcoming it for a while
☐ put it away and get on with my life
☐ focus on it so that I can work through it as soon as possible
☐ am unhappy for a while but bounce back eventually

25. The following areas of coping in teaching that I had a natural knack for when starting to teach:

☐ Self-control
☐ Optimism
☐ Self-esteem
☐ Self-awareness
☐ Assertiveness
☐ Goal-orientation
☐ Stress-tolerance
☐ Stress-management
☐ Empathy
☐ Social responsibility
☐ Interpersonal skills
☐ Realistic expectations
☐ Adaptability
☐ Problem-solving skills
☐ Withstanding the pressures of multi-tasking
☐ Conflict management
☐ Working in an organised way

26. The following areas of coping in teaching that I received in training BEFORE starting to teach:

☐ Self-control
☐ Optimism
☐ Self-esteem
☐ Self-awareness
☐ Assertiveness
☐ Goal-orientation
☐ Stress-tolerance
☐ Stress-management
☐ Empathy
☐ Social responsibility
☐ Interpersonal skills
☐ Realistic expectations
☐ Adaptability
☐ Problem-solving skills
☐ Withstanding the pressures of multi-tasking

☐ Conflict management
☐ Working in an organised way

27. The following areas of coping in teaching that I received in training AFTER starting to teach:

☐ Self-control
☐ Optimism
☐ Self-esteem
☐ Self-awareness
☐ Assertiveness
☐ Goal-orientation
☐ Stress-tolerance
☐ Stress-management
☐ Empathy
☐ Social responsibility
☐ Interpersonal skills
☐ Realistic expectations
☐ Adaptability
☐ Problem-solving skills
☐ Withstanding the pressures of multi-tasking
☐ Conflict management
☐ Working in an organised way

28. The following areas of coping in teaching that I received from a MENTOR/SUBJECT HEAD/PRINCIPAL/OTHER SIGNIFICANT PERSON in teaching

☐ Self-control
☐ Optimism
☐ Self-esteem
☐ Self-awareness
☐ Assertiveness
☐ Goal-orientation
☐ Stress-tolerance
☐ Stress-management
☐ Empathy
☐ Social responsibility
☐ Interpersonal skills
☐ Realistic expectations
☐ Adaptability
☐ Problem-solving skills
☐ Withstanding the pressures of multi-tasking
☐ Conflict management
☐ Working in an organised way

29.   The following areas of coping in teaching that I had to TEACH MYSELF:

☐   Self-control
☐   Optimism
☐   Self-esteem
☐   Self-awareness
☐   Assertiveness
☐   Goal-orientation
☐   Stress-tolerance
☐   Stress-management
☐   Empathy
☐   Social responsibility
☐   Interpersonal skills
☐   Realistic expectations
☐   Adaptability
☐   Problem-solving skills
☐   Withstanding the pressures of multi-tasking
☐   Conflict management
☐   Working in an organised way

30.   The three areas that I would like to develop in the near future in order of preference is:

☐   Self-control
☐   Optimism
☐   Self-esteem
☐   Self-awareness
☐   Assertiveness
☐   Goal-orientation
☐   Stress-tolerance
☐   Stress-management
☐   Empathy
☐   Social responsibility
☐   Interpersonal skills
☐   Realistic expectations
☐   Adaptability
☐   Problem-solving skills
☐   Withstanding the pressures of multi-tasking
☐   Conflict management
☐   Working in an organised way

31.   Rate yourself on a happiness scale from 1 – 10.

☐

32.   How would others around you rate you on a happiness scale from

1 – 10?
☐

33. My biggest worry in teaching is ....

34. My biggest frustration in teaching is ....

35. My biggest challenge in teaching is ....

36. What I enjoy best in teaching is ....

37. I would not mind to have a follow-up interview about my coping skills in teaching. ☐

38. I prefer not have a follow-up interview about my coping skills in teaching. ☐

NAME:.. AGE: ☐
CONTACT NR:............................. GENDER: ☐
E MAIL ADDRESS: ....
COMPLETED YEARS IN EDUCATION: ☐
COMPLETED YEARS IN TEACHING LIFE ORIENTATION: ☐

I have had trouble with the following:

headaches ☐

stomach ulcers ☐

high blood pressure ☐

heart disease ☐

depression ☐

feelings of helplessness ☐

shortness of breath ☐

sleeplessness ☐

gastrointestinal disturbances (diarrhoea and/or constipation) ☐

in the last 6 months ☐

12 months ☐

2 years ☐

5 years ☐

10 years ☐

never ☐