THE EFFECT OF ORTHODOX JEWISH EDUCATION ON ADOLESCENT IDENTITY: A CASE STUDY

by

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submitted in part fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION – WITH SPECIALISATION IN
GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR A.C. LESSING

JANUARY 2003
A man's character is discernible in the mental or moral attitude in which, when it came upon him, he felt himself most deeply and intensely active and alive. At such moments there is a voice inside which speaks and says, 'This is the real me!'

William James
Acknowledgements

I wish to express my sincerest gratitude and appreciation to the following people whose assistance and co-operation made this research project possible:

♦ Professor A.C. Lessing, my supervisor, for her kindness, support and expert guidance.

♦ David Hensman and Marie Newton for editing the text.

♦ The principal and participants of the school where the empirical research was conducted. Their enthusiastic involvement made this research project meaningful.

♦ My husband, family and friends for their encouragement and support.
Declaration

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I declare that
THE EFFECT OF ORTHODOX JEWISH EDUCATION ON ADOLESCENT IDENTITY: A CASE STUDY
is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Colleen Rose Hensman

Date: January 2003
Key Terms

THE EFFECT OF ORTHODOX JEWISH EDUCATION ON ADOLESCENT IDENTITY: A CASE STUDY

The nature of adolescence; adolescent identity development (cf. Erikson); psychosocial adolescent identity development; religious education; Jewish Orthodox education; teachers' and learners' difficulties in Orthodox Jewish education; Jewish Orthodox adolescents; adolescent identity development in Orthodox Jews; religious identity.
Abstract

THE EFFECT OF ORTHODOX JEWISH EDUCATION ON ADOLESCENT IDENTITY: A CASE STUDY

Orthodox Jewish adolescents develop and mature within a very structured environment. The aim of this study was to explore adolescent psychosocial identity development within Orthodox Jewish education. The secondary focus was the nature of the religious identity acquired through religious education, specifically Jewish Orthodox education. The literature study explored adolescent identity and development (within Erikson’s framework), religious orientation and Orthodox Jewish education. The qualitative research was conducted empirically, in the form of a case study of seven adolescents from a single-sex Orthodox school based in Johannesburg. The themes that emerged from the empirical study are as follows: the community; Orthodox Judaism; education; parents, family and peers; adolescent and religious identity. The study indicated that the participants’ identity development is dominated by their religious psychosocial world that paradoxically provides the structure that supports and complicates their identity development.
### Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bar Mitzvah</strong></td>
<td>Ritual for boys turning 13. Passage into manhood (taking personal responsibility for their own actions).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chumash</strong></td>
<td>Pentateuch (First five books of the Old Testament).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frum</strong></td>
<td>Observant Jews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gemara / Talmud</strong></td>
<td>The Law as found in the first five books of the Bible. Offers more detail on the commandments and issues found in the Pentateuch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ghol</strong></td>
<td>Secular learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goy / 'Goyish’</strong></td>
<td>Non-Jew.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Halachah / Halakah</strong></td>
<td>The legal system or the Law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hashgacha Pratis</strong></td>
<td>Divine Providence – expression of God’s intervention in every aspect of the world.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kodesh</strong></td>
<td>Holy / Torah learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mishna</strong></td>
<td>Commentary by the sages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Limudei Kodesh</strong></td>
<td>Religious studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mitzvah</strong></td>
<td>A good or holy deed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mussar</strong></td>
<td>Ethics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peos</strong></td>
<td>Side locks; a Jew is forbidden to remove hair from the temple.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rabbi</strong></td>
<td>Religious teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shabbaton</strong></td>
<td>Religious weekend retreat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shabbos / Shabbat</strong></td>
<td>The Sabbath.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shul / Synagogue</strong></td>
<td>Place of worship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Talmud</strong></td>
<td>The collection of 63 books containing the body of Jewish and expansion of the Old Testament (the Mishna and the civil and canonical law derived by the interpretation Gemara).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Torah</strong></td>
<td>The Old Testament.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tzitzes</strong></td>
<td>A four cornered garment with fringes worn by all Jewish males.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yarmulke</strong></td>
<td>Head covering worn by all Jewish males to indicate a sense of modesty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yeshiva / Yeshivot (pl.)</strong></td>
<td>School for the purposes of religious study.</td>
</tr>
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CHAPTER 1 ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH

A WINDOW INTO THE WORLD OF ORTHODOX JEWISH EDUCATION

1.1 Background

Orthodox Jewish adolescents develop and mature within a very structured environment. Although they share adolescent tasks with other adolescents i.e. identity development, biological development, emotional development, societal and peer imperatives, these adolescents live within a distinct and unique context that has a profound influence on their entire lives.

Formal and informal learning occurs as part of the 'Jewish life cycle' - with the emphasis placed on Torah learning and the related Laws and rituals. Jewish Orthodox schools are learning institutions that enable children and adolescents to learn religious and secular subjects within a very specific religious environment. All future references to 'Orthodox' refers specifically to 'Jewish Orthodox'.

The primary focus of an Orthodox school is religious learning. The adolescent individual needs are of secondary importance. The value and significance of the adolescent's religious belief system is a taken-for-granted facet of this area of research and is not being examined. Religious, social and cultural values are all intertwined and community and family values are dominant.

The Orthodox learning environment places emphasis on the oral-Socratic method of learning i.e. learners are taught to challenge their teachers and present logical arguments to substantiate their views. The learners are generally articulate; well able to argue their beliefs, as well as being able to challenge their peers and teachers. However, this stylised method of argumentation exists within very rigid boundaries. The foundation of belief and the resultant Law (Halachah) is not to be questioned; only the interpretation and meaning of the material is challenged. Considerable debate around the interpretation of the Law and the meaning of the religious material is encouraged. As Rapoport, Garb and Penso (1995:57) comment, the disagreement over details directs the debate into the concrete sphere, while the religious ideals are unchallenged.
The secular curriculum is shaped by the religious concerns. As the secular curriculum is deemed to be of secondary importance, it is subject to religious Laws concerning the material taught, the learning environment and teacher discretion.

Educational resources (e.g. English literature) are restricted by carefully censored religious constraints. Other censored areas, that protect as well as restrict the life experiences of these adolescents, are access to the media (news, television and magazines), art, music and movies. The censorship extends to taboo issues that may not be discussed, for example, other religions, sex and evolution. The religious strictures cover the following areas: house-keeping and food (keeping Kosher), dress (there are stringent dress codes for men and women; adolescents and children are expected to comply) as well as social interaction (male-female interaction).

While Jews within an Orthodox system develop an awareness of their religious and societal role, individual identity formation has to occur within very precise and enforced boundaries. Studying and debating, rituals and festivals, community activities and socialising, are prescribed. Alexander (1992:455) refers to these divisions as the 'formal education' of the classroom that is different from the 'informal education' of the community and family activities.

1.2 Analysis of the problem

The individual adolescent's meaning and uniqueness of experience within this system is an area of interest worth exploring, as they are developing an identity within a very structured religious environment.

1.2.1 Awareness of the problem

While working in a Jewish Orthodox school for three and a half years, the researcher became aware of the impact of this learning environment on adolescent identity development. The specific focus of education, within an Orthodox religious school, is structured to serve religious and educational requirements, in that order.

The school offers religious studies until noon (Kodesh) and secular studies until 4 p.m. (Ghol) to male learners. The school conducts evening classes once a week and lessons on Sunday mornings continue the Limudei Kodesh (religious learning)

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programme. The religious programme encourages Shul attendance twice a day and strict observance of all festivals and rituals. Religious objectives of Orthodox Judaism dominate all facets of the curriculum.

Some of the positive issues which the researcher perceived include: a strong moral code; a powerful sense of religious and cultural identity; tremendous parental involvement; the need for the learners to achieve their potential; a policy of inclusion and the absence of the negative influence of media on the adolescent - thus the value based programme re-enforces the religious life-style.

Some of the negative aspects the researcher became aware of are: the demands of the programme, especially on learners with emotional and cognitive difficulties; the time constraints of the programme which limit extra curricular activities; the sense of insularity and the bias toward the religious learning at the expense of secular learning. Also, the implicit sexism: this rigorous programme is for boys only, who are expected to continue their religious studies after completing their matriculation; while girls, who study separately, may leave school before completing their final exams.

The Orthodox Jewish world is a world apart. The dress code requiring Yarmulke (head covering) peos (side locks) and tsitsi (four cornered garment with fringes) are visible indications of the adolescents' religious orientation. The absence of interaction with other adolescents, except for frum (observant Jews) Jews, re-enforces the sense of being different from the rest of the world. There is a clear societal hierarchy that ensures the perpetuation of the Orthodox community.

The researcher's awareness of the positive and negative aspects of the Orthodox education system gave rise to the question – what are the effects of Jewish Orthodox education on adolescent identity development? These adolescents are in the process of developing their identities, while simultaneously learning what it means to be frum. This complex process is worthy of analysis. Markstrom-Adams and Smith (1996:247) comment that while there is a great deal of data related to personality and identity formation in adolescents, there is a dearth of information on the connection between identity and tenets of religiosity.

It will be necessary to provide some contextualization of the learning environment (i.e.
the Orthodox learning environment) and its strictures, as well as adolescence and the attendant issues accompanying identity formation.

1.2.2 Investigation of the problem

The following quotation from Healy (1981:164) characterises the Jewish educational environment:

*Religious schools arouse deep emotional loyalties connected, not only with the continuance of a specific faith, but also frequently, with the maintenance of a particular identity and tradition.*

The rationale for and effectiveness of religious schools, has been analysed by Healy (1981:163) as follows,

*If many of the faculty and administrators in these institutions understand and share these religious traditions ... their stubborn adherence to a tradition of faith argues to at least some generally perceived sense of rightness, and it is useful to interpret this stubbornness in educational as well as ecclesiastical terms.*

In exploring why a religious base of a school or college is important, Healy (1981:164) focuses on the issue of why it matters educationally. He identifies five basic religious ideas that have an influence on the curriculum:

1. *The classical and scholastic understanding that contemplation is the highest destiny of man.*
2. *The acceptance of the sacramental universe, as taught in both Christian and Hebrew Scripture.*
3. *The understanding that theological instructions condition a curriculum by its being, as well as by its content.*
4. *The search for oneness in knowledge that corresponds to the integrity of man's being.*
5. *The premise that all education has a moral thrust, since there is a necessary tie between learning and conduct.*

The Jewish Orthodox belief is influenced by what Covey (1992:97) refers to as beginning with the end in mind. As Neusner (1986:79) said, *Life is the antechamber, death is the destination: what we do is weighed and measured. When we die, we stand on the one side of the balance, while our life and deeds stand on the other.* Gorri's (1990:549)
quotation from the Orthodox handbook of religious belief for lay people expands this concept:

The world we live in is viewed as a corridor that leads to still another world. The belief in an afterlife, in a world to come (Olam Haba) where man is judged and where his soul continues to flourish is imbedded in Jewish thought. ‘All Israel have a share in the world to come.’ Mishna Sanhedrin 11.1.

Diamond (1981:297) identifies the goals of Orthodox schools being to fill their students with ... piety, humility, a love for Torah and above all, an intense commitment to Torah study. Secular studies are valued mainly as tools for better understanding of the Torah.

According to Diamond (1981:297) there are three types of Yeshivot (religious schools) designed to serve the needs of religious education. The first type is based on the pre-war Yeshivot of Eastern Europe. The focus is on Gemara (the Law as found in the first five books of the Bible). The students study secular subjects, in order to learn Torah more effectively. While they are not encouraged to study further, except perhaps in maths and physics, the secular learning they achieve is designed to earn an adequate living, and to continue studying the Torah.

The second model followed in response to the criticisms of those Yeshivot. Diamond’s (1981:298) view is that

... the second group ... provides neither a well-rounded Jewish education nor a viable ideological programme for the student who will attend college and work in the secular community. While devoting the same amount of time to Limmudei Kodesh, these Yeshivot include Chumash ... and Hebrew in their curriculum. A conscious effort is made, moreover, to confront the challenge of secular ideology to Torah values and to point out the good and the bad, from a Torah perspective.

Male students will continue their studies for a year or more, at a full time Yeshiva, after completing some secular requirements (e.g. matriculation). Their parents actively support the intertwined educational and religious goals.

The third model is generally co-educational. The administration emphasises the Torah study, while the parents (who are less observant in their faith) are more concerned about academic achievements, with a view to further secular academic education. The parents are amenable to the religious demands during school hours, but are not eager for the demands of the strict observances of the Orthodox schools.
Diamond's (1981:299) concern with the second type of yeshivot is with the teaching of the Jewish studies, especially Gemara and the expertise required mastering the Gemara's language, syntax and style. (The school observed in this research fits into the second category.) Goldberg (1981:291) is also critical of the Jewish day school. He said that there is a

... severe deficiency in Hebrew, be it biblical, mishnaic, medieval or modern ...(within)
four areas: pronunciation, grammar, translation and vocabulary.

Paradoxically, the concern is for the paucity of the Jewish religious knowledge, and concern that too much attention is given to secular studies.

As Jews fled from Europe and Russia over the last few centuries, Brown (1992:45) says that as a result of easy access to the free education system, parents saw this as a way to become 'Americanised'. In time a dilemma was caused, when people found many external challenges to their Jewish identity. By having Jewish classes for an extra two hours per day, parents and teachers hoped to ameliorate the effect of secular education. While this re-inforced the Jewish identity, it meant that learners were unable to participate in extra curricula activities. This is called the 'supplemental' or 'afternoon school system'.

In the late 1970's there was a resurgence of interest in the Orthodox approach. Jews with minimal observance became involved in full observance – eating kosher, observing daily Shul and prayers, keeping the Sabbath and learning Hebrew.

Frum Jews establish separate day schools for their children to preserve and foster their all embracing Orthodox beliefs and practice. This requires an economic sacrifice: frum families are large and these institutions are expensive both to implement and maintain.

The researcher believes it is meaningful to examine the system and its effect on adolescents, as,

Unlike moral stages, moral beliefs are acquired through social transmission. When confronted with problems requiring moral thought, children and adults call upon learned beliefs to frame solutions. Sources of moral beliefs include parents, peers and social institutions (Norman, Richards & Bear 1998:90).

The Jewish Orthodox social system creates very firm boundaries within which adolescents learn and develop.
Parents and teachers set great store by a secure Torah-learning environment. The researcher’s interest is in the adolescents’ perception of this situation. In conclusion, adolescents’ central tasks of identity formation are: exploring who they are within society, while they are establishing their own values. The researcher is interested in the way Orthodox adolescents develop their identity within their experience of their religious-educational environment.

1.2.3 Research question

Parents and teachers value, and are committed to supporting a stable Torah learning environment. Frum parents are keen for their children to learn in an Orthodox school, in order to acquire the pervasive sense of Jewish identity. The Jewish Orthodox social system creates very firm boundaries in which adolescents learn and live. The religious environment is ubiquitous and it is within this environment that Orthodox adolescents develop their identity. The researcher is interested in the way adolescents’ experience this rigorous environment and this leads her to ask: What is the effect of an Orthodox Jewish education on adolescent identity development?

1.3 Aims of the research

The aim of the literature study is to explore psychosocial adolescent identity development in general and to examine the Jewish adolescents’ experience of Orthodox education in particular.

1.3.1 General aims

The following issues and questions will direct the literature study:

♦ What is adolescent development? (see 2.2)
♦ Explore the nature of adolescent identity formation (cf. Erikson ‘a sense of psychosocial well-being’). (see 2.3)
♦ What are some of the developmental tasks that need to be completed in adolescence? (see 2.4)
♦ An exploration of general religious identity. (see 2.7.2 and 2.7.4)
♦ What are the demands and requirements of an Orthodox education? (see 2.8)
♦ What types of difficulties may adolescents encounter in Orthodox schools? (see 2.9)
♦ How do adolescents experience Orthodox education? (see 2.10)
1.3.2 Specific aim

The specific aim is to explore how Orthodox adolescents experience their educational environment during their identity development i.e. an exploration of their psychosocial development. Within this process it is valuable to ascertain how the critical adolescent task of identity development is accomplished.

1.4 Research method

This study is grounded in a literature study. The information gleaned from the literature search is presented by way of an exploration of the concerns previously mentioned. The research is aimed at the gathering of information from the literature about Orthodox education and the way it affects the identity development of the adolescent. It is explanatory, as there are descriptions of adolescence, adolescent-identity and related tasks. There is an exploration of general religious identity and some of the factors implicit in religious identity formation. This is followed by a description of the origins and nature of Orthodox education, as well of some areas of strength and difficulty encountered by adolescents within Orthodox schools. While this empirical study focuses on South African Orthodox educational experience, most of the literary references are from international sources.

The literature study relies on books, journal articles and periodicals. The literature study precedes the empirical investigation, which is of a qualitative nature. The intention is to analyse the literature review in relation to the findings of the empirical study.

After the literature search, seven learners are individually interviewed, using a phenomenological approach. The interviews are in-depth interviews starting with the one main research question: *How do you experience your education in an Orthodox Jewish school?*

1.5 Demarcation of the research

The researcher chose to explore the adolescents' experience of Orthodox education, as she believes that adolescence, in the way that Erikson (1959, 1963 & 1968) defines the stage, is a time of Identity and Role Confusion or Identity Diffusion. It is significant to see how the formation of the identities of specific adolescents occurs within the specific religious framework of a Jewish Orthodox community.
1.6 Clarification of terms

The following definitions are offered only as an initial explanation. The literature study will offer greater clarity and more detail.

Adolescence - Papalia, Olds and Feldman (2002:377) define adolescence as a developmental transition between childhood and adulthood entailing major physical, cognitive and psychosocial changes.
- Adolescence originates from Latin *adolescentia* that refers to the process of growing or growing up.
- Hoge (1999:2) said, *We do generally refer to the teen years as the period of adolescence and a youth in that age range as an adolescent. However, establishing more precise criteria for defining this developmental period is quite difficult.* This is a useful proviso.

Adolescent identity - Hoge (1999:147) distinguishes *... two components of identity development: self-concept, or the image individuals hold of themselves and their relation to the world, and self-esteem, or individuals' evaluation of their self-concept, the extent to which they view themselves in positive or negative terms.*

Identity - *Identity may be described in terms of the total concept of self.* Rice (1996:36). To understand an individual over time, it is important to have some sense of constancy, which Erikson (1968:17) refers to as a sense of personal sameness and historical continuity.

Adolescent faith - According to Atwater (1996:395), *Adolescent faith has been characterised as (1) individualistic, (2) abstract, (3) private and differentiated, (4) stressing practical idealism.*

Religious observance - *refers to a variety of religious matters, such as membership in a group; the acceptance of its authority beliefs and practices; and participation in its ceremonies and rituals.* Atwater (1996:398).
1.7 Research programme

In Chapter One an orientation of the study has been given. A theoretical background on adolescent identity development, religious identity and Orthodox education, as described in the literature, is offered in Chapter Two. Chapter Three offers more detail on the research design. Chapter Four offers the findings from interviews that are analysed and linked with the literature survey. Each interview lasted approximately one hour in length, and is transcribed word for word. These open-ended interviews allow for a systematic examination of adolescent identity within Orthodox Jewish education. Chapter Five concludes this study.

1.8 Summary

In this chapter the background to the research question of how adolescents experience Orthodox education has been explored. The awareness of the issue occurred while the researcher was working within the Jewish Orthodox environment. The research question has been stated and the aims of the study set. Further, the method and demarcation to be used has been mentioned. A research programme has briefly been described. Chapter Two comprises a report of the literature that has been surveyed as background for the empirical study. This is to be followed by an empirical study of how adolescents experience their religious and educational environment. The findings and conclusion will provide some insight into the manner in which frum Jewish adolescents experience Orthodox education as they are in the process of identity development.

The literature study will follow in Chapter Two.
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE STUDY

EXPLORING ADOLESCENT IDENTITY FORMATION WITHIN
JEWISH ORTHODOX EDUCATION

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this literature study is to explore the phenomenon of adolescent identity development. Specific focus is given to the factors that enhance and inhibit the development of adolescent identity and developmental tasks. The secondary focus of this study is the nature of the religious identity acquired through religious education, specifically Jewish Orthodox education.

2.2 Adolescence

The word adolescence originates from the Latin adolescentia, which refers to the process of developing or growing up. According to Hoge (1999:2), although the term does not reflect a specific age, it is currently used as a term for the teen years. This general term for the teen years will be used in this research.

Fox (1997:237) offers an historical context for adolescence, and concludes that the concept of adolescence is not merely a product of modern times, but that the behavioural and psychological displays have been documented, at least since Grecian times. She describes some of the paradoxes of adolescence as

... a time of uncertainty but of conformity with peers. It is a stage of life when the individual is seeking self-identity and in this process becomes inwardly absorbed, perhaps egoistic, and sometimes cruel. However, it is also a most spontaneous, energetic and promising phase, one devoted to ideals and romanticising is concerned with the demonstration of physical and sexual prowess as it is characterised by laziness, unsteadiness, preoccupation with sex, and possibly criminal acts (Fox 1997:233).

Adolescence is a time of intense physical, emotional and psychological transition and is the time for establishing identity.

The integration now taking place in the form of ego identity is more than the sum of the childhood identifications. It is the inner capital accrued from all those experiences of each successive stage when successful identification led to a successful alignment of
the individual's basic drives with his endowment and his opportunities (Erikson, 1959:89).

During the process of adolescence many changes occur on a biological, intellectual, emotional and social level. Fenwick and Smith (1998:27) believe that with the exception of infancy and early childhood, the adolescent years involve more rapid change and more physical, emotional and intellectual growth than at any other time of life.

Cole and Cole (1996:617) examine the effect of the biochemical changes on adolescents. They believe that the reproductive potential is the most dramatic element because of the interpersonal effects on social behaviour. Hoge's (1999:18) work recognises similar areas in acknowledging the importance of the development of sexuality and the reproductive system on adolescent development. Cole and Cole (1996:619) link the effects of biological maturity with social interaction among peers and friends, siblings and parents, as well as of their entry into the workforce. Clearly the biochemical transition is significant and the effects are vital as they influence adolescent development. As this is not the focus of this research, it is acknowledged as a taken-for-granted, yet vital component.

The focus of this research is on exploring the psychosocial identity of a particular group of adolescents. Elkind (1994:203) explores the importance of a social context.

The transition from childhood to adulthood always takes places in a particular sociocultural and historical context. In many ways the cultural context determines the ease or difficulty with which young people transit to adulthood.

Seltzer (1989:18) identifies the context for adolescence as,

a period of living in a no man's land, of being on unfamiliar ground, having left childhood yet remaining far from adulthood. ... The allure of the adult world exists and the vision of independence intoxicates: yet the safety of childhood, still close, beckons on. Neither role fits: the one is out-grown, the second is not yet attainable. Cognitive expansions incrementally broaden horizons, but concrete skills have yet to be developed, and opportunities must be sought. Each individual must make the passage independently while cognisant that age-mates are seeking the same goal simultaneously. Confusion coexists with challenge, accomplishment coexists with anxiety, exhilaration coexists with sadness, and new freedom coexists with new responsibilities.
This quotation reflects the plight of the adolescent - it is a time of so many conflicting and seemingly contradictory experiences, feelings and opportunities for self-development and self-knowledge.

Adolescents’ tasks can be summarised in three broad categories within this perplexing period. Firstly, to establish their own identity while coping with biological changes, secondly, establishing their social identity which is influenced by their peers, and thirdly, the acceptance of their specific values which may be linked with religious identity viz. Jewish identity. As Cole and Cole (2001:644) acknowledge, adolescents need to be able to accommodate their views of life with the world as it really exists. As adolescents adjust their perception of who they are with whom they want to be, they arrive at a sense of self and identity. Therefore, adolescents’ active thinking may be seen as vital in coping with adulthood and the psychological demands of adulthood.

2.3 Adolescent identity formation as an important developmental task

This literature study places great reliance on the work of Erik Erikson, an ego psychologist, whose theory is that continuous human development covers an entire life span, within a social context. He describes the human life cycle as being intertwined with social institutions or the environment. While Erikson, a student of Freud, accepts the influence biological factors on adolescent behaviour, he examines the psychological integration of what he called identity. Erikson (1963:261) describes identity in the following way:

the accrued confidence that the inner sameness and continuity prepared in the past are matched by the sameness and continuity of one’s meaning for others.

The reason for the reliance on Erikson’s model is that it offers a significant description of the developmental stages of human life. Erikson’s descriptions of the developmental tasks of each stage are inter-connected. Importantly, he recognises that the developmental process occurs within a social context (unlike Marcia): thus Erikson’s theory provides a sense of psychosocial integration. Marcia (1980:159) broadened Erikson’s theory of identity, calling it a self-structure - an internal self-constructed, dynamic organisation of drives, abilities, beliefs and individual history. In this way the integration of the individual’s identity can be perceived.
Erikson’s (1959;1963;1968) premise is that the individual goes through a series of chronological stages. As each stage draws to a close the individual goes through what he calls a developmental crisis, the purpose of which is the resolution of the two reciprocal opposites. The ideal solution is that a balance exists between the two. For optimum human functioning, there needs to be interplay between the individual’s developing needs and opportunities within a social environment. Thus, adolescent behaviour needs to be understood within the context of an organism in the growth process. Consequently, society will benefit when individuals successfully resolve their developmental crises.

If identity is not well established, the result will be role confusion. This issue will be explored in this chapter. As Erikson (1968:130) said

...should a young person feel that the environment tries to deprive him too radically of all the forms of expression which may permit him to develop and integrate the next step, he may resist with the wild strength encountered in animals who are suddenly forced to defend their lives. For, indeed, in the social jungle of human existence there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity.

Thus Erikson highlights the need for adolescent identity development to be given prominence.

There is a valuable flexibility within Erikson’s identified stages – when individuals do not complete a particular stage within the expected time-frame, they have the possibility of doing so at a later stage. However, if a stage has not been successfully resolved, the implication is that it will be more difficult to successfully deal with crises of the following stages. Erikson’s acclaimed model argues that a sense of wholeness in maturity is embedded in the psychological integration of past, present and future.

Outlined in this paragraph is Erikson’s (1963:247-263) delineation of the first five of the eight ages of development relevant to this study. Stage One is Basic Trust and Basic Mistrust. Stage Two is Autonomy, Shame and Doubt. Stage Three is Initiative and Guilt. Stage Four is Industry and Inferiority. Stage Five is Identity and Role Confusion / Identity Diffusion.

Brief reference to stages one to four is relevant, as the successful completion of these stages enables the individual to cope more easily with the developmental crisis of stage
five, which is the adolescent stage. In addition, the condensed reference has bearing
on the core of this research. As Erikson (1968:96) says

... the emerging ego identity, then, bridges the early childhood stages, when the body
and the parents images were given their specific meanings, and the later stages, when a
variety of social roles becomes available and increasingly coercive. A lasting ego
identity cannot begin without the trust of the first oral stage; it cannot be
completed without a promise of fulfilment which from the dominant image of adulthood
reaches down into the baby's beginnings and which creates at every step an accruing
sense of ego strength.

This quotation emphases the importance of successfully completing each stage.

2.3.1 Basic Trust and Basic Mistrust

The first stage, during infancy, requires the child to have a stable trust in the world and
in the self (Erikson 1959:55; 1963:247). A balance needs to develop between trust and
a degree of distrust that his environment will fulfil basic needs like food and shelter, and
some higher order needs, like love and care. The importance of the achieving trust is
that it forms the foundation for the sense of identity and self-acceptance within a social
framework.

Erikson (1968:76) links basic trust of stage one with the institution of religion. The
individual develops a sense of autonomy, as the image of the principle of law and order
is seen in daily life. This is supported by the legal system, protecting the individual's
privileges and terms, duties and rights.

2.3.2 Autonomy and Shame and Doubt

The second stage occurs around the second year of life: here the physical development
assists the child in testing the anal functions of retention and excretion (Erikson

While it is important for children to exercise autonomy, not too much should be
expected of them, because too many failures will induce humiliation and
embarrassment, which will lead them to distrust their abilities. Erikson (1963:254)
states:

From a sense of self-control without a loss of self-esteem comes a lasting sense of good
will and pride; from a sense of loss of self-control and of ... over control comes a lasting
propensity for doubt and shame.
2.3.3 Initiative and Guilt

The third stage takes place during the third to sixth year, the time when the child has greater mobility and an awareness of the genitals. The importance of this stage in terms of the evolving personality, is the development of a conscience. If this stage is not successfully completed, role experimentation could lead to role fixation (Erikson 1959:74; 1963:255).

2.3.4 Industry and Inferiority

The fourth stage covers the primary school going age (Erikson 1959:82; 1963:258). As Erikson (1963:258) says,

\[ \text{The inner stage seems all set for entrance into life except that life must first be school life, whether school is field or jungle or classroom.} \]

This is the time of acquiring literacy and other requisite skills for future careers. The more complex the society, the more specialisation in teaching is required: consequently the parental role is reduced. In Schaffer’s (1989:440) exploration of this area he comments that the pre-adolescent needs to acquire a personal and interpersonal competence, which can be represented by reading, writing and arithmetic, as well as an ability to interact with peers and adults. As children acquire these skills, they will develop a sense of ‘industriousness’, which will enable them to cope with the next stage of adolescence. Erikson identifies the danger for the child at this stage as being a sense of inadequacy and inferiority.

When the earlier developmental stages have been either partially or entirely successfully resolved, the adolescent can begin the process of exploring the fifth stage i.e. identity and role confusion.

2.3.5 Identity and Role Confusion or Identity Diffusion

In Erikson’s description of stage five (Erikson 1959:55; 1963:247) he identifies the physiological revolution of adolescence and awareness of new tasks while challenging earlier assumptions. Erikson (1963:261) says,

\[ \text{The growing and developing youths ... are now primarily concerned with what they appear to be in the eyes of others as compared with what they feel they are. ... The sense of ego identity, then, is the accrued confidence that the inner sameness and} \]
continuity prepared in the past are matched by the sameness and continuity of one’s meaning for others, as evidenced in the tangible promise of a ‘career’.

Feldman (1999:341) explores Erikson’s views and he describes adolescence as the time individuals examine their personal strengths and weaknesses, while they attempt to investigate their uniqueness and individuality. Using this information, adolescents try to discover their future roles. Their friends and peers increasingly become their resources and they become less reliant on the adults in their lives. In essence, they are trying to realise their identity.

Adolescents are required to develop a sense of identity that is separate from that of their parents and simultaneously they need to complete a number of developmental tasks. Markstrom, Berman and Brusch (1998:206) examine the process of the emerging identity. Ideological or personal identity develops from an internalised process that affects the individual’s purpose and direction. While interpersonal or social identity refers to a view about self in connection with others, it is due to both an internalised and externalised process. Together, ideological and interpersonal forms of identity comprise ego identity.

Santrock (2000:350) refers to identity as a ‘self-portrait’ that has many pieces. Some of the identities he refers to are: personal, personality, sexuality, career or vocational, political, religious, cultural or ethnic, achievement or intellectual and physical. In order to explore their identities, adolescents experiment with various options. He believes that adolescence is best viewed as a time of exploration and change, a chance for decision making. Kail (1998:278) likens the way teens explore different identities to the way adults may test drive different cars, before selecting one that will best suit their needs.

Erikson (1963:262) says,

The adolescent mind is essentially a mind of the moratorium, a psychosocial stage between childhood and adulthood, and between the morality learned by the child, and the ethics to be developed by the adult.

Papalia et al. (2002:426), along with many other writers, refer to the psychosocial moratorium, the ‘time out’ period that allows adolescents to make sense of their own
world as they make the transition to adulthood. Recognising this time frame underscores Marcia’s (1980:161) comment that although this process may be dramatic, generally it is an ongoing process where small, daily decisions play a cumulative and important role.

While growth is visible physically, the developmental changes in emotional, intellectual and social functioning are evident in behaviour. Development within these areas is uneven and confusing for those to whom it occurs and those who witness it. Seltzer (1989:94) says adolescents essentially are in the process of constructing a sense of self, which once achieved, will allow them a personal anchor. However during this developmental period, there is discernible instability. Nevertheless, once identity has been accomplished, the self then gains stability and there is the core of identity. Final integration of the areas indicates the end of the period when the adolescent becomes an adult.

2.4 Factors enhancing identity formation

The following section will explore individual identity formation, the influence of the social environment, including peers, siblings and parents, as well as the importance of personal values.

2.4.1 Individual identity formation and family influences

In Bukatko and Daehler’s (1998:402) view, a sense of self, with the ability to reflect on individual attributes, is the essence of identity construction. An identity, they say, needs to be a comprehensive, congruous and internalised view of who a person is, what they want to be, as well as what they believe in and value. Adolescents experience many pressures while establishing identity i.e. the internal personal goals, as well as the external pressures to make the right decisions. The latter is linked with career choices and relationship choices and the need for continuity and congruency. An identity revolves around establishing a sense of self, recognising physical identity and coping with a changing appearance that is linked with gender identity.

The establishment of individual identity is critical; without it, insecurity about self-identity, purpose in life and a place in community i.e. an occupational role, will lead to role diffusion. Herbert (1991:214) refers to individual identity formation as a life-long
process, people may enjoy re-shaping their personalities, and this will be satisfying as long as they have a clear sense of who they are.

Lefrancois (1995:558) analyses three general stages of parent-child interaction,

*The first, a pre-adolescent phase, is marked by children’s continuing physical, social and emotional dependence on the family and by low conflict. The second, spanning early adolescence involves increasing independence and greater conflict. The third stage, beginning in later adolescence is marked by declining conflict and the achievement of relative independence from parents. Independence does not imply that children break all bonds with their family and tie themselves irrevocably to groups of peers.*

While Cole and Cole (2001:677) reflecting on current research, believe that the families that are the most helpful in promoting individual identity, are those that provide a sense of safety, while encouraging adolescents to create a distinct identity. Furthermore, as Papalia *et al.* (2002:441) note with reference to family conflict, while there are variations for different ethnic groups, the critical issue is the individual adolescents’ personalities and their parents’ management of the immediate situations. Parenting styles have a huge impact on adolescent self-image and developing identity. Noack, Kerr and Olah (1999:713) made similar observations. Their focus is on the need to examine the balance between independence and family inter-connectedness, because family relationships have immense and long lasting impact on adolescent development.

Siblings play an important role in identity development, as they are in a curious position, in that they are family members as well as peers. Seltzer (1989:75) explores the pivotal role of siblings during adolescence. They are members of a different generation from their parents but they are part of the same generational-group as peers. As they are members of two worlds, they are a significant group with a unique power position somewhere between peers and family. Gouws and Kruger (1996:116) recognise the additional factors in that the

*... influence of sibling relations on the development of children depends on age, gender, birth order and spacing.*

Large families, too, have impact on development. Dunn (1984:72) identifies a number of aspects,

*Firstly for many children in large families there is an important closed world of play with the brothers and sisters... a second point is that siblings in large families do often have*
special roles as disciplinarians of their younger siblings; this rarely happens in two-child or three-child families. ... The picture of childhood spent with several brothers and sisters as one of security, strength and a rich shared world of play is of course only a partial one. Rivalry and competition were described too.

Before establishing a specific identity, adolescents need to synthesise their personal needs, inherent abilities and identification with significant people whom they encounter. Unlike younger children who model themselves on others, adolescents alter and integrate earlier descriptions into their identity. Furthermore, the adults whom adolescents choose as role models, do not seem to reflect their social role; instead, what is important is the role they are portraying during the time of uncertainty in the adolescent’s life. With regard to this form of expression, Jensen (1985:70,71) believes that adolescents have a variety of opportunities for achieving a sense of identity - these may be vocational, philosophical or religious. Developing a rich self occurs by interacting with as many varied, alternative models as possible. The more exposure and involvement, the fuller will be the emerging personality.

Erikson (1968:165) describes successful identity formation in the following way:

An optimal sense of identity... is experienced merely as a sense of psychosocial well-being. Its most obvious concomitants are a feeling of being at home in one’s body, a sense of ‘knowing where one is going,’ and an inner assuredness of anticipated recognition from those who count.

2.4.2 Social identity and the peer group

The task around social identity refers to generating an identity within a social context: that is, in a family environment, with significant other people e.g. role models, as well as peer influences and pressure.

The following section explores the societal aspect of adolescent identity development i.e. learning about one’s self, in a social context where one is of value to others; this also includes developing emotional ties with another person and entering or preparing for emotional relationships.

Among the most critical developmental tasks that have to be performed by the adolescent are therefore those of socialisation, carving out a niche for himself in society, acquiring inter-personal skills, cultivating tolerance for personal and cultural differences and developing self-confidence. Consequently the adolescent gradually moves away

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from his parents, and acceptance by and consorting with the peer group assume increasing importance (Gouws & Kruger 1996:110).

2.4.2.1 Social tasks

It is the task of the adolescent to develop socially appropriate behaviour. Noom, Dekovic and Meeus (1999:771) examine the importance of autonomy and attachment in adolescent development. They describe autonomy as the ability to regulate one’s own behaviour; while attachment is seen as the quality of the relationship with significant others. They believe that these qualities should be seen as differing aspects, rather than opposites.

Fulfilling social tasks requires mastering social skills. Bukatko and Daehler (1998:524) recognise that friendship and peer interaction is a key element in the social and emotional life of adolescents. They rely on their peers as each is in the transition between childhood and adulthood, no longer child and not yet adult. There is a sense of mutual understanding as each adolescent experiences biological, intellectual and emotional changes - all of which give rise to changes in social personality and overt actions. Because of the quality and frequency of these changes, adolescents are unpredictable and subject to changeable moods that accompany their daily experiences. The norm is fluctuation and excitement, not stability. Interaction with peers is of great importance.

2.4.2.2 Socialising with peers

As Bukatko and Daehler (1998:523) note, the importance of the intimacy of friendship in adolescence is re-inforced, as they share problems and solutions to those problems, with friends. Each self-picture is in the process of formation. In this time of confusion and complex change, adolescents find it helpful to confide in age-mates or peers who are experiencing similar distress and exhilaration.

Peer relationships may be described as supplemental, rather than replacing parents’ influence. Atwater (1996:201) states that peers play an increasingly important role in the lives of fellow adolescents. As adolescents move from being happily dependant on parents to becoming individuals, who are fully capable of independent living and personal decision-making, they rely on their peers. Papalia et al. (2002:43) make a
similar assertion that adolescents enjoy the support of their peers who are undergoing similar changes.

Peers embody two very strong needs for adolescents — conformity and experimentation. Atwater (1996:211) describes peer conformity as the willingness to comply with group norms whether because of the actual or imaginary social authority groups possess.

The peer group has many dynamics and the resultant pressure on adolescents is immense. During this stage there is great concern about how they appear to be in the eyes of other adolescents and the way they perceive themselves to be. Hoge (1999:30) makes a distinction between different forms of peer relationships. He refers to the importance of close friendships and the impact these relationships have on attitudes and behaviour. Then he explores the role of peers in a wider context i.e. at school or in the community. He argues that acceptance or rejection will have considerable impact on the adolescent's development.

While adolescents are in the process of challenging the adult world and norms, there is some consolation in turning to their friends. They use peer interaction as an opportunity for sharing, comparing, evaluating against and experimenting with one another. Atwater (1996:203) refers to this process as that of social comparisons, which he says is vital during adolescence, when individuals are ... busy establishing themselves, not simply refining themselves, as in adulthood. Thus, peers provide a reference measure for adolescents to assess their own experience and conduct.

2.4.2.3 In-groups

While they crave the company of their peers, Erikson (1963:262) notes that adolescents can be cliquish and brutal in their dismissal of all those who are 'different' whether in appearance, background or abilities. The differences may be obvious or subtle, reflecting the signs of the in-group or the out-group. The significance for Erikson is that such intolerance is a defence against a sense of identity confusion - which does not mean it should be condoned.

As a result of the physical changes, linked with genital maturation and the awareness of the adult roles that await them, adolescents are very concerned with popular efforts to establish their adolescent subculture i.e. dress, language, music and adolescent rituals.
The tremendous energy they invest appears to make this stage like a final rather than a transient phase. Rice (1996:247) refers to the adolescent subcultures that place importance on peer conformity, which seem to be in contradiction to adult values. He believes that the adolescent subculture is the result of being segregated from the adult world in their long hours of training and extra-curricular activities.

Rice's (1996:276) analysis of groups or cliques indicates that they operate in a similar way to friendship groups i.e. that groups and friendships are chosen partly on the basis of similarity. Should some behaviour or attitudes become incongruous, there will be a split and re-alignment with other like-minded members. Conformity for adolescents is like an insurance policy against being rejected by the group: there seems to be an obsession with the way they appear to their peers. Rejection means eventual eviction from the group. Without access to their peer group, adolescents will be deprived of the opportunity for growth and a forum for practising their new skills.

2.4.2.4 Socialising with the opposite sex

The time that is spent with peers of the same and opposite sex is exciting and presents new opportunities to the adolescent. Simultaneously, it involves conflict, jealousy, fear of rejection and uncertainty. Zigler and Stevenson (1993:556) comment on the difficulty of the process and the fact that most adolescents, during this time, become embarrassed due to an actual or imaginary social error. Adolescents support one another temporarily by forming small and larger circles of friendship and by stereotyping themselves, their ideals, and their enemies: they also test one-others' constancy and endurance. Social interaction of whatever kind is very important to the adolescent.

Erikson (1968:128) says that as adolescents search for a new sense of continuity and sameness, they also search for sexual maturity. Adolescents need to have to come to grips again with crises of earlier years before they can install lasting ideals of their final identity. As the adolescent is still in a state of self-formation, ‘falling in love’ is not entirely or even primarily, a sexual issue. To a large extent, adolescent love is an attempt to arrive at a definition of one's identity by projecting one's unformed self-image on another person, and by seeing it reflected, there is a move towards interpreting one's identity. True intimacy can only be experienced when the individual possesses a sense of self with which to truly engage the other person.
Rice (1996:216) similarly says that adolescent sexuality has more to do with emotional needs than sex. He contends that sexual needs are exercised as a way of expressing and fulfilling non-sexual needs. Some emotional needs he includes are the need for affection, avoiding loneliness, acceptance, exploring gender issues, building self-esteem, expressing anger or escaping boredom.

Ironically, Seltzer (1989:157) notes that the intimacy level is very low while the activity level is very high in adolescent gatherings. This she attributes to the need to be alone in order to have time to process the outcomes of the large gathering, to re-evaluate for better understanding or interpreting the comparative act that motivates attendance. The various emotions like, elation or disappointment, that the adolescent experiences may not be clear to the adolescent. Furthermore, intimacy requires a time commitment: lack of real intimacy conserves energies. This is necessary, as the adolescent must still devote time to a number of responsibilities; firstly, personal tasks (school-work and extra curricula activities); secondly, family responsibilities; thirdly peer interaction and other reference groups; and fourthly personal physical health and body awareness.

2.4.3 Long term identity development - career choices

A related task of creating value in society is choice and preparation for a career and future activities. Consequently, all of these activities need to be accommodated within the careers available to adolescents at that time. Thus they are grappling with the question of how to connect the skills and the ideal examples of careers with what is currently available. Furthermore, as a result of technological developments, there is a great deal of time between the beginning of secondary school and the young person’s final access to specialised work i.e. a career. As the developing work identity includes learning and experimenting, the adolescent is permitted an apprenticeship. So the adolescent phase becomes an even more marked and conscious period of psychosocial development.

In terms of career development, Seltzer’s (1989:94) empirical studies indicate that adolescents seek out opinions and information from reference groups and figures well beyond parents and peers. They reveal discriminating use of different reference groups for various issues or situations. Parents are considered experts on particular issues like careers, studying or earning a living. Seltzer’s data (collected from 2500 adolescents over a ten year period) indicates that peers are environmental figures of the present:
there is the need to conform, and for the adolescent to be aware of what 'is in' and what will make a good surface impression. Parents, taking care of current support needs, are the reference group for adolescents' future concerns.

Noom et al.'s (1999:781) more recent study of 400 adolescents makes a similar deduction. They found that the attachment to parents is

... positively related to academic competence and self esteem and reduces engagement in problem behaviour and feelings of depression. Attachment to peers is strongly related to social competence and increase engagement in problem behaviour.

2.5 The importance of personal values on identity formation

Developing and formulating exclusive values is essential in the process of identity formation. This is because developing a personal philosophy serves as a guideline to behaviour. Erikson refers to the 'ideological mind' of the adolescent, who is eager to be recognised by his peers, and is involved in the activities of society, while simultaneously deciding the boundaries beyond which behaviour is immoral, strange or harmful.

Establishing values is relevant for the healthy personality - the question to be asked is whether the individual is proficient in the use of the social rules, which make things more manageable (not more convoluted) or whether the rules dominate the person. Erikson (1968:128,129) links the earliest stage of the identity crisis i.e. trust in self and in others, with the way the adolescent looks most fervently for people and ideas to have faith in, which also means people and ideas whose service would seem be worthwhile. At the same time fearing a simplistic or too trusting commitment, the adolescent will, paradoxically, express interest pertaining to faith with obstreperous and cynical mistrust.

This is supported empirically by Hill (1995:365) who says that, even though an adolescent's set of beliefs may show some difference from parental teachings, there is seldom a wholesale rejection of their belief system.

It is Erikson's (1968:129) view that if the second stage establishes the necessity of being defined by what one can choose freely, while at the same time, the adolescent is apprehensive of activities in which he would feel exposed to ridicule or self-doubt. This too, can lead to a paradox, namely, that he would rather act outrageously in the eyes of his elders, out of free choice, than be forced into activities that would be embarrassing.
to himself or his peers. Thus it is possible to see the impact of such behaviour in a social context.

2.6 Factors inhibiting adolescent development

Adolescence is a vulnerable time for individuals, as they are in the process of constructing a sense of self, which once achieved, forms a foundation. During this developmental period the adolescent does not show stability or constancy. Before psychosocial maturity is achieved, the individual is very easily influenced. Being unable to form an identity is what Erikson (1963:261) refers to as role confusion. He contends that when this kind of difficulty is based on a strong previous doubt of racial and sexual identity, or where role confusion joins a depression of long standing, delinquent and borderline psychotic episodes are not uncommon. Adolescents, who are confused and troubled by the inability to adopt a role forced on them, see running away in one form or another, dropping out of school, leaving jobs, staying out all night or withdrawing into bizarre and inaccessible moods, as the only option.

Atwater (1996:318) working within Erikson’s framework, says that identity confusion is the result of adolescents avoiding exploration of their own identities and the consequent decision-making - which promotes a sense of direction.

Erikson (1968:174) defines negative identity as an identity contrarily based on all those identifications and roles which, at critical stages of development, have been presented to them as most undesirable or dangerous and yet also as most real. The choice of the negative identity is often expressed in contempt or hostility toward the roles seen as acceptable in one’s family or immediate community. Any aspect of the required role (masculinity, femininity, nationality or class membership) can become the main focus of the young person’s ridicule. Choosing a negative identity may be a reaction to overly ambitious parents. Therefore, a negative identity can sometimes be seen as a desperate attempt to regain some mastery in a situation. Similarly, work paralysis may be analysed as a logical sequence of a deep sense of inadequacy: this does not usually reflect a true lack of potential, but may convey the unrealistic demands made by an ego willing to settle for only unlimited authority or control.
Papalia et al. (2002:447,448) explore the link between parenting and negative identity formation - either good behaviour was not reinforced or there was harsh or inconsistent parenting - which affects identity formation negatively.

In conclusion, it can be said that the sense of identity occurs within three critical spheres: personal, social and value choices. Psychosocial development of identity is a complex and turbulent phase.

2.7 Religious identity within the framework of Orthodox Judaism

As an introduction to exploring some facets of Orthodox Judaism, the researcher provides a general overview of religious identity.

2.7.1 Boundaries pertaining to religious beliefs

A disclaimer is necessary before proceeding. The following analysis and synthesis of the material does not involve value judgements about beliefs or religious affiliations, but is rather an attempt to unravel some of the religious themes in personal development. As Spilka, Hood and Gorsuch (1985:2) recognise, it is not the place of psychologists to challenge religious institutions and their theologies - the task is to examine and explore the psychosocial world of religion and religious education. Religion is an incredibly complex and complicated, multi-faceted and symbolic structure. An individual’s religion determines a belief system that is exhibited in everyday behaviour and an articulated value system. It is celebrated in rituals and festivals.

2.7.2 Religious beliefs

William James is one of the pioneers in the psychological study of religion. It is James’ (1902:494) view that:

- The theories which Religion generates ... are secondary; and if you wish to grasp her essence, you must look to the feelings and conduct as being constant elements.

The essence of Orthodox Judaism, in the researcher’s experience, can be evidenced in the conduct and feelings of the adolescents. The significance of religious influence on adolescent identity is the focus of this thesis.

Kadankavil (1985:136) believes that the exploration of the objectives of metaphysical truth of the beliefs of the religions are of less importance, it is more meaningful to examine whether subjective religion is a religion leading to maturity, while undergoing a
process of integration and development. Thus for a truly religious person, religion will most likely be more primary, or central.

Allport and Ross (1967:442) express the view that knowing a person is religious is in some way secondary to being aware of the importance that religion plays in that individual’s life. Bearing this in mind, the researcher will attempt to explore some of the facets of religious identity: intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, problem-solving approaches and other features that are linked to mental health and identity formation.

2.7.3 Religious identity as expressed in extrinsic and intrinsic orientations

Allport and Ross (1967:434,435) did seminal work when examining positive and negative features of religiousness by differentiating between intrinsic (I) and extrinsic (E) orientations within the Religion Orientation Scale (ROS). It is their proposition that extrinsically motivated people use their religion as a means of obtaining status, security, self-justification and sociability; this is essentially an utilitarian approach. Intrinsic motivation requires internalised beliefs and indifference to external consequences i.e., individuals live their religion. It is their contention that knowing the role that religion plays in an individual’s life is far more important than knowing that a person subscribes to some form of religion. Norman, Richards, and Bear (1998:96) contend that a moral curriculum is a combination of content and process and this may lead to the development of personal certainty, a sense of ethical responsibility.

Spilka et al. (1985:19) elaborate on the framework - identifying the forms as intrinsic-committed and extrinsic-consensual. They define an intrinsic-committed framework as universalistic, strongly ethical, with a general framework for meaningful daily life and seeing people as individuals. The cognitive characteristics include flexibility and tolerant thinking that can accommodate complexities. The extrinsic-consensual framework is more expedient, restricted to a small group and linked with low self-esteem. The cognitive characteristics comprise a concrete and literal outlook, intolerance of different views, rigidity, mechanistic thought and closed judgement.

Further work has been completed by Bergin, Masters and Richards (1987:197) using the Religious Orientation Scale to assess the correlation between the two scales and anxiety, personality traits, self-control, irrational beliefs and depression. Results generally indicate that intrinsic religious orientation is negatively correlated with anxiety,
and positively correlated with self-control and preferred personality functioning, whereas the opposite is true of extrinsic religious orientation. Correlations are generally not found with irrational beliefs.

2.7.4 The impact of religion on identity development

Baker and Gorsuch's (1982:121) study of trait anxiety and religiousness found that intrinsic orientation seems to occur with greater ego strength, more integrated social behaviour, less paranoia or insecurity, and less anxiety: but extrinsic orientation produces the opposite affect. They conclude that intrinsic orientation is linked with the ability to integrate anxiety into every day life. The general findings are consistent with the proposition that being committed intrinsically to religion does in fact bring peace.

Markstrom-Adams and Smith (1996:258) argue that

... diffusion is the least healthy of identity statuses, and its association with the extrinsic orientation leads to a conclusion that extrinsics fare the poorest in respect to psychosocial development. The more instrumental and utilitarian extrinsic motivation towards religion is related, therefore, to a state of identity formation that is immature, underdeveloped and potentially maladaptive.

Their study indicates that extrinsic individuals appear at risk for poor psychosocial health and adjustment.

Religious problem solving styles have been suggested to be an important variable in the relationship between religiousness and psychological health. Pargament, Kennell, Hathaway, Grevengoed, Newman and Jones (1988:91) propose three styles of religious coping that reflect three types of relationships with God. Firstly, the collaborative style involves an active and personal exchange with God, usually intrinsically motivated and is positively correlated with competence in the individual. The deferring style is a passive approach, which waits on God for answers, seems to be related to extrinsic motivation and to the inability of the individual to resolve problems. The self-directing style is a functionally effective style of personal problem-solving which emphasises the freedom God gives to people to direct their own lives beliefs or depression.

Successful identity formation is linked with good mental health. Schaefer and Gorsuch (1991:449) examine three aspects of psychological adjustment and health i.e. religious motivation, religious beliefs and religious problem solving styles. Motivation, knowledge
and belief are important factors in identity formation. People's feelings and attitudes towards an object, influence the way they evaluate that object. The intellectual component represents knowledge about the object, while the behaviour indicates the action with respect to the object. There is often, however, a significant difference between attitudes and real actions, and there is no consensus about the interrelations of these components of an attitude.

Bergin et al. (1987:198) contend that the relationship between religiousness and mental health is not clearly understood. The authors identify values from a number of sources as: autonomy, nurturing relationships, identity, goal direction, integrity, work and symptom control. They explore characteristics of mentally healthy life styles, as well as examining the relationship of religious values to a variety of personality characteristics and indexes of pathology. Bergin et al. (1987:203) conclude that the evidence to date seems to indicate that intrinsic orientation is an asset. The religious factor can be used therapeutically to favour growth. For example, appeals can be made to the positive values that are held and there is the availability of social support from the religious community. While the extrinsic orientation reflects shallowness and a manipulative style that are identified in religious and personality indexes, there is also a rigidity that makes insight and change more difficult to achieve.

Pfeifer and Waelty (1999:43) studied the effect of depression, anxiety and religiosity (they used items from the ROS scale mentioned). They concur that studies on mental health have produced mixed data. Their conclusion is that religion seems to be a significant factor in coping with depression and anxiety; particularly in terms of meaning and hope that goes beyond the actual life situation. Yet, they say that for the patients who experience anxiety and religious conflict, these anxieties have been found to be related to their essential psychopathologies.

2.7.5 Religious schema within a community context

The link between religion and the community is significant. Spilka et al. (1985:75) contend that in the Judeo-Christian world, children (pre-formal operational phase) generally are required to study their faith and indicate their acceptance (e.g. during the Bar Mitzvah or confirmation). However it is only upon reaching adolescence that they have the cognitive skills (formal operations) which allows for an analysis of their faith. Moreover, religious cognitive development is only one aspect of religious development.
Furthermore, Spilka et al. (1985:79) conclude that parents' religiosity has a direct impact on their children, but research to date cannot prove a causal relationship. Religious affiliation may be more easily passed on than religious beliefs, but influence of parents' religiosity is a definite factor in both cases.

The Talmud advises parents in this regard to *Teach your child a trade for otherwise you will teach them to steal* (Talmud: Tractat Kiddishin:62). Brody, Stoneman and Flor (1996:703) found that greater formal religiosity is associated with positive family relationships, as well as resulting in fewer internalising and externalising problems amongst adolescents. Indirectly, adolescent self-regulation is influenced by positive family cohesion.

An exploration of one of the weekly Orthodox rituals may be of value in understanding the power of religious celebration and the way it reflects parental influence and community values. A significant weekly, family-religious celebration, is that of Shabbos (Sabbath). Goldberg (1987:148) says that observing the Sabbath is not simply an abstract theological concept and a legal institution, but it is an integral part of the Jewish family life and social order. The psychological importance lies in the basic assumption that adhering to rituals and acknowledging the implicit values makes people's lives more fulfilling. All preparations for the Sabbath must be completed before sundown. The tensions, difficulties and activities of the week are to be put aside in order to have time for oneself, family and friends. As it is a weekly celebration, and rituals do not depend on a particular, or economic and social standing, the Sabbath represents continuity, stability and support for a people dispersed throughout the world and living in a mobile society. The Friday evening is complemented by the service on Saturday mornings, where, as Goldberg (1987:150) says, the

*atmosphere is quiet, intellectual, and unhurried. The prayers of the Sabbath liturgy emphasise the majesty of God and the covenant (relationship) with Israel.*

In this way, Jewish religious experience is interactional, in that it is the encounter of self with the environment. This is experiential rather than vicarious living. The declaration of Hillel, a Jewish sage, quoted in Hoffman (1992:419): *Do not separate yourself from the community* implies that Jews need to identify with their community and not stay apart from it. This reflects Erikson's view of the psychosocial development of establishing an individual identity within society. Lawton (1993:21) acknowledges that even well-
educated Jews are not exempt from unacceptable moral behaviour. The extra control is in the hands of the community. The family is the microcosm and on a larger scale the community creates the boundaries of what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, while the final deterrent is social disapproval or exclusion.

Thus religious and community values are interlinked. Hill (1995:359) proposes that people visualise their environment in terms of their specific schematic organisation. A schema is defined as an intellectual structure of prior knowledge. Thus a religious person may interpret events within a religious framework, which may effect an emotional response.

Beck (1986:148) argues that spirituality should be significant in the lives of religious and non-religious people and should therefore be a focus in schools. However, Beck (1986:150) reflects a concern, that paradoxically, religious people have sometimes neglected the spiritual dimension.

Kaplan (1994:287) comments on the difficulty Jewish adolescents’ experience; they are obliged to develop both their emotional and spiritual identity within the same time frame.

2.8 The nature of Jewish Orthodox education

In the light of the preceding discussion, what does it mean to say that a person is educated as a Jew and has received a Jewish education? Rapoport et al. (1995:48) believe that it is the nature of the Jewish religious educational framework to act concurrently as educational institutions and as religious agencies. Jewish yearnings for education resonate through the twice-daily Shema prayers: Teach your children thoroughly. This is taken from Deuteronomy 6:7,

And you shall teach them (God’s words) diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise.

Jewish religious education is conveyed in a multiplicity of ways. It is essential to look beyond the classroom to see how this takes place. Thus youth groups, summer camps and weekend retreat programmes (Shabbitons) are outside of the classroom but they all fall within the ambit of Jewish education. The choice of teaching material re-enforces the ethos of Orthodox schools. As Schimmel (1997:36) and Kahn (1980:360) both
explain, there is a great deal of educational value to be gained by teaching biblical and rabbinical texts, with a focus on their psychodynamic and emotional dimension, in addition to any other educational aspect of the curriculum.

2.8.1 Historical context

Religious Jewish schools have a unique history, reflecting the way education, instruction, guidance and administration are interlinked. Hoffman (1992:416) attests that Judaism credits Joshua ben Gamlo with establishing Jewish schools. Joshua ben Gamlo was concerned that the Torah would be forgotten as only the children who had fathers to teach them, were studying Torah - the others were uninstructed. He determined that teachers were to be employed in every community. Thus the establishment and financing of schools became a community responsibility. Financing religious school still requires great ingenuity and commitment from school principals and the community, especially today, when religious schools receive a very small government grant in South Africa.

Brown (1992:49) reflects similar sentiments when he said that the value based programme of the Schechter day schools (which work within a similar framework to the South African Orthodox Jewish schools) appeals to Observant parents, who look for peer and community support for their lifestyle.

2.8.2 The religious imperative for establishing Orthodox Jewish schools

Alexander (1992:448) says,

> The efforts of American Jews to establish both personal Jewish identity and group identification, their struggle for both religious and ethnic survival, are symptoms of much larger issues. Identity and identification are not only Jewish problems. Nor are they merely ethnic problems, minority problems or problems of the religiously minded. Identity and identification are modern problems. The difficulty that people have in developing a sense of who they are, of what groups they belong to, of what they ought to believe and of how they should behave are endemic to a highly diffuse, tolerant and pluralistic society such as ours. It is precisely because Jews have embraced modernity so wholeheartedly that the study of how they have been confronting these issues is instructive.

This is a reflection of the way South African Jews experience the situation. Spilka et al. (1985:92) note that in order for religious schools to have a long-term impact on adolescents, they need to comprise 1000 or so classroom hours per annum (this is about four hours per day).
The formality of the current learning processes is founded on the methodology used by Rabbis in their Torah study. Jacobs (1995:19) states that the study of Torah has traditionally been the area of rabbis and scholars, privileged men who were permitted access to the knowledge of God through disciplined schooling and an all embracing commitment to Jewish studies. There is a powerful perception that men who are familiar with Talmud are considered among the elite of the Jewish community, because they are aware of the thoughts of all previous rabbis, and thus linked to God. The Talmudist is revered for being pure in spirit, following an ethical and moral life style, as well as being esteemed for total recall of over five thousand pages of Talmud and the ability to analyse the debates. As there is such importance placed on Torah scholarship, it is understandable that Talmudic studies are seen as a path to God.

In concluding this section, Carmy's (2001:32) words reflect the infinite power of Torah study and the value ascribed to Torah study.

*In principal, the Torah has something to say about all subjects under the sun and above the sun. Its orientation is formative, its legal conclusion (Halakah) normative. Moreover, Torah studying is an overriding religious imperative pursued for its own sake; it would be difficult for an outsider to overestimate its importance in the life of the committed Jew.*

2.9 Difficulties encountered within Jewish Orthodox education

The Orthodox Jewish educational system places great demands on learners, as enumerated previously. The author wishes to discuss some of the difficulties of learners' and teachers' in Kodesh.

2.9.1 Learners' difficulties

Shkeddi (1997:73) identifies a number of issues that reflect the difficulties that learners encounter in Orthodox education. Firstly, students generally are uninterested in the texts they are required to study. Secondly, students only enjoy studying the texts under specific conditions of time, place and context. Thirdly, students relate to the texts critically (in the sense of challenging) and fourthly, students perceive the text to be important and sacred, though not authoritative.

Neusner (1986:77) recognises that there is an enormous emotional and psychological cost involved in the Rabbis' prescription for the life of moderation in emotions and restrained affections. Rabbis' instructions are to control emotions: arrogance, self-
with their consciences or wrestle with the moral dilemmas of the world. Instead, they are obliged to subscribe to a system of case law and speculation that defines behaviour in any given situation. Jews are always aware, as Neusner (1986:79) says, that death is the destination. Thus, life is the preparation for the journey and keeping the Law is an essential requirement. This is the focus of the curriculum and learning environment.

In conclusion it may be said that although Orthodox Jewish education offers a clear structure for learning and adolescent development – there are many areas of concern for both teachers and learners, adding complexity to adolescent development.

2.10 Connecting Jewish Orthodox education with developmental tasks of identity development

Jewish adolescents experience both Jewish culture and the socio-cultural influence of their environment. Kahn (1980:360) expresses the view that both the process of identity formation and the sense of identity will be unique for Jewish adolescents. This makes the task simultaneously more difficult, but sometimes easier for Jewish adolescents. Biblical ancestors offer models to emulate or tasks to master. She quotes some examples, viz. Cain, who struggled with impulses and external controls; Joseph, who struggled with self-esteem and relationships. Kahn (1980:363) says that the

... contemporary mainstream Jewish adolescents can identify with the Creator who created them in His image. Thus, they become empowered to create their own identity.

In a similar vein Youniss, McLellan and Yates (1999:250) confirm that religion assists development as per Erikson’s model. It is their view that

It offers an orientation to life and earns a view to events in terms of a transcendent system. It grounds principle and norms for behaviour in ideological bases and exemplifies them in actual historical events. It consequently affords a link between the world faced by youth and the world of prior generations. It further offers an ideal future towards which action can be directed.

Noom et al. (1999:780) view autonomy and attachment as two important developmental goals - their study shows that both have a positive adaptive function. In addition,

... educators should begin to think about detecting risky combinations of autonomy and attachment which increase the chances of an adolescent demonstrating problematic, acting out or internalising, demotivated behaviour.
Within an ethnoreligious context, Markstrom et al. (1998:205) state that Jewish adolescents living in predominantly ethnoreligious contexts have a greater sense of continuity. This arises from their social context with which they identify (particularly when their identity matches characteristics they value to the neighbourhood). They regard ethnicity as a significant factor that establishes a social contextual milieu. These findings are consistent with the expectations that a Jewish dominated adolescent should score significantly higher than did their nondominant counterparts in ethnic behaviour as well as have a higher total ethnic identity score.

Markstrom et al. (1998:216) found that adolescents in the Jewish dominant contexts are more advanced in some forms of ethnic identity and at less risk for ideological identity diffusion. Ideological and interpersonal forms of identity are associated with self-esteem, but there are minimal links between ethnic identity and self-esteem. From their study Markstrom et al. (1998:219) conclude that adolescents in Jewish dominant contexts are more advanced in some forms of ethnic identity than their non-Jewish peers and at less risk for identity confusion.

2.11 Conclusion

In conclusion it can be said that the traditional frum practices and religious demands are onerous on the developing psyche of the frum adolescent. The teleological focus is the vital and fundamental key. Orthodox adolescent development is extremely complex: religious imperatives provide a structure that both assists and complicates their adolescent identity development. The powerful religious structure requires commitment and dedication from adolescents, their peer group, parents and teachers to complete the process of adolescent identity development.

In Chapter Three the research design will be fully explained.
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

The research methodology used in this study will be explained. After establishing the process, there will be an examination of the motivation for the selection of the research topic, then the statement of the problem and the procedure used for data collection will be outlined. Ethical awareness is central to all research projects and some of the issues critical to this study will be explored. Chapter Four will contain the findings of the empirical study. After an analysis and interpretation of the collected data, Chapter Five will conclude this study.

Dooley (1990:8) believes it is necessary to approach the chosen area of research with a healthy scepticism in order to see things as they really are, rather than being influenced by unthinking perceptions. This awareness is vital in all areas of social science.

3.2 Research problem and aim

The aim of qualitative research, according to van der Merwe (1996:283), is to develop theories to promote better understanding and increase insight in the human condition. Researchers explore the ways different individuals make sense of their lives and offer an interpretation to refine knowledge of human behaviour.

This research problem has been selected because of the researcher’s interest and involvement with this group of adolescents who develop within an unique environment. There is curiosity about the way frum adolescents’ complete the psychosocial tasks viz. identity development within their specific religious-educational environment. The aim of this research is to explore adolescent identity development in general and specifically frum adolescents’ experience of Orthodox education. To this end, the study utilises a literature study and an empirical investigation with a qualitative analysis.

3.3 Research design

Denscombe (1998:174-6) offers meaningful insight into the differences between the two approaches, qualitative and quantitative. As this is a qualitative study, there will only be
reference to this form of research. Qualitative research uses words as the measure of analysis. Secondly, qualitative research is descriptive. Thirdly, qualitative research gravitates towards small-scale studies. Fourthly there is an holistic position in qualitative research. Fifthly, the researcher is personally involved in qualitative research. Finally, qualitative research has a tendency to be linked with an emergent design. This implies that theories and methods will emerge in the course of the research, with emphasis being on the findings. All of the above holds true for this study.

Denscombe (1998:208) states that qualitative information, regardless of whether it is in the form of words or icons, is the *product of a process of interpretation*. The importance of acknowledging this process is that it influences the way data is interpreted, perceived and used by researchers.

This researcher’s qualitative research will rely on empirical, participant observation, as well as open-ended and unstructured interviews. The approach is broadly phenomenological, that is, attempting to examine the meaning of life events for a group of adolescents within their specific educational and religious environment. The phenomenological question being: *How do you experience your education in an Orthodox Jewish school?*

### 3.4 Research methods

The process chosen for this research project is an inductive method. The research was guided by a general hypothesis. Van der Merwe (1996:279) explains that in the inductive approach the researcher moves from particular experiences to broad truths.

> From the researcher's perspective, this means that the research project is initiated without any explicit conceptual framework. The research is loosely guided by general hypothesis of conjectures.

It is van der Merwe's view that this type of research is less structured; connections and patterns are discerned after the data has been produced. Aspects of this methodology are: unstructured interviewing, idiographic descriptions, qualitative approach and objectivity, which van der Merwe describes as *the intersubjective predisposition of an insider.*
Dooley (1990:71) expresses the idea that the researcher will most likely be attracted to a paradox – which he describes as the clash between current issues and contemporary data. The issue of paradox attracted the researcher to this research problem.

### 3.4.1 Ethical awareness

*Ethics is a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group, is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students.*

With these words, Strydom (1998:24) offers an essential framework for conducting social science research.

Ethical awareness is a crucial component, as social research needs to protect the privacy and dignity of the human subjects who are investigated. Two basic moral obligations for research that Rosnow and Rosenthal (1996:52) identify are:

1. **(1) not to do physical or psychological harm to research participants and (2) to do research in a way that is most likely to produce valid results (so that the participants’ time and efforts, as well as other valuable resources, will not have been wasted).**

Pragmatically Denscombe (1998:5) asks three questions of social researchers:

- *Can I avoid any deception or misrepresentation in my dealing with the research subjects?*
- *Will the identities and the interests of those involved be protected?*
- *Can I guarantee the confidentiality of the information given to me during the research?*

Linked to the issue of confidentiality is that of privacy. Strydom (1998:28) makes a distinction between these two concepts by saying that,

*Privacy implies the element of personal privacy, while confidentiality indicates the handling of information in a confidential way.*

All of the above considerations were borne in mind during this study. Furthermore, ethical awareness is crucial in a study that examines adolescent identity development during the formative stage, as adolescents are at an extremely vulnerable and impressionable age. In addition, great sensitivity was essential while examining the role of religious education and religious identity. In this study the privacy of the participants has been respected. The confidentiality and anonymity of each participant was confirmed as they were explicitly informed that they would be known numerically, as
participants one to seven, in the transcripts. There has been no coercion of any of the participants. The focus of this research is the exploration of the adolescents' psychosocial world, not an analysis of their religious framework.

Prior to exploring adolescents' experience of Orthodox Jewish education, it was necessary to obtain the support and consent of the school. The school principal offered enthusiastic interest and support for the duration of the project. Verbal feedback will be given to participants, the parents and the school principal at the conclusion of the study.

3.4.2 Measures to ensure trustworthiness

In exploring the issue of bias, Katzer, Cook and Crouch (1978:55) remark that

Bias exists to some degree in every study. But the presence of bias does not always imply that the study can be totally discredited.

They identify relevant questions for a researcher to ask. Firstly, what are the potential sources of bias in this study? Secondly, how did the researcher make allowances for, or exclude, likely bias? And thirdly, could there be any undetected biases?

Guba's model, in Poggenpoel (1998:351) identifies four methods to compensate for some of the above areas of bias, namely, credibility or truth-value, transferability, dependability and confirmability. The point of credibility is to guarantee an accurate account and description of the phenomenon that is being examined. The second aspect of transferability or applicability refers to the ability to generalise from the data. The third component is dependability in which the investigator endeavours to offer an explanation for the shifting contexts of the research area and changes that result from greater understanding of the research area. The final aspect is that of confirmability, which requires that there can be corroboration of the results. Every effort has been made to comply with the enumerated measures.

3.4.3 Data collection

According to Clarke (1999:20) qualitative data collection techniques are helpful for exploring the thoughts, ideas and perspectives of different interest groups. The researcher is interested in the psychosocial experiences and identity formation of a specific group of adolescents. Access to this specific group of adolescents was via the chosen site - an Orthodox school.
3.4.3.1 Sample

The researcher elected to use systematic sampling. Systematic sampling as described by Denscombe (1998:12) is a variation of random sampling, in that there is some system in the selection of the participants for the research. In this case-study, the approach was to request one volunteer participant from each grade in the high school. As there is currently no grade 9 class, an extra participant was selected from the grade 10 class. During the interview this participant felt he was under enormous pressure and he chose to conclude the interview after a few minutes. The replacement participant came from the grade 11 class, but was aged 15, the appropriate age.

3.4.3.2 The researcher as an instrument

In examining the role of the qualitative researcher, Clarke’s words are helpful.

\[ \text{The task of the qualitative researcher is to acquire insight and develop understanding.} \]
\[ \text{The researcher actually getting close to the data in order to understand the actor’s point of view obtains social knowledge (Clarke 1999:39).} \]

Having some sense of the objective of the social science researcher, it is of value to explore the position of the researcher.

In exploring the life experiences of the seven Orthodox Jewish adolescents, the researcher’s position is of some significance. As van der Merwe (1996:284) comments,

\[ \text{... the researcher’s position as outsider shifts to an intersubjective position of insider ...} \]
\[ \text{Participant involvement implies that researchers are either insiders or have been initiated into a particular culture.} \]

The researcher has been involved in this frum community. As an English teacher and head of secular studies, the researcher interacted with learners, parents, secular and religious teachers and thus gained a working knowledge of the Orthodox system during the previous three and a half years. The participants were relaxed during the interviews, as they were able to share their feelings, knowing that many aspects of their frames-of-reference were understood. This was necessary as a number of the participants felt that they were responsible for giving a good picture or not letting all the Jews down. Clarke (1999:75) says that the interaction

\[ \text{... between the interviewer and interviewee is much less formal and resembles a natural conversation. The primary purpose is to obtain data that provide an insight into how interviewees define and account for particular situation and circumstances.} \]
The active involvement in the process is expressed in the form of active listening.

*Active listening is a prerequisite of effective communication. Being careful while listening to what is said so that the interviewer is able to formulate meaningful questions, use prompts and probes effectively and generally respond in a manner which stimulates the flow of talk and encourages the continued co-operation of the interviewee (Clarke 1999:75).*

This research project is essentially phenomenological, thus as Dooley (1990:282) says it is descriptive, rather than causal, with the focus on the participant’s life experiences.

### 3.4.3.3 Method

This is an exploratory study, in that there is an effort to establish insights and have more understanding in this area of human existence. The investigation is structured with a literature study, followed by interviews and then an analysis of the empirical data.

The research is aimed at collecting information from the literature about adolescent identity and Orthodox education. Some of the issues explored are: the nature of adolescence and adolescent identity formation; some factors implicit in religious identity formation; how *frum* education provides or fails to meet the needs of the learners, and examining specific types of problems adolescents might encounter in Orthodox schools.

After the literature search, the seven participants were interviewed individually. All were interviewed using a phenomenological approach. The interviews were in-depth interviews starting with the one main research question: *How do you experience your education in an Orthodox Jewish school?*

This was a cross-sectional study of secondary school adolescent boys from one *frum* school. The time context was the year 2002.

The data was transcribed verbatim from the audio recordings. The audio recordings have been stored.
3.5 Analysis and interpretation of data

The transcriptions of the audio recordings have been analysed via the methods of coding and segmenting as suggested by Johnson and Christensen (2000:426). They describe segmenting as

... dividing the data into meaningful analytical units ... A meaningful unit (i.e. segment) of text can be a word, a single sentence, several sentences, or it might include a larger passage such as a paragraph.

The analysis of the text data requires the researcher to assess the importance of the quotations to the subject being researched. Furthermore,

Coding is the process of marking segments of data (usually text data) with symbols, descriptive words or category names (Johnson & Christensen 2000:427).

The researcher elected to colour-code the themes that emerged from the analysis of the text data.

3.6 Summary

An effort has been made to answer the research question, viz. How do adolescents experience an Orthodox Jewish education? This includes an attempt to answer the related issues of psychosocial development and an awareness of religious identity.

In this chapter the researcher has been exploring the research methodology and central approach of this study. Ethical considerations have been briefly explored. In addition to offering a motivation for the selection and statement of the research topic, there was an explanation of the procedure used for data collection. An analysis of the data will conclude this research project.

This researcher’s qualitative research will rely on empirical, participant observation, as well as open-ended and unstructured interviews. The approach is broadly phenomenological i.e. attempting to comprehend the meaning of events to this group of adolescents in their specific educational environment. The phenomenological question being: How do you experience your education in an Orthodox Jewish school?.

In Chapter Four the empirical findings from the participant interviews will be recorded and analysed.
CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

THE ADOLESCENT FRUM WORLD

4.1 Introduction

When the responses from the participants were analysed, there seemed to be a logical division into six themes. These are: the community; Orthodox Judaism; education; parents, family and peers; adolescent identity and religious identity.

In this chapter the participants' views, taken from the transcripts of the interviews, will be divided into the six categories enumerated above. The adolescents' responses are contextualised by references to the literature study. Attention is given to identifying the achievement or otherwise of adolescent tasks. The areas are, firstly, achieving their own identity while coping with biological changes, secondly, discovering their social identity influenced by peers and thirdly, the acceptance of a value system.

Some of the quoted passages are lengthy – this is to offer a 'flavour' of the interviews with these frum teenagers. The pauses and hesitancies reflect the difficulties of participants as they explored their psychosocial world.

4.2 The community

All the participants expressed an intense awareness of the significance of their community. The words of the sage, Hillel, quoted in Hoffman (1992:419) were that Jews should not separate themselves from the community. A participant says,

*There's also a feeling of ... community ... that you belong to a group of people ... and that there're people there, who are willing to help you, willing to do things for you ... and if anything happens to you, there's a whole community behind you ... There's just an all-round secure feeling.*

The participants value belonging to the community. This is simply and profoundly expressed in the following comments:

*If you take it as a whole world for you ... all the Jews in the world ... all of us are just part of one big community ...
Well ... everyone is involved with each other ... it's like a ... um ... it's almost like an extended family ... it also has more friends ... in the community.

In a way it puts some responsibility on you, in a way it takes some off, because there are other people who can do things.

For this group of adolescents, there is a clear link between religious and community values. As one adolescent says:

Every time I observe one of the commandments, or ... I pray ... I'm giving to the community ... um, there are certain people ... who send out e-mails all over the world ... people we need to pray for, who are sick, who have been put into prison for no reason, or have problems ... just to pray for them... So every one understands, there is a community out there that you belong to it ... you receive from it ... and you also have to give... And it's not just you against the world...

The participants are very concerned to reflect their community satisfactorily. There is a strong feeling of being ambassadors for the whole Jewish community, as well as some anxiety associated with the need to preserve the good name of all Jews. This sense of responsibility is a clear theme from the participants’ responses:

(We can't) ... do anything wrong in order to ...(bring) disgrace (to) the school, disgrace the ... ja, disgrace our community, whatever ... Because people shouldn't see you doing it ... disgracing the school and ... know where you're from, and you're definitely from an Orthodox school ... 'cause you're wearing the Yarmie (Yarmulke), or whatever ... so ja, you have to ... you always have to be on the alert ... Well, we all have to ... learn. We have to pray, have to be the community ... You should join in ... if the community is doing something, you should do it with them ... so you can take part in it ... and be part of a... (community). A person who doesn't really join the community ... is ... like ... looked down upon .... to be an outsider isn't a good thing.

I have to decide what I'm going to say ... There's also a feelings of responsibility, that I'm presenting my religion and everything.

Being part of the community is seen as vital, there seems to be an implicit need for community interests to be safeguarded - even at the cost of individual identity. Furthermore, rejecting the frum community is considered a serious, reprehensible step. While being part of a community provides a clear sense of belonging and meaning,
there is also a personal cost. Lawton (1993:21) recognises that no Jews are exempt from unacceptable behaviour and the additional constraints on the behaviour of individuals come from the community. The participants see their roles as follows:

*It depends on what their reasons are (for not being involved within the community) .... If they want to be an outsider, because they're not interested in being part of the community, then ... that's a problem ... it's not very good for them ... they ... shouldn't be like that. But if they are an outsider because, um ... they ... can't be a part of the community, the community doesn't want them ... then it's a problem with the community. Or they should go and find a community which is more suited to them.*

You've been brought up in it your whole life, and you're seeing people who have gone off the path and, all that, and (some of those who) deviated .... do come back ... and they aren't happy, and they know that they got the Jewishness in them ... *(There is an important) feeling of belonging to something, belonging to a people ... It gives you a sense of belonging and responsibility ... to do right, to follow the Law, and to show other people the right (way)... to help them follow.*

Belonging to a community is an established way of living and the thought of being excluded is frightening to these adolescents. There is, however, an awareness that communities are not always welcoming or accepting:

*It's just ... that there're certain people who feel that they belong to a community, certain communities, which are ages old. And if a person just wants to come and join the community, the community doesn't really feel that they are part of them, they will do to them what they will do to everyone in the community. They will act towards them in the same way, but it won't be with the same kind of ... um, neighbourly 'old-friend' feeling. And the person might feel that (sense of isolation and) then decide to go somewhere, (where) they'll accept him more.*

The community plays a pivotal role in the identity development of these adolescents. Erikson's view of psychosocial development endorses the point of identity development occurring within a community or society. A note of concern is the power of the community to condemn those who do not conform to the *frum* tenets and adolescents similarly have limited opportunity for experimenting.

The following section will explore the context of the religious environment that *frum* Jews find meaningful.
4.3 Orthodox Judaism

For these adolescents there is a pervasive awareness of being Jewish. Being Jewish is more than a religious or cultural choice – it is an inescapable identity:

Ja ... it wasn’t ... ja ... it wasn’t a choice, you know ... do this or do that ... always ... you’re Jewish ... you’re going to be Jewish.

(I’m frum) because it’s how I’ve been brought up and that ... the society, it’s my parents ... Once you have been a Jew ... you cannot ‘unbe’ a Jew - you can live like a non-Jew, but you can’t not be a Jew! Therefore the punishment would be much worse. ... If I had to go out and do something like very ‘not Jewish’, like eat non-kosher, I’d have a massive conscience and all that, it wouldn’t be like a ‘wow!’ - I wouldn’t enjoy it.

It can be seen that being Jewish requires dedicated commitment to a multiplicity of demands. As confirmed by Lawton (1993:20) this is no mere lip-service, rather a conscious life-style requiring a great deal of dedication. The social, legal and religious tenets of Jewish heritage are very restrictive, yet this offers a sense of security, as these participants say:

Well, it’s like it was set out, it’s like a set-out path ... you don’t have to ... there’s no ‘this way’ and ‘that way.’ There’s like a straight path you can follow. There’s ... the slip-roads, but you don’t feel the need to go (and explore them) ... and try and find another direction. There’s already ... it’s a set map, a set route for you to go on.

I think it’s more like ... if you keep all the Laws, there’s less corruption ... whatever. Well, it’s definitely, like a peaceful, easy way of life.

it’s limited ... it’s also ... I don’t know ... it’s nice ... It’s like ... there are not so many choices that you have to make, which sometimes it could be a pain ... And sometimes, it’s nice ... um ... I don’t know ... it’s easier to (follow this path) ... it’s easier, basically, to have, rather someone else to decide for you, to than decide for yourself.

Although these participants find it awkward to express their feelings about their religion, it is evident here and in other quotations, that basic trust has been established. On the one hand, this is in keeping with Erikson (1968:76) who links the basic trust of stage one with the institution of religion. On the other hand there is a concern that the demands of the community are so pervasive, that individual identity development plays a secondary role.
The fixed structure, espoused in the *Halachah* (the Law), the sense of belonging and knowledge of the system, creates a sense of safety for *frum* adolescents. This concurs with Lawton's (1993:21) remark that the Law provides answers to all moral dilemmas. Paradoxically, while there is a strong sense of security, there is also a sense of disquiet that the inflexibility of the system shelters these adolescents from the world.

The historical context also creates feelings of reassurance, as one participant says:

*(It's comforting) ... that it's not just a new science. And that there's something that has stood the test of time, that you, there were lots of people before you, who worked this out, and know what they were doing. It's not a – you don't feel as if this is some new discovery which has yet to be proven or something!*

This desire to have faith in a system of belief and in those who promote it, is in keeping with Erikson's (1968:128) assertion that adolescents fear trusting a belief-system too simply and simultaneously, they are searching for a system in which they can have faith. The Jewish tradition seems to fulfil these needs.

Linked with this is a persisting awareness of the Jewish life cycle, and their place within it. Markstrom et al. (1998:205) refer to this sense of continuity. One participant says:

*My children will go to the children's group, so I will be part of the community as a adult. We also view the children as being the next generation that are going to take over from us. There's a concept that, um there's going to be ... death at some point and we've got to prepare for the future, and what it's going to be like with our lives. We've got to prepare our children (so) that they're able to take over from us. Going to prepare the next generation - that they know what to do, for all the problems that might face them ... to lead the next generation, or to be part of the next generation, helping the leaders, listening to the leaders, um, supporting everyone. It is a structure in society. Every generation, has its own different problems - there's interaction between the different generations, its not as if they're completely separated, that the young think that they are the least, the young, there's a sense of um ... its like going down through the ages!*

This reflects the powerful awareness of the Orthodox structure and being part of the Jewish life cycle. There is clear personal knowledge of the tenets and practices of Judaism. This is in keeping with the Neusner's (1986:79) remark that individuals need to be aware that death is the destination.
Being an Orthodox Jew is immensely important to all the participants – very strong views were expressed on the differences between Orthodox versus Conservative or Reform. The following quotation offers insight into these tenets:

Conservative or Reform is not Judaism! They’ve taken Judaism … and they have said … because of today’s problems … this Law is out … that Law is out! … And all through the ages … anyone who said that any Laws were out – especially those given by the Rabbis of the time of Moses and Joshua – and those given by God on High at Mount Sinai … Those … Laws are (fixed) – you cannot change them, you cannot take them away … Certain Laws, even those made by Rabbis these days, which no-one can take away, um … So anyone that says that because this and this and this … For example, there’s a Conservative ruling that if you live far away from the Synagogue, far enough away, you can drive there on the Sabbath. Which is a direct violation of the (Halachah) … You are not allowed to burn fire on Shabbos … So it’s not really Judaism. They’ve made their own religion – but they’ve used Judaism as a base, to twist and turn, and reform … It may as well be atheism! They just call themselves Jewish and they have a Jewish temple. And they call that a Rabbi – but it’s a woman … According to Jewish Law a woman should not be out in the open. A woman shouldn’t sing at an opera … singing is, because it … a woman shouldn’t parade herself in front of men… A woman has her own place… And a woman, when she is married, she has to cover her hair, because she’s got a husband … There is no need for her to out in the open … um, a woman has to be modest! She … can’t go be a Rabbi in front of a large congregation, where she may say certain things especially if she’s reformed … which is … She’ll say things that aren’t even real Judaism – and it’s not the way things should be!

Reform and Conservative are not the true thing. It’s not the pure Judaism - and if they change any Laws, then they may as well not be Jewish, but that’s the same thing!

These judgmental responses reflect the extrinsic-consensual framework Spilka et al. (1985:19) refer to as comprising a concrete and literal interpretation of religion and an intolerance of different perspectives. This may be explained by the demands of Jewish Law. Being frum demands observance of the Law. Knowledge of the 613 Laws and the interpretation is central to daily life. However, these demands are onerous, so many adolescents can only try their best - as this participant expresses:

I try my best to keep what (Laws) I can … what I have to … and what I’m able to … And there are certain Laws which only apply to women, certain ones which only apply to people who are married and certain ones that only apply to people who are under …. It’s not really difficult to keep, because if you’re born a frum Jew … then, as you grow up …
it's part of you... As you go through a day it... feels natural... it's not as if it's something you have to do...

There is a continuing sense of an extrinsic religious orientation in the following responses. The adolescents are aware of their community's expectations, the demands of Judaism on their lives and the sense of protection that follows. When the demands of the Law collide with their age-related curiosity and the need to experiment is so compelling, they experience internal conflicts. Allport and Ross (1967:434,435) refer to the rigidity of the legalistic demands as belonging to an extrinsic religious orientation. These participants' responses indicate the extrinsic orientation:

Well, you try to... I mean... obviously, sometimes you break it... and you... don't keep to most of them... but you try... Obviously when you're older and you've past, you're like 22 or whatever... it's a bit easier... but like... this stage... whatever... you try to keep them (the Laws)... but... obviously, most of them... you... it's just very hard...

'Cause you want to (have fun)... you want to... basically, you... just want to... have fun... It's hard... it restricts you a bit... to a certain degree... So therefore... it definitely gets a bit harder... Sometimes it definitely does... Sometimes I really get upset about it... but... you just... if I really get upset about it... I forget about it... I just do what I want to do... most times... I... whatever... try...

You can make a lee-way in the Laws... you can find like... a loophole which you can use... and also... you can justify it... you can say that... my parents did this, and I did this... it's okay... I'll get repentance for it... ja... I do know that I am justifying it... I know it is wrong... but, it's still going too... It's not going to stop me...

Depends what (Law) you break, there are different punishments which we are told by the Bible. There's also Yom Kippur, which you can get atoned for... therefore you can get atonement if you don't keep them all, depending on the severity of the Law broken.

The above comments reflect some of the adolescents' difficulty and the pressure they feel in their obligations to uphold the Law. The effort of attempting to follow all the Laws, with clear knowledge of the consequences of defaulting, results in feelings of guilt and some anxiety - evident in the participants' responses. While some of the participants accept the Law and the security of the system, others clearly find the restrictions irksome or even distressing.
These adolescents try to be contrite. They have been well grounded in the Halachah and the consequences of breaking it. Yet, while they follow the letter of the Law, some are searching for a loophole to allow them to ignore the spirit of the Law. Internal conflict is caused by consciously searching for these loopholes - knowing that annual atonement (Yom Kippur) is available. These responses reflect a frame-work that Spilka et al. (1985:19) refer to as extrinsic-consensual. This essentially utilitarian approach is rigid and inflexible.

Laws and rituals are central to Jewish life. Goldberg (1987:148) said that observing the Sabbath is an integral part of Jewish family life, because following the rituals and endorsing the implicit values, fulfills peoples' lives. While there is a strong awareness of the value of the rituals and religious festivals, for there is also a sense of tedium related to the restrictions of the ceremonies and rituals:

- It’s nice (Shabbos) ... and boring ... I mean ... if there’s something to do ... then it’s nice ... I mean ... we’d go and play, like ... table tennis ... with my friends, we’d spend the afternoon ... then it’s nice ... But when there’s nothing to do ... then it gets kind of boring. You’d like to go onto the computer or something ...

These adolescents have a tremendous sense of pride in playing their part in the system:

- (The point of the rituals is) ... to ... symbolise ... what happened in the past ... like that you repeat it ... just to ... praise God ... for His... how He helped the Jewish people ...

- Sometimes these festivals ... it gets me at times - when you just go in a car, you can't drive around ... It's like it's enjoyable ... it's really fun, whatever, ... but like sometimes it ... it just gets to me a bit ... Also the ‘fast’ day obviously ...

While there are indications of the onerous obligations and demands of the system, there is evidence of enjoyment in participation. Erikson refers to the importance of the social contribution to identity development, yet frum community values are extremely limiting.

In order to fulfil their roles as Orthodox Jews, education is of a vital importance.

4.4 Education and schooling

In keeping with the Law found in Deuteronomy 6:7, and expressed in the twice-daily prayers, education is held sacrosanct.
However, Orthodox education seems to arouse mixed feelings in the minds of the participants. On the one hand, some feel privileged and see immense value in the system, on the other hand, other participants feel ambivalent and negative towards the system. The differing views can be seen below:

_The more I learn, the more they feel they ... prepare ... a person, with a large knowledge behind him, ... (so that people) can do well. There's certain tracheads of the Talmud, which can help you a lot in business. There's certain tracheads that can help you a lot in Law ... um ... Also if you want to do a Rabbi's course ... then you've got a lot of knowledge behind you ... (and) you're more likely to be appointed to a good position ... Certain people, they learn their whole lives ... um, they decide a ... what's going to be (i.e. interpretations for the community) ... Certain great Rabbis, who - there are some in Israel, some in America, a few in England - who, if there is ever something of importance to be decided on - they speak to each other ... they discuss, they ... argue the point out, they look at it from all sides... They put out a ruling... And if you've learned your whole life, then you feel in a position to be ... (make a meaningful contribution).

(The reason for a frum education) 'Cause my parents want it?! ... I think it's very different growing up as we call it an FFB - 'frum from birth', whereas opposed to my parents ... who weren't ... Because I think they've got a chance to be on the other side (i.e. secular life), as they have been ... and discovered they actually want Judaism ... and feel that is right... Whereas ... us, we don't get as much choice or chance of exploration ... so ... the Jewish education they really want ... more than us ... because they want us to ... because they think because they found that this was right ... therefore, we should also see it as right, not necessarily, actually ... discover it for ourselves ... which is correct in a way, because ... if you were to try to discover it, you wouldn't really ... I don't think we would all make it to the (same conclusion).

The long-term goal of the learners seems to express a similar sense of ambivalence, some keenly contemplate the long-term learning at Yeshiva, while others express concern about the limitations of possible future university studies:

_We're being prepared, yes ... and ... in all different countries the way of preparation is different. And according to your (Kodesh) teaching, (the Rabbis) might prepare you differently. Certain teachers, um, prefer to teach this style, another person prefers to teach that style ... Everyone has a different way of teaching and you have to (adjust).

_It's a good stepping stone for Yeshiva because you are learning the work now already, so you can prepare, you are not coming into it (cold), not knowing about it ... And it's not
such a good stepping stone for university ... because the emphasis is on Jewish studies, and so... the secular studies are like... not so important to the school, whereas at university, it's just secular studies. So therefore, I can see the young kids, they (are) like bored thinking Jewish, Jewish, Jewish – let's drop out of school and go to Yeshiva ... not everyone can cope with it and later on, when you need it, they're going to like suffer (for the limited secular preparation).

I don't know ... it (Kodesh study) just seems like ... time wasted ... really. You're sitting there doing nothing ... well, not nothing ... you ... you're growing on yourself ... you're getting personal growth, but there is no way to display it. You just want to sit there the whole day ... What? If you see an old lady who(m) you need to help across the street, you are not going to be able to help her ... because you're really sitting there ... learning.

Education for frum learners is strenuous and time-consuming. The demanding learning programme, combined with other religious activities, requires great commitment and devotion from the learners. Many learners expressed their feelings about their demands placed on them. Here is the pattern of a typical frum adolescent's day:

I get up in the morning and I usually go to a learning programme. And then we pray. When I come home, I eat breakfast. I have about twenty minutes to (my self) ... I eat breakfast, to get ready. I go to school and then I come home from school. There's homework, relaxing a bit, then I have to go and pray again. When I come home I eat supper, do a bit more homework, then have a shower or whatever and go to sleep.

You learn every morning – Halachah – what you're supposed to do, what you're not supposed to do ... and who to do it, why to do it ... Um, you're given the basics. You're given certain details which might be important, and as you go through life, you come to the different stages of your life ... You learn things which are appropriate then ... You're all set in a cycle ... If you - as we come towards certain holidays - we learn things which are appropriate then. And as you go over it again, each year, it becomes ... like a part of you ... and you understand ... You know exactly ... And you go deeper into it, the reasons behind it ... you work your way through.

The programme is onerous and it is evident that a number of learners experience pressure in a number of areas – academic, religious and social obligations:

It gives you a sense of responsibility more ... It's also much harder, because when they (other adolescents) end school at 2 o'clock, and we at 5 o'clock and religious studies in the morning, gives you that extra load of pressure and workload, makes it much harder.
as well ... It is a load, yes, 'cause if you don't do it, you're looked upon bad by society and peers and all that type of thing, they talk about how bad he is for not doing it ...

It is a very different school because in the morning we do Jewish studies ... and it gives you a perspective of Jewish life and what it is all about. Jewish life is set Laws which you have to follow by. It is not a life of free choice, of experiencing new things; you're always set and grounded by certain rules. It is a very limited life as well; you can't do what you want to do, when you want to do it, how you want to do it.

... you've got more rules ... like ... there's a ... what we're taught ... and we've got ... like additional subjects to follow ... but then, again ... it's more meaningful because it's ... a um ... it's a spiritual ... and its all got to do with what God wants.

Yet, despite the feelings of burden, these adolescents have a sense of well-being and safety within the structure of the system. The following excerpts reflect some of the feelings of security the learners feel within the order of their environment:

It's very nice, there's no, you don't feel, really, pressures. There's no feeling of animosity to any one. And everyone is friendly. There's no elitism in the school. It's very good.

Mussar (ethics) ... okay ... it teaches you the right way ... you learn it ... and it's pointing out (the correct behaviour) ... you know ... I'm going to go this, and learn it ... 'cause I'm doing this wrong ... While you're studying it ... you pick up things, saying ... 'Look, I'm doing this wrong' ... 'I must go and correct that'.

Another of the boundaries for these frum adolescents is the rigid learning environment, with segregation of the sexes which occurs from the pre-grade years. The participants feel that there are a number of valid reasons for this separation for learning purposes:

At certain times it can be a distraction. But the structure of the learning, even in the things we learn, it says that girls shouldn't learn it, certain times, because it doesn't apply to them. It won't apply to them, women aren't considered as the people who give rulings on what we should do ... so they don't need to ... do the Halachah, the Laws ... There're certain books written for women to read about um ... ritual purity ...

It makes logical sense that men and women are completely different, um there's no ...
There are certain norms which apply to both but they, they have different viewpoints ... They're completely different, so, there shouldn't be a common, a common, a common er, learning centre. There are certain learning centres for women ... classes on how to run
your lives, how to keep your kitchen kosher, how to, what you should do about your children, purity and things like that.

These adolescents believe there is an understandable reason for division of the genders, based on the possibility of feminine distraction, as well as the belief that there are different obligations for men and women. The implicit sexism in the differing syllabi, lifestyles and expectations for girls and boys, remains unchallenged and unquestioned.

The Rabbis play diverse roles in these adolescents' lives. Not only do they teach, they are also role-models and proponents of the religious and moral curriculum. The influence of Kodesh educators, with reference to the content and the process of a moral curriculum, is in keeping with the observation of Norman et al. (1998:96) that this may lead to the development of personal certainty and ethical responsibility. Jensen (1985:70,71) sees that the opportunity of developing a 'rich self' is promoted by interaction with as many alternative models as possible. The role of Rabbis is recognised to be of vital importance. They are clearly venerated by the learners. The esteem in which they are held, whether expressed easily or with difficulty, is evident:

They're basically the whole influence ... they teach you ... basically, what's wrong in life. They're the ones you question, you challenge ... and they're role-models of the community ... They're also responsible for handing down ... the (Jewish) 'map', basically. They're teaching you the 'map'. Once you know ... you're ready to pass it on to the next generation.

They're people that are very modest and that ... and really ... people that are ... how do you say it ... ja ... basically ... they just ... they follow every single Law of ... Judaism ... and they're like ... ja ... they're modest people ... they're caring ... and sharing ... and like ... everything that you should be ... like ... all moral people would say that a person should be. That moral Law says that, you should be that ... that's what they are.

They're not out there to have a good time ... they're working here .... They're not here to have... like the best suit, to drive the best cars ... they're here to ... just to serve God.

He (a specific teacher) had like a ... direct influence on me. ... it was basically a guide light ... um ... a light-tower ... (he) showed me where to go ... what I was doing wrong, when I was falling. Also showed me my positive points and how to ... enhance them, and basically gave me ... like refuelled me to carry on...
While the system is rigid and demanding, paradoxically the learners have a sense of freedom because they are encouraged to challenge some tenets within the religious parameters of the system. This contributes to the feeling of security within the frum system, possibly because they are not encouraged to challenge the structure of the system itself. As the participants say:

*If they tell you something ... and you don't agree with it ... you ... challenge them ... they're very, very (encouraging) ... Like we get a thing ... in our class, like 'a question of the week'. ... They encourage you to ask questions ... It's not like they want you to ... ask questions in different things in religion – (only) in Judaism ... They want you to ask questions ... which means that there is basically an answer for everything.*

*Well ... what's the point of just ... following blindly? ... I don't think so! ... ... I challenge whatever I can. Well, ja. In (certain) stuff that I wouldn't ... doesn't sound right to me ... I wouldn't follow it ... and once I've challenged it ... and gone through stuff thoroughly ... and ... seen it actually is right ... I'll change my point of view.*

The issue of religious censorship, especially related to sexual issues, is somewhat irksome, as one participant says:

*It is like, the ... young teacher, who is more dynamic and who could relate to (us) better, doesn't shy off like, life issues and all like that, then it becomes much more easy to relate to (them) ... Like older Rabbis who think you do not know anything about love and all that, and are trying to hide stuff ... I mean (it is) not just hidden. 'Cause when you have to read and translate after a while, you can feel that they are skipping parts and not translating and all that, and I think it's very restrictive.*

*Kodesh is very highly regarded by these participants. Sometimes, however, access to learning is hampered by learning in the Hebrew language. Shkedi's (1997:73) study identifies some of the learners' difficulties. These participants experience similar difficulties with ancient Hebrew texts:*

*Ja ... that's a bit of a problem (learning in Hebrew) ... But it's put out in English ... but, once you've ... revised it a whole lot of times ... and then you read it in Hebrew ... you know what all the words mean. Then it's ... you have ... like ... a nice feeling ... solving a mystery or something.*

*When you start learning Hebrew, and you start learning in Hebrew, it's very difficult, because of the new language. You don't understand what's really going on here, and you have to have someone translate it for you ... But recently ... I've been noticing it's a*
lot ... I find it easier just to do certain things by myself. If I want to look up something, I can look it up ... in Hebrew, for myself ... It becomes easier with practice, and with, um, a wider vocabulary, you know more.

It's definitely harder ... but ... whatever. But like most words ... I mean ... but like most words, I don't know how to translate into English ... So ... you ... the teacher translates it for you ... and you just go along with that ... You do ... revision by going over and over again ... so, slowly but surely you get to understand the way that the ... language (works) sort of ...

Some of the texts are easier to relate to than others. They are more practical and more ... and some I found are out of context, and it also depends on teachers quite a lot ... how you relate to the text.

... It's not like a boring subject ... whatever. It's really interesting ... And most of it you can incorporate it into what you're doing...

It is apparent that some of these learners perceive real value in studying in Hebrew, however tedious and difficult. It certainly causes great stress for others as they have to depend upon and trust their teachers, as their access to knowledge is affected.

Secular education, however, is viewed very differently. These learners identify concerns regarding their secular education. The following issues cause feelings of discontentment because of censorship of material, lesser value attached to the importance of secular education, a long academic day resulting in weariness and resentment and poor motivation from both learners and educators:

I would like to have done Biology, which the school won't offer (the subject), because it talks about sex and all that ... and they are, like, 'bury it away kind of thing'. I mean every kid is going to find out about (sex) eventually, so we might as well learn properly. And also as I say, (having) given more emphasis, and giving better teachers to Kodesh, (it has) put secular bit to the side... so the teachers aren't like (good) ... (negative shrug). I mean now they have been fixed up and they are quite good. But, they aren't like top teachers and ... but they haven't always been good.

It's, just ... um ... I don't know ... it's just ... you see at another school ... the other pupils the same age ... are on a higher level ... in ... secular education. I'm getting half of the best, ja ... Like getting a proper secular as well as a proper religious education,
Jewish education ... I think it's more the ... our attitude ... the teenagers, the Jewish teenager towards learning ... basically, 'What do I need this for?' (a learners' response) ... they also, the attitude comes through them (the educators) also ... 'Why should I teach them properly?' 'They are not absorbing anything anyway.'

While exploring this aspect, it is interesting to note that this participant identifies the attitude of the learners as influencing the secular education:

Well, it comes from us ... being teenager Jews. Ah ... our attitude has to change ... because that's where the whole negative spiral starts ...

The origin of this attitude of indifference to secular education may be interesting to explore - what is significant and disconcerting is the impact of the negativity on career options for the adolescents.

These attitudes confirm Diamond's (1981:297) concern with this kind of learning environment. (The second model of Yeshivot designed to promote the needs of religious education.) His concern is that both secular and religious studies suffer as a result of the expectations and demands of the two programmes.

In concluding this section, one of the issues against which the participants chafe is that of censorship. One participant expresses this strongly:

I don't think they are really trying to protect us, I think they think we don't know (about certain life issues) and they and later on in life, when we need the education – they will give it to us. I think it's quite frankly, it's very stupid, because most teenage boys know quite a lot more about love or life than they think ... and about these issues which (they) are hiding from us, like girlfriends, and sex and marriage that sort of stuff. And they (the educators) are going to hide it and make it ... say, stolen fruit, it's going to make it a bigger pull on you. And once you're starting to go the back way - get something much worse. ... I still think parents restricting their kids, is also to an extent, not so good – because when you start restricting like everything ... kids are either going to break and or go to the other extreme, and have a chance to, like ... to get a break from the system.

This participant's concern reflects the issue recognised by Gouws and Kruger (1996:110) regarding the limitations on adolescent expression and the learning about self within a social context. These restrictions impose huge constraints on these developing adolescents.
In concluding this section, it may be seen that the programme attempts to offer learners a comprehensive learning environment. However it seems that the learners feel deprived as a result of the requirements of the dual system. The educational environment offers the ... entrance into life to which Erikson (1963:258) refers in his third stage of ‘industry and inferiority’. While these learners are acquiring an abundance of skills for their religious world, it is to the detriment of skills for the secular world.

4.5 Parents, family and peers

These adolescents are deeply aware of the importance of their families and peers.

4.5.1 Parental interaction

*Frump* adolescents' behaviour and interaction with their parents is strongly influenced by their religious values. This attitude is reflected a number of times - one example is:

> I guess it's all ingrained in me, you've just got to listen to it ... what your parents say ... It says in the Torah ... that you've got to honour your parents ... and therefore ... there are some people whose parents have told them, 'it's fine, they can do it'. But you know, my parents say, 'No, I can't do it' ... and I respect that ... I don't feel like I'm missing anything.

Brody *et al.* (1996:703) identify the value of formal religiosity on family relationships, as well as an indirect benefit of self-regulation on adolescents but only where there is positive family cohesion.

Establishing individual identity and separation from parents is an adolescent's task. For these teenagers the added dimension is that parental values are intertwined with shared religious values, endorsed by the community - all of which hampers the task. One participant sees the multiple influence as follows:

> Mostly it's my parents, the family. The background I've got, of being in the community, who are a big part of my life.

Some participants do see the necessity of challenging their parents as part of their development:

> For me, it's not been so easy ... to challenge my parents ... I mean ... I'm very good at arguing, and all that and I'm very rarely let down. If I believe something, I go for it, wholeheartedly so ... There have been clashes at home ... Not always ... 'cause my parents
sometimes ... My parents always say it's very hard to give in to a kid, especially when they're coming out of ... when they are growing up. It's very hard ... So when they think I'm right they are not going to give in, because it's a set of principles.

Most times ... with my parents (it's difficult) ... I'm very different to them ... and ... very different to my brother ... which is the older son, so they're expecting a certain value of how I should grow up ... because he was ... like ... much more ... of a kind of goody-goody boy ... like 'Mommy said this' ... and 'we must do this straight away' ... Well, I'm really ... not. I'm more of a challenging, experimenting dude ... So ... the relationship with them isn't very close ... So I find it very hard to discuss matters with them ... with personal, emotional, proper, like, life matters with them ... I find it very hard to actually relate to them. ... I find it very hard to get down to it.

The difficulty this participant experiences in his relationship with his parents is evident in the hesitancy with which he speaks. The need for separation from parents is identified by Papalia et al. (2002:441) who comment on the importance of the way parents manage specific situations for the good of their children's individual personalities.

Interaction and communication between parents and teens is complex. Each family's interacts uniquely. In terms of the choice of verbal interaction, a distinction can be made between the kinds of issues discussed with parents versus those issues discussed with peers. Parents represent a reference source for certain religious or emotional issues, while peers are seen as a different kind of reference group for aspects of adolescence:

With my parents ... we discuss uh... I don't know ... we discuss ... school ... we discuss ... learning ... We discuss ... like that sort of thing. ... If you do have a problem with, like ... a certain matter ... I would go and discuss it with my parents ... any matter that I'm ... I know I can't go to a friend for, or anything ... I go to my parents.

I wouldn't ask my friends questions about Judaism ... I'd speak to my parents about that ... what they say I should do ... I wouldn't ask my friends that, I'd ask my parents. ... Well, with my friends ... we just ... we just discuss ... like ... I think, like all teenagers discuss ...I mean... what every teenager would discuss ... Orthodox or not ... whatever.

These responses are in keeping with Noom et al. (1999:781) and Seltzer's (1989:94) findings that the most important attachment to parents is found in areas of academic competence and self-esteem, while peer interaction is linked with social competence.
The constant awareness of living in a religious enclave, within a broader social environment, poses certain problems. Frum parents and the community are very aware of the possible influence or attraction of a different or secular life-style, hence the extreme censorship of material available to adolescents. However, one adolescent's concern about the naivety of some Orthodox parents is as follows:

They don't know what a teenager is and what's out there today ... they don't know about sex, the drugs and ... and they think that their kids, since they've been frum, are also going to do like ... they would never go out to a club or to a movie! ... You know ... 'frum boys' and all that! ... They wouldn't expect it of their kids ... So their kids say they are like, going to a restaurant and meanwhile get dropped off there and walk around the corner, their friends in a car and they go out.

While this kind of experimentation and exploration is in keeping with peer needs, which Atwater (1996:211) describes as the needs of conformity and experimentation – there is concern that these adolescents feel they have to explore the world surreptitiously. One participant pragmatically says, ... I think all teenagers, finally, usually experiment.

4.5.2 Family interaction

Large families are the norm for Orthodox Jews. These adolescents generally enjoy the opportunities and positive opportunities that large families offer:

So, I enjoy a large family and I think it is quite fun, although I do have a lot of clashes with them – as every families do. ... So sharing to an extent it is quite a lot, because if you get a present, it's for every one, if someone comes and brings something over and that. You don't get as much to yourself as you want, there can be an advantage as well ... you (learn) how to share and live with other people and interact with other people.

It's fun ... I mean there's always a friend around ... there's always someone to play a game with ... and if you want to ... if you want to share news ... then the whole family would know about it ... you can't just tell one of the older ones ... it will eventually get heard by somebody else ...

We are all very close to each other and we ... just ... it's nice having all of us around the whole time. Obviously, ... some of my siblings have already gone overseas ... and are living there ... but, ja ... it's very nice ... enjoyable, having a lot of siblings ... people that you know ... that you can always rely on, later on in life ... ja, it's very nice.
Generally, they find the relationships to be of value, acknowledging some of the disadvantages, while appreciating the advantages. Gouws and Kruger (1996:116) comment on the influence and value of sibling relationships and the effect of birth order, as the researcher found.

A number of these adolescents' older siblings have already left South Africa to complete their Yeshiva studies. The result is a shift in family interaction – these adolescents are aware of the changing dynamics within their families:

Well ... now that I am the oldest ... they (my parents) depend on me more ... um ... And a ... I think it just makes the difference ... they depend on you ... you are not just like a ... you are also one of the children ... but now you are the oldest child at home... So they give you certain responsibilities ... and stuff like that ... But I would also get now ... now that I'm older ... I'd also get certain privileges ...um ... It's also to do with being older ... they trust me ... and things like that ... I've become ... a... much more responsible ... 'cause I'm older... so, it's not just maturing ...But, that it's just ... they see I can do it ...

These kinds of family dynamics appear to allow the adolescents an opportunity to create and develop their own identities. This is in keeping with the research of Cole and Cole (2001:677), who say that families that provide a sense of security, while encouraging adolescents to create a distinct identity, are the most beneficial in assisting individual identity. The responses also reflect the views found in Dunn's (1984:72) comments about large families.

In conclusion it is interesting to note that none of the participants referred to any issues of privacy. This may be as a result of being unaware of the value of privacy.

4.5.3 Peer interaction

Adolescent friendships are very important in terms of both a support and a reference group. Teenagers need the availability of their peers - this interaction is complementary to what their parents offer (Atwater 1996:201).

They ... most of my friends ... like we have a couple of good friends here, ... that I go out with ... we're all very good mates ... most of the other friends ... are in different (frum) schools ... they just ... (are) great to be around with ... always there when you have like a ... a problem ... or something, and ja, just ... just have a lot of fun together
We ... I don't know ... we ... hang out with our friends ... and every Sunday we play soccer ... we ... have like ... a ... league or a Shul league ... sort of thing ... And ... um ... we hang out ... in all different places ... uh.

The hesitancy in these quotations is due to the feeling that peer interaction is so taken-for-granted, that there was a level of difficulty in describing the everyday interaction. These kinds of comments reflect the importance of friendships, where adolescents share problems and the solutions to those problems as Bukatko and Daehler (1998:523) note.

Socialising with the opposite sex is taboo in the frum community. One participant has a girlfriend. Within the frum environment, not only is this relationship unusual, it is also regarded with great concern. By contrast, another participant sees a girlfriend simply as an activity that causes extra pressure:

(I) wouldn't like to (date) ... Like the pressure ... of having a girlfriend doesn't happen ... having to phone ... having to be ... always like ... very friendly ... always having to (consider her).

There are many dynamics within these peer-friendship groups. While teenagers may be supportive of each other's difficulties, the conformity imperative is very strong. Rice (1996:276) explores this aspect, commenting that the basis for some of the selection of groups is that of similarity. This restricted socialising holds true for Orthodox Jews:

(My friends are) very much restricted to my friends in class ... and ... other smaller Jewish schools ... basically, I don't have (other friends) ... um ... they're (my friends) in Shul ... I don't have any other ... goyish friends ...

Linked with the issue of conformity, Zigler and Stevenson (1993:556) comment on adolescents' awareness of actual or imaginary social errors, as they try to modify their behaviour to the group norms, because all social interaction is important to adolescents. One participant reflects on the impact of the social group in the following way:

Well, they (my peers) ... um ... I saw what they were 'at' already ... and what I was lacking ... and what I had to build myself up to ... basically (I felt) like a misfit. Being here (they were elevated) ... I was down here ... and they were already high up there.

This participant admits to a basic need of adolescence - the desire for conformity and peer acceptance. Atwater (1996:211) describes two strong needs of adolescence:
conformity and experimentation. At times, these needs cause stress for adolescents. Peer pressure, the need to experiment and concern regarding their parents' views, are important issues for these teenagers, as the following quotations indicate:

That if they ... like ... a ... would invite you to come to a party, and you would have to go to the party, otherwise you hurt them ... But the party would be at a Nando’s (not kosher) and then you’re in a dilemma about what to do. And if you decide not to do it ... then you might lose the friendship ... And therefore if you say that you would do, then ... um ... you’re breaking down on what you’ve been taught ... and that’s like ... rebellion ... um ... Personally, I wouldn’t ... I couldn’t rebel ... because, like ... I know ... I’d ... my parents would be disappointed in me ... and....and all stuff like that.

I try not to put myself in this kind of situation (i.e. peer pressure) ... When I’m there ... what happens, depends on how I am feeling ... I mean I have encountered it a few times but, every one does. Well, the one time, she (my mother) caught me ... so that’s changed. (He related a bunking incident and the consequences, being suspended from school, sent home and ‘escaping’ to a shopping mall). But, I just know (my parents’ reaction) ... they were a bit disappointed, and put (me) on a whole guilt trip! ... I felt very bad the whole time, especially when the guilt trip started off it made it worse ... I think I covered up quite a lot as well, because I didn’t want them to see that it actually got to me, but it was (uncomfortable) ... yes.

These responses indicate that frum adolescents are not exempt from the conflict and difficulty caused by peer pressure. Bukatko and Daehler (1998:524) refer to the importance of friendship and peer interaction in the emotional and social life of adolescents.

Social life, friendships, experimentation and peer interaction may only occur within the confines of the Orthodox community, with parental approval. Thus, for this group of adolescents, there is the added religious pressure that inhibits and generally eliminates experimentation. The following responses show the internal conflict between the desire to experiment versus the powerful prohibitions of the frum life-style:

They (peers) also feel very restricted and lots of boundaries and that, and they’ve also broken a few boundaries and done new stuff. Every one has justified it, obviously ... ‘you become better later on’ and ‘it’s a stage’ and all that. You know, a lot of people are happy with it (the frum environment) but, they would like to be on the other side of it and try new things which they can’t ... Sort of ... like do this (i.e. experiment)... and then come back ... while we can still have fun and all that! ... ‘Let’s do it ... and try it out, and
then later on we come back and be Orthodox and on the right road again! ... But I think it is the right road. I don’t have much choice either way...

The majority (want to experiment) ... There are one or two that go for it whole-heartedly but they are in the minority. My whole class wants to discover, to explore and to see ...

There is a curiosity within these adolescents to explore the world beyond the confines of the frum world. This curiosity is in keeping with their stage of identity development.

In concluding this section, it can be seen that these adolescents seem to rely on their family and peers in the way that the literature suggests. The identified differences are the enormous additional religious pressures and obligations on these adolescents with regard to experimentation and the general absence of interaction with the opposite sex.

4.6 Adolescent identity

For Jewish adolescent boys, the Bar Mitzvah (the religious and social ritual at the age of thirteen) is held in recognition of leaving childhood behaviour and thinking behind. This is one of the most significant ceremonies in their lives. As the participants say:

_Before I was just carefree and did nothing ... and ... now ... that I was Bar Mitzvah ... (there’s) a new element of responsibility. That I was for myself ... I had to, not make my own decisions ... well ... ja ... I make my own decisions, from ... what advice I’ve been given._

_You are responsible yourself ... um ... it was also like ... the joy of entering manhood ...

While the Bar Mitzvah is an important rite of passage, adolescents are not encouraged to explore their new phase of development, rather, they are required to fit into the system in a ‘responsible’ way. This participant explains the way he understands his place within the community:

_There’s a very structured system that ... the elders are better ... and that we should listen to them ... and learn from them ... and emulate them ... And not that the young are the elite - and that you are going to be next ..._

Despite the strong awareness of the authoritative community, these adolescents seem to see themselves as individuals who have a need to establish their own positions. There is some sense of the ego identity that Markstrom _et al._ (1998:206) identify as an
awareness of self, as well as an awareness of self in connection with others i.e. the ideological and interpersonal forms of identity:

There's a feeling of being myself, and that I'm not ... can't ... not I can't, I'm not with everyone else.

As I become older and an older teenager, I become more independent and then it's like, what I choose to do as opposed to what I have to do. It just becomes that I choose that way ... instead of having to do it.

I guess it's all got to do ... maturing and getting older ... and stuff and seeing like, there's no point in like certain things, but you still have fun ... um, some things I still see as fun, but some things that seems ... like just stupid ... and I wouldn't do it.

I got a lot more responsibility ... and I've become much more strong-minded, in my beliefs, in what I want to do. Like ... secular music. My parents don't like it at all, but I like it ... my parents say, 'it's not right' and all this. But I still listen to it and still walk around the house and all this ... I am not as embarrassed as I was before, of things that I thought were right, and was doing, to now. More open and more saying ... 'This is what I'm about'. They don't like it ... (e.g.) goyish music, secular music, having a girlfriend ...

These responses indicate a developing sense of self, but with added pressure and family conflict. Bukatko and Daehler (1998:402) identify this concept of self with the ability to reflect on individual traits, as the essence of identity construction.

Establishing a sense of self does not occur in isolation. Cole and Cole (2001:644) base the search for self in reality, saying that adolescents need to accommodate their views of life with the world as it really exists. The following quotation seems to capture this perspective, an awareness of the limitations of the social environment as it really is:

The truth is, it is all my choice, I mean I could go to India and try to 'find myself there' or something like that ... but - I think the choice's been taken to quite an extent - ... the upbringing and people around me and all that.

Santrock (2000:350) views adolescence as a time of exploration and change, during which time future decisions are made. One participant expresses his feelings of anticipation in the following way:

You feel you've got your whole life ahead of you and you can still plan it ... um ... The choices you make ... um, and on the other hand here are still certain things which are
behind you, um ... things you might not have done in the position you are in now. ...
Being in the school is your time of decision. Are you going to university? Or start a
business and support the Torah? Or are you going to Yeshiva and learn Torah and be
the Torah?

The sense of assessing personal abilities, while exploring future roles, covers the areas
Feldman (1999:341) mentions. This participant is using the time of moratorium Erikson
(1963:262) and Papalia et al. (2002:426) refer to, as he appraises life in terms of past
experiences and future prospects. The proviso is that it must occur within the Orthodox
framework, and frum adolescents are not permitted a moratorium in the full sense.

Paradoxically, while these adolescents indicate a sense of personal self-awareness and
individual identity formation, there is still the very powerful imperative of their religious
constraints. There is a constant awareness of the socio-religious structure in which they
live and function. There is a strong sense of being different from other teenagers, and
there were a few references to other teenagers who are 'normal'. There is implicit envy
in this kind of reference. The prescribed laws and rituals seem to place restrictive limits
on the adolescents' opportunities and options for making choices, as well as causing
frustrations, as the following quotations indicate:

It's very restricting because you have to get up at a certain time every morning and you
have a certain time that you have to go and pray at Shul. ... three times a day get a
Mincha, (it) makes your whole day restricted to doing certain things - like (being unable
to be) doing stuff that normal teenagers do. You also really can't do things like clubbing
and those kind of entertainment things ... movies and all that ... are looked upon badly by
Jewish people ... So it's very (difficult) ... going out and all that ... It's very difficult ... if
you keep those Laws ... For me, Jewish life is (hard) ... I suppose going through the
teenage phase... is a bit difficult and hard.

I'd like to go and see ... not even see ... and (be able to) make my own decision ... just
... I need, I need an outlet, myself, I feel that I need to. I'm the kind of person - I like to
interact with new people, meet with new people, and being out and open and ... having
fun and all that. So I find that, like Saturday night, is like that you can't go out and they
(my parents) see it as a bad night to go out ... because everyone goes out ...

The fact that ... people are looking at you more often than they look at this bloke ... and
they'll have a second glance at you ... instead of ... having sort of like a normal person
walking around ... they'll put it out of their minds.
These views express the internal conflicts of the needs and desires of these adolescents to engage in their own exploration. There is a yearning to have social involvement and experience of the world beyond the frum boundaries, yet there is a constant awareness of the confines of the value system of their religious world.

Erikson refers to the ‘ideological mind’ of adolescents, as they engage in this psychosocial task. There is clearly a desire for self-exploration, understanding and greater life-opportunities, as a participant says, to explore and just go for yourself ... and all that ... (but the frum lifestyle is) not so conducive to it ... . This aspiration is limited by the knowledge that it will not be possible. This participant articulates the power of the religious environment in the following way,

because you're Jewish ... an Orthodox Jew and you've got to do what the Torah says you've got to do.

Furthermore, the cost of challenging the status quo is great – it means leaving the security and safety of the community. This participant captures the awareness of challenging the entire system, and decides that the cost is too high:

It's not that I can't challenge all of them, but I won't challenge all of them ... if I wanted to ... I could ... leave the house ... if I wanted to ... but there's no where to go ...

Finally, there is the conflict of a participant who feels the urge to assert his individuality, while knowing the constraints as he is firmly entrenched in the Orthodox system. Bukatko and Daehler (1998:402) comment that a sense of self, with the ability to think about individual qualities, is the essence of identity development. As the next participant explores the meaning of free will his expression of frustration is poignant:

Let's start with Judaism. It's really like based on what Judaism is. Like, there is one aspect, that every single person has free choice - which to me, I don't see as free choice, because we are told that either you can do this and live or you can do this, and you can die ... For me, that free choice is living or dying, and not a real person can want to die. Let's say, (a) suicidal person - that's a different story. So they are being told you can cross the road and get hit by a car or you can stand on the other side and wait, and live. I really don't feel there is free choice in Judaism, at all. I mean, there are a few aspects which I can see as free choice, not really in Judaism, though. Like, going to Shul in the morning, is a sort of a free choice, there you can decide to go to sleep, but, the rest isn't really a free choice, especially if it comes to life and death issues. So, I don't see much of a free choice. Also, the whole society of Judaism, I don't - I mean it is
right and all that, but I find it very restricting and very not conducive to growing and learning. Or the kind of learning that I want to do ... And I want to find it ... I find life is about people and ... If you ask Rabbis questions which are conflicting with Judaism, they either say to get at you, about not being Jewish and all that, makes you feel all bad about Judaism and they don't answer you... Or they tell you that it's not for you to worry about. And sometimes in life you want answers, so that I find also very (limiting) ... I mean, there are some who give you answers, but it is very far and few between, they can give you answers that you want to hear, answers that make sense to you ... 

These adolescents are striving to establish their unique identities. There is awareness of their specific social milieu, supported by religious boundaries. This is in keeping with Lawton's (1993:21) reflection that the family is the microcosm of the community, creating the boundaries of what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour, with the final impediment to choices being, social exclusion.

In concluding this section, it can be said that many of these adolescents are encountering their emerging selves. With reference to Erikson's (1963:261) comments about this stage, there is some sense of developing ego identity - the accrued confidence that results from a sense of internal stability linked to past experiences. Concern still exists regarding the full exploration of individual identity, because of the rigidity of the system endorsed by the family and community values - a facet these adolescents identified. This is clearly an added pressure in the development of identity.

4.7 Religious identity

These adolescents have a very strong sense of their Jewish religious identity, where the Law and religion are always intertwined. This offers a sense of comfort:

I think it's both ... the Law and ... being Jewish ... But even if you don't keep the Law, you still have that religion.

We have a concept that - He's a living God ... He's constantly running the world ... He's constantly taking care of what should be happening to us ... um, there's a concept called Hashgacha Pratis ... He is concerned with what's going to happen to us...

The disciplined approach is evident in the practice of their religion:

It's (the first prayer is) more like a description than a praise ... We say that He is the God of our forefathers, and the God of us. He owns everything ... created everything ... And
then we go on to say that He ... He will revive the dead ... He keeps His promises ... And we go on to say that He is the most Holy, and then we go on to the questions. ... We ask Him for, um ... knowledge ... We ask Him to ... bring us back to Him ... We ask Him for forgiveness, for healing, for ... um, redemption from the exile ... .

The prayer format is universal to all Jews, with limited personal responses:

*We don’t really have our own input, because it was decided, years ago by the sages ... that these blessings have everything encompassed in them ... in the way they’re worded ... in their order ... the set-out, what they mean. ... There’re certain ... certain prayers which are added ... like ... a person ... prays for young children. ... There’s certain prayers he can add for ... like the education of his children... a person who has financial troubles... there’s a prayer he can say for ... um ... financial prosperity etc.*

James (1902:494) says that the essence of religion requires seeing feelings and conduct as constant elements. Religious imperatives on the conduct of these adolescents is prescribed and formally established. The following responses reflect the adolescents’ differing feelings as they experience their religious world:

*Hmm ... We’ve got to pray to God ... and talk to God ... and ... you know ... and if you realise ... that everything you do and everything you hear ... is from God ... it just makes it all ... that much better, more meaningful.*

*You pray ... you, uh, you ... I’m also, I take very quick over praying to God ... I like spend all the time ... ja ... ‘cause I think it’s very ... like ... it’s, definitely it’s hard to relate to the fact ... like ... you never see a God ... It’s hard to relate to that. But ... obviously, when you hear about all the miracles that happened ... all that happened in the past ... obviously, it does make sense that ... like 6 million Jews survived to their children and tell them what happened there ... Mt Sinai ... or whatever ... but it’s like a fact of ... you’re standing in front of ... like ... nothing ... and you’re praying to God.*

*Each person, when you, you pray you’re supposed to feel as if He (God) is there, in front of you and you’ll pray to Him directly ... It’s not, it’s not that you pray to this person ... You are speaking to the God! And He can do this for you! If you have that firm conviction, then you feel as if - you’re part of this.*

In contrast is this participant’s developing prayer life and meaningful religious values:

*Well, praying is like that ... I was like ... seven years old ... you know ... to talk to God - you know ... I didn’t really see the meaning behind it ... It’s like ... When you get older ...*
you just ... Well, it's different ... there's different things along the road ... but I guess ... the beginning of last year ... or something, well, I ... Look, it's not every thing that I do is still lekker ... but it's becoming more and more what I choose to do.

The hesitancy and non-verbal squirming accompanying many of these responses to this theme reflect the awkwardness and discomfort these adolescents experience while exploring their religious identity. Not only did this seem to be the first time that they had examined their own religious identity, it also seems to be uncomfortable for them to think of their personal engagement with religion.

Many of these adolescents' responses seem to fall within the paradigm of what Pargament et al. (1988:91) refer to as a deferring style. That is, communicating with God passively, waiting on God, and this is associated with an extrinsic motivation. One participant explains his ambivalent feelings about his relationship with God:

Sometimes you feel that He is there, and that He is with you ... and sometimes you don't. Ja ... if you, pray for something ... you pray three times a day ... and then it may not always get answered. No ... well, whatever the reason, it always gets answered ... sometimes it could be no ... but ... when you pray for something ... and it does happen ... you get that feeling that ... He's with you and He's listening to you. A feeling that there's like a ... an upward spiritual power that is within you ... um ... I prayed for like (a long time) ... to get like um ... like a 'game-boy' or and then you get stuff like that ... and it has eventually come through! ...

While the formality and structure of the system offers an intellectual sense of safety, there seems to be an emotional distance. When exploring personal affiliation with their religious world, the participants have difficulty and some uneasiness as they attempt to articulate their spiritual connection:

Well, look ... I mean ... I pray every day ... three times a day ... therefore you try (to develop a relationship), and it's like hard to get like a very close relationship ... but you try and get a close relationship ...

It's not so much of a relation to life ... We know He is there and He's reigning and all that He's given to us ... but I don't feel so much of a close connection, as it should be ... because ...we pray and all that. ... It's meant to be talking to God and communicating ... So therefore I think when you pray you should have a sense of you actually are talking to God, not just saying words and hoping for the best ... You sometimes do feel like a real connection, but not often ...
It's difficult to say ... um ... I would describe that ... (very long pause) well ... it's like ...
if I need something ... I just pray to God ... and then ... hopefully, He'll listen to me ...
and help me out.

It's ... a ... I don't know ... it's not very good ... I don't know ... I don't know ... (very uncomfortable with this issue) 'Cause ... I don't know ... I don't know ... I just don't think
I ... I know how to relate to the fact that I'd have a relationship with God, whatever ...

All the participants found difficulty in articulating their religious identity. While they feel security in observing the Law and following Jewish customs, it is difficult to examine their personal relationships as separate from their duty.

The responses seemed to fall within the ambit of the extrinsic-consensual framework. Further analysis of religious identity is beyond the scope of this study. Suffice to say, that these adolescence all seem to have a strong sense of their religious heritage, traditions and community that upholds their values and morals, all of which is in keeping with the third task of the development of their adolescent identity.

4.8 Conclusion

It can be concluded that these teenagers experience some difficulty as they endeavour to complete the three central adolescent tasks. As previously noted, these tasks are, achieving their own identity while they are coping with biological changes, discovering their social identity and the acceptance of a value system.

These adolescents have to develop within the ambit of their community. The power of the community to condemn those who do not conform to the Law, tends to limit adolescent development. While these adolescents have a great sense of pride in taking their place in this system, there is the awareness that they cannot deviate from the precepts and this does cause some of them feelings restriction.

All the participants find it difficult to examine their religious identity. While they experience security as they observe Jewish Law and follow Jewish customs, exploring their personal religious identity causes some feelings of uneasiness.
Religious and social knowledge of Judaism occurs within the educational environment offered at an Orthodox school. The learning programme, comprising Kodesh and Ghol, endeavours to offer learners an all-inclusive learning environment. However, the implementation of the dual programme raises a number of issues and concerns.

Parents, family and peers affect these adolescents in much the way the literature describes. The points of difference are the tremendous additional religious pressures on the adolescents and the general absence of interaction with the opposite sex, limiting the development of social and personal skills.

These adolescents are developing their identities as they live and learn within the rigid religious structure and this has a complex impact upon individual identity, an aspect that these adolescents identified. In all areas, the pervasive influence of Jewish Law and traditional community values dominate adolescent identity development.

The summary, conclusion and recommendations from the study will follow in Chapter Five.
CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will present a summary of both the literary and the empirical study, followed by conclusions that may be drawn from the qualitative study. This will be followed by a list of some of the limitations experienced while conducting this work. A few recommendations will be offered prior to the concluding remarks.

5.2 Summary: orientation to the research

The following aspects were addressed in Chapter One: an introduction, motivation for the research topic, analysis of the research problem, aims of the research, a clarification of terms, the method and demarcation of the research and the research programme.

5.3 Summary of the literary study

The literature study explored adolescent identity and development (within Erikson’s frame-work), religious orientation and Orthodox Jewish education.

Erikson’s (1959; 1963; 1968) premise is that the individual goes through a series of chronological stages. At the end of each stage the individual has what he calls a developmental crisis, the purpose of which is the resolution of two reciprocal opposites. The ideal solution is that a balance exists between the two. If an individual has not dealt with a particular stage, it is presumed that it will be more difficult to successfully deal with the crises of the succeeding stages. Erikson’s model argues that maturity is embedded in the psychological integration of past, present and future (see 2.3).

Outlined in this paragraph is Erikson’s (1963:247-263) delineation of the first five of the eight ages of development relevant to this study. Stage One is Basic Trust and Basic Mistrust. Stage Two is Autonomy, Shame and Doubt. Stage Three is Initiative and Guilt. Stage Four is Industry and Inferiority. Stage Five is Identity and Role Confusion / Identity Diffusion (see 2.3).

To understand an individual and his life cycle, it is important to have some sense of constancy, which Erikson (1968:17) refers to as a sense of personal sameness and
historical continuity. Rice (1996:36) describes the integration of personal identity in terms of the total concept of self (see 2.3).

Erikson's model is a psycho-social one, because adolescents develop their identity within society. The implication is that society will benefit when individuals successfully conclude their developmental crises (see 2.3).

Adolescents' tasks can be summarised into three broad categories during this period. Firstly, they need to establish their personal identities, while coping with biological changes. Secondly, they must establish their social identity, influenced by their peers and family, and thirdly, they should acknowledge their specific values, which may be linked with religious identity (see 2.2).

Adolescence is a transition between childhood and adulthood that covers physical, cognitive and psychosocial changes. It is a time of intense physical, emotional and psychological transition, according to Papalia et al. (2002:377). This is a time of paradoxes, which Fox (1997:233) describes as a time of searching for self-identity while wanting to conform. Adolescence is a time of idealism, cynicism, spontaneity, energy, laziness and self-indulgence (see 2.2).

While growth is visible physically, changes in emotional, intellectual and social functioning are evident in behaviour. Development within these areas is uneven and confusing for adolescents themselves, as well as to those who witness it (see 2.2).

Societies accommodate adolescents during this time. Many writers, including Erikson (1963:262) and Papalia et al. (2002:426) refer to adolescence as a moratorium, that is, a psychosocial stage between childhood and adulthood, a time that allows adolescents to make sense of their own world as they make the shift to adulthood (see 2.3.5).

Prior to achieving psychosocial maturity, the adolescent is very easily influenced as the core of identity is not yet formed. Being unable to form an identity is what Erikson refers to as role confusion (see 2.6).

Feldman (1999:341) explores Erikson's views and his concept of adolescence is a time of examining individual strengths and weaknesses, uniqueness and individuality. Using
this information, adolescents try to discover their future roles. Their friends and peers increasingly become their resources, while they become less reliant on the adults in their lives. In essence, they are trying to realise their individual identities (see 2.3.5).

As adolescents modify their perception of who they are, with whom they want to be, they arrive at their own sense of self or identity (see 2.2).

Personal identity is a comprehensive, congruous and internalised view of a person: what they want to be, as well as their beliefs and values. There are many pressures in establishing identity, both internal personal goals and external pressures to make the right decisions in life i.e. career and relationship choices. According to Bukatko and Daehler (1998:402) establishing individual identity revolves around creating a sense of self, recognising physical identity and coping with a changing appearance that is linked with gender identity. Santrock (2000:350) describes identity as a 'self-portrait' that has many pieces i.e. personal, personality, sexual, career or vocational, political, religious, cultural, relationships, achievement or intellectual and physical (see 2.4.1).

Adolescents need to develop a sense of identity separate from their parents; simultaneously they need to complete a number of developmental tasks. Even though an adolescent's beliefs may be different from parental teachings, there is seldom a complete rejection of their belief system, according to Hill (1995:365). Formal religiosity also affects family relationships. Indirectly, positive family cohesion influences adolescents' self-regulation, Brody et al. (1996:703). The family is the microcosm of the wider community that creates the boundaries of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, the final deterrent being social disapproval or exclusion (see 2.7.5).

Parenting styles have an impact on adolescents' self-image and developing identity. Papalia et al. (2002:441) believe that the way parents manage specific situations and the individual needs of their adolescent children is most important (see 2.4.1).

Prior to establishing a specific identity, adolescents need to synthesise their personal needs, inherent abilities and identification with significant people whom they encounter. According to Jensen (1985:70,71) greater exposure will lead to a richer personality development (see 2.4.1).
Adolescents need to develop socially appropriate behaviour – in terms of self-regulation and social interaction. Noom et al. (1999:771) define autonomy as the ability to regulate one’s own behaviour; while attachment is seen as the quality of the relationship with significant others (see 2.4.2.1).

Interaction with peers is of great importance for identity development. This may be seen in terms of friendship and social interaction because of shared understanding as each adolescent experiences the biological, intellectual and emotional changes - all of which give rise to changes in social personality and overt actions (Bukatko & Daehler, 1998:524). Peers play an increasingly important role in the lives of fellow adolescents (Atwater 1996:201,203). Peers provide a reference or social comparison for judging their own experience and conduct (see 2.4.2.2).

The peer group has a powerful impact on adolescent development – both in terms of conformity and experimentation. Atwater (1996:211) refers to the actual or imaginary social authority of peers. Close friends and peers influences attitudes and behaviour. (Hoge 1999:30; Zigler & Stevenson 1993:556). Acceptance or rejection by the peer group will significantly impact adolescent development (see 2.4.2.2).

One of the ways of adding value to their society is the choice and preparation for a career and future activities. Developing and formulating exclusive values is essential in the act of identity formation. This is because developing a personal philosophy serves as a guideline to behaviour (see 2.4.3).

Successful identity formation is linked with mental health. Belief, knowledge and motivation are important contributory factors in identity formation. Schaefer and Gorsuch (1991:449) examined three aspects of psychological adjustment and health: religious motivation, religious beliefs and religious problem solving styles (see 2.7.4).

Atwater (1996:398) says that religious custom refers to a variety of religious aspects, like group membership, accepting its authority, beliefs and practices, as well as participating in its ceremonies and rituals.

Religious orientation may be examined in terms of extrinsic and intrinsic orientation (Allport & Ross 1967:434,435; Spilka et al. 1985:19). Extrinsic-orientation is essentially
an utilitarian approach where religion is a means of obtaining status and tends to be sociably expedient. This orientation correlates with low self-esteem and comprises a concrete, literal outlook, which is intolerant and rigid. Extrinsic individuals appear at risk for poor psychosocial health and adjustment (Markstrom-Adams & Smith 1996:258). Furthermore the extrinsic orientation reflects shallowness, a manipulative style and rigidity that makes insight and change difficult to achieve (Bergin et al. 1987:203). Intrinsic motivation requires internalised beliefs, ethical behaviour, flexibility and being able to accommodate complexities. According to Baker and Gorsuch (1982:121) intrinsicness is linked with the ability to integrate anxiety into everyday life (see 2.7.3).

The religious problem-solving style has been linked to religious and psychological health (Pargament et al. 1988:91). The Collaborative style involves an active exchange with God, being usually intrinsically motivated and correlating with competence in the individual. The Deferring style is a passive approach, that waits on God for answers and it seems to be related to extrinsic motivation. The Self-Directing style is a functionally effective style of personal problem-solving, emphasising the God-given freedom people have to direct their own lives (see 2.7.4).

Jewish religious education is conveyed through a host of activities other than formal daily school activity. Youth groups, summer camps and Shabbitons all fall within the ambit of Jewish religious education and instruction (see 2.8).

Carmy (2001:32) says,

*In principal, the Torah has something to say about all subjects under the sun and above the sun. Its orientation is formative, its legal conclusion (Halakah) normative. Moreover, Torah studying is an overriding religious imperative pursued for its own sake; it would be difficult for an outsider to overestimate its importance in the life of the committed Jew.*

This reflects the infinite power of Torah study and religious imperatives (see 2.8.2).

Although Orthodox education offers a clear structure for learning - it is also a system with areas of concern for both teachers and learners, which compound the complexity of adolescent development. Shkedi (1997:73) identifies difficulties that learners and teachers encounter in Orthodox education. One of a number of concerns he raises, is the lack of congruence between teachers' perceptions and the students' world. An
issue from Mosher and Handal's (1997:456) research is that religion is related to psychological distress and adjustment in adolescents. Their proviso is that religion is not of equal value for all adolescents and tends to vary with grade level (see 2.9).

Markstrom et al. (1998:219) conclude that adolescents in Jewish dominant contexts are more advanced in some forms of ethnic identity, than their non-Jewish peers, and at less risk for ideological identity confusion. Ideological and interpersonal forms of identity are associated with self-esteem, but there are minimal links between ethnic identity and self-esteem (see 2.10).

The interviews confirm that the traditional frum practices and religious demands are onerous and cause conflict in the developing psyche of the Jewish Orthodox adolescent. The adolescent identity development is strongly influenced by their religious psychosocial world that provides the structure that both supports and complicates identity development. The pervasive religious world requires commitment and dedication from adolescents, their peer group, parents and teachers to complete the process of identity development.

5.4 Summary of the empirical study

The responses from the six participants were analysed into six themes. These themes are: the community; Orthodox Judaism; education; parents, family and peers; adolescent identity and religious identity (see 4.1).

The participants reflect a deep awareness of being Jewish. As Lawton (1993:21) says, being Jewish is more than a religious or cultural choice - it is an inescapable identity. There is profound awareness of their Jewishness leading to their commitments, obligations and consequences of behaviour (see 4.3).

The first theme explored is the Orthodox community. All the participants expressed an intense respect for their community. The words of the sage, Hillel, that Jews should not separate themselves from the community, echo in participants' responses. There is a powerful awareness of the value of belonging, as well as anxiety that they might let the community down in some way (see 4.2).
Community control is subtle rather than overt - any person breaking the code, will be ostracised and isolated. Erikson refers to the importance of social contribution on individual development. Frum community values are extremely restrictive and place tremendous demands on all adherents. There is a clear link between the Orthodox religion and their community values. The frum adolescents can be recognised as being ‘different’ in terms of worship, culture, dress and behaviour. Furthermore, being part of the frum community implies that community interests need to be safeguarded, even at cost of individual identity. Choosing not to be part of the community is considered serious and reprehensible (see 4.2).

The community plays a pivotal role in the identity development of these adolescents. Erikson’s view of psychosocial development endorses the need for identity development occurring within a community or society. A concern is that the demands of the community are so pervasive that individual identity development may be suppressed, which could result in deep conflict for these adolescents (see 4.2).

Although the participants found it difficult to articulate their religious-spiritual views, their responses indicate that basic trust has been established. This is in keeping with Erikson’s view (1968:76) linking the trust of stage one with the institution of religion. The desire to have faith in a belief system and in those who promote it, is in keeping with Erikson’s (1968:128) assertion that adolescents fear a simplistic approach to faith, while they are earnestly searching for a value system. The structure of the Jewish Orthodox faith and life cycle fulfils these needs for these adolescents (see 2.3.1).

The second theme from the interviews is that of Orthodox Judaism. Being Orthodox is immensely important to all the participants – very strong views were expressed on the differences between Orthodox versus Conservative or Reform Judaism. There is a ubiquitous awareness of being Orthodox, a consciousness of the frum life cycle, as well as their place within it. The legalistic structure expressed through the knowledge and practice of Halachah, while living within the confines of the frum community creates a sense of security. Paradoxically, the inflexibility of the system may prevent these adolescents from really challenging their social environment (see 4.3).

The adolescents clearly feel the religious-social pressure and obligations. Their efforts to keep the Law and knowledge of the consequences of breaking the Law, results in
strong feelings of guilt which is evident in the participants’ responses. The participants experience internal conflict as they consciously search for loopholes to avoid the restrictions of the Law. For them there is comfort in the knowledge that annual atonement (Yom Kippur) is available. Some of the participants accept this, others find the restrictions constraining. Their approach to the religious imperatives is essentially expedient and utilitarian (see 4.3).

Laws and rituals are central to Orthodox life. These adolescents take pride in fulfilling their obligations. However, there are indications that some view the system with ambivalence, there are times when ceremonies and rituals become tiresome (see 4.3).

The role of education is the third theme. Religious education is deemed to be of great importance by both the parents and the community. Education for frum learners is onerous due to the combination of the Kodesh and Ghol programmes in addition to the other prescribed religious activities. From the perspective of the frum life-style they sometimes look at other adolescents with envy (see 4.4).

The content and structure of frum education arouses a variety of feelings in the participants. Some adolescents feel privileged to learn within this system as they aspire to long-term Yeshiva studies. Others feel frustrated and cross that they have been deprived of information due to censorship or have suffered as a result of the limited secular teaching and they question whether they will be able to effectively participate in the secular world. A few participants resist the rigidity of the structure (see 4.4).

In general, Kodesh education is highly regarded by these participants. While the system is rigid and demanding, the learners feel confident in that they are encouraged to challenge it within defined religious parameters. This contributes to the feeling of security within the system. Of concern for some participants is the religious learning being hampered by having to learn in Hebrew as well as the issue of religious censorship (see 4.4).

Secular education is presented as a secondary objective. The concerns identified here are; censorship of study material, an awareness of the lesser value attached to secular learning (which has consequences for future studies) and apathy from both learners and educators. In summary, the system inculcates the view that learners are acquiring skills
for their religious world, and only to a lesser extent, skills for the secular world. As a result of the attitude to Kodesh learning, Jewish religious teachers are revered as role models. On the other hand, the secular teachers are disparaged - although there was some grudging admittance of responsibility for their own attitudes (see 4.4).

The fourth theme is the contribution of family and friends to their adolescent development. As for all teenagers, the varied impact of family, parents and peers is equally important for these frum teenagers (see 4.5).

These adolescents seem to enjoy belonging to large families. Many of the participants' older siblings have begun their Yeshiva studies abroad which creates changing dynamics in the siblings' position within the family (see 4.5.2).

These adolescents' attitude towards their parents is strongly influenced by their shared religious values. Yet, establishing individual identity and separation from their parents is one of the adolescents' tasks. While some participants are unwilling to challenge the status quo because of the religious imperatives, others recognise the need to challenge their parents and resent the constraints. A number of participants find the restrictions especially difficult when related to taboo issues. There are times when the choice to experiment becomes necessarily surreptitious (see 4.5).

Interaction between parents and teens is always complex. These teens see their parents as a reference for specific religious or emotional issues and their peers as a reference group for the norms of coping with the challenges of adolescence (Noom et al. 1999:781; Seltzer 1989:94). Both kinds of interaction are necessary (see 4.5.1).

Peer-friendship groups are vital to teenagers in order to meet some of their emotional needs and share in their social interaction. Friendship-groups are limited, they only interact with other frum adolescents. The need to conform and experiment with the peer group is in keeping with all teenagers (Atwater 1996:211), but sometimes this causes stress for these adolescents because of their religious obligations. An area in which these teenagers are different from their contemporaries is in socialising with the opposite sex (Rice 1996:216) – which is taboo in the frum community. The limited interaction causes some stress (see 4.5.3).
Generally, these adolescents depend on their family and peers much in the same way the literature describes (Noom et al 1999:781; Papalia et al. 2002:447,448; Rice 1996:247; Seltzer 1989:94). The significant difference is the immense religious pressure on the adolescents with regard to experimentation and the general absence of interaction with the opposite sex (see 4.5).

The fifth theme that emerged is that of adolescent identity. The constant awareness of the socio-religious structure dominates their development. There is an awareness of being different from other teenagers in terms of schooling, life-style and opportunities – evidenced by the references to 'normal' i.e. non-Jewish teenagers (see 4.6).

Despite the impact of an authoritarian community, some of these adolescents are able to see themselves as individuals, albeit definitely as Jewish Orthodox adolescents. Some participants are able to assess their personal abilities, while exploring future roles, in terms of their past and excitement about the future. They perceive themselves as separate entities and are aware of themselves in relation to others, within their psychosocial world (see 4.6).

While they see themselves in as individuals, this perception is strictly within their religious milieu, as described by Youniss et al. (1999:250). There is an ever-present consciousness that their lives are entrenched within a religious framework. There is clearly a desire for more self-exploration, questioning or exploring beyond the parameters of the community but this is tempered by the fear of being rejected by the frum community (see 4.6).

Many of these adolescents are developing separate identities. Erikson (1963:261) refers to the sense of developing ego identity, where confidence comes from a sense of internal stability that is linked with past experiences. Some concern still exists regarding individual identity development, because of the rigid religious system and the impact this has on individual identity (see 4.6).

The final theme from the empirical study is that of religious identity. These adolescents have a very strong sense of their identity in which the Law and religion are inseparably interlinked. All the participants found it uncomfortable to articulate their religious identity. They certainly feel great security in observing Jewish Law and following Jewish
customs, because their roles and involvement is precisely defined (Lawton 1993:21). However, they find it difficult to explore their personal responses with regard to their religious identity (see 4.7).

The formality and structure of the religious framework offers an intellectual sense of safety and continuity, but their religion seems to be impersonal and emotionally distant. The participants' responses seem to fall within the ambit of the extrinsic-consensual framework (Allport & Ross 1967:434,435; Spilka et al.1985:19). Many of these adolescents' responses seem to confirm what Pargament et al. (1988:91) refer to as a deferring style while communicating with God, this is a passive approach - waiting on God, and seems to be related to an extrinsic motivation (see 4.7).

Further analysis of religious identity is beyond the scope of this study. Suffice to say, that these adolescents all seem to have a strong sense of values and morals, which is in keeping with the third task in the development of an adolescent identity (see 4.7).

In conclusion it can be said that these adolescents are able to complete the three central adolescent tasks i.e. achieving their own identity while coping with biological changes, discovering their social identity as influenced by family, parents and peers and finally, the accepting a value system. In all areas, the powerful and pervasive influence of Jewish Law and the community values, dominate the identity development of these adolescents (see 4.8).

5.5 Conclusions that may be drawn

Within the confines of the Orthodox life style these adolescents are in the process of achieving an identity according to Erikson's criteria. Yet their values and social choices exist only within the confines of the religious world; there are no choices for them outside the parameters of the religious frum world. From the interviews, the participants generally reflect an unquestioning acceptance of the religious value system. This voluntary acceptance allows them a sense of well-being and security, but at a cost. Should they challenge the values of their belief system or explore beyond the established parameters, there is the reality of being excluded from the community. So, while their Jewish religious identity is clearly developing, the question remains as to how well they are able to function in broader society.

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Even the participants who expressed interest in tentatively exploring some of the forbidden areas, have strong feelings of guilt at the thought of challenging the Orthodox heritage and its life-style.

Their personal commitment to the system is enormous. This constant and pervasive awareness of being Jewish is reflected in all aspects of their psychosocial life. They cannot escape the ever-present knowledge of being Jewish, whether it be in their thrice daily prayers, dietary restrictions, clothing or life-style that is prescribed by the Halachah. The personal commitment is sustained by the desire to be part of frum community and there is constant awareness that while they continue to fulfil the precepts and obligations, they will be accepted.

The interviews do not indicate any sense of negative identity development or role confusion, as described by Erikson.

The effect of Orthodox Jewish education on their adolescent identity leads to a profound awareness of the all-encompassing influence of the religious and cultural heritage on every aspect of their lives. The concern is that these adolescents are not experiencing the advantage of the adolescent moratorium i.e. the freedom to explore other options.

5.6 Limitations of the study

A number of limitations were experienced while writing this dissertation. Firstly, as the researcher is not Jewish, there was a little difficulty in exploring some aspects of Jewish religious life. Secondly, the research is centred on very profound issues of religious beliefs and adolescent development. This required sensitivity from the researcher as she briefly entered their world. Thirdly, there is very limited literature on the topic of Jewish adolescent identity development. Fourthly, as the study was limited to males (this is a male-only school): research in an Orthodox girls' school may have provided a different perspective on frum adolescent identity development. Fifthly, the researcher found very little relevant material on the internet – hence the absence of references from this source. Finally, this is a limited sample from a single community and generalisations would be speculative.
5.7 Recommendations

A few recommendations arising from the study may be made. The information regarding adolescent identity and specifically, these adolescents' perceptions, gleaned from this study, may be of value to the teachers, especially the religious teachers who have such powerful influence on the developing adolescents. Secondly, projective media could be used to gain additional information apropos some of the underlying difficulties of adolescent development that have been briefly mentioned. Finally, if a similar study were to be conducted within a local frum girls' school, valuable information could be obtained about the impact of the Orthodox educational system on the developing female adolescent.

5.8 Concluding remarks

This study gave the participating adolescents a challenging opportunity to engage in some personal reflection on their developing identities. A number of the participants reflected after the interviews that they had been challenged in areas they had not explored before, issues they had not previously articulated. As one participant said after the interview, *I surprised myself with some of my answers.*

The community showed tentative curiosity in the researcher's findings, expressed as interest in the way 'an outsider' perceives the system. They clearly have no desire to question or assess the impact of the frum life style on the developing adolescent identity, as this is their preferred way of life, in which they and their children maintain traditions as they have existed over centuries.

This study allowed the researcher to explore more deeply areas that had been of prior interest i.e. a non-Jew, interfacing with an Orthodox Jewish community and probing the process of the identity development of these adolescents. The study offered a meaningful opportunity to explore psychosocial areas that had hitherto been closed. It was a privilege for the researcher to engage in some exploratory research in the area of adolescent development with this unique group of adolescents.
Bibliography


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