

CHAPTER 7
RESEARCH FINDINGS

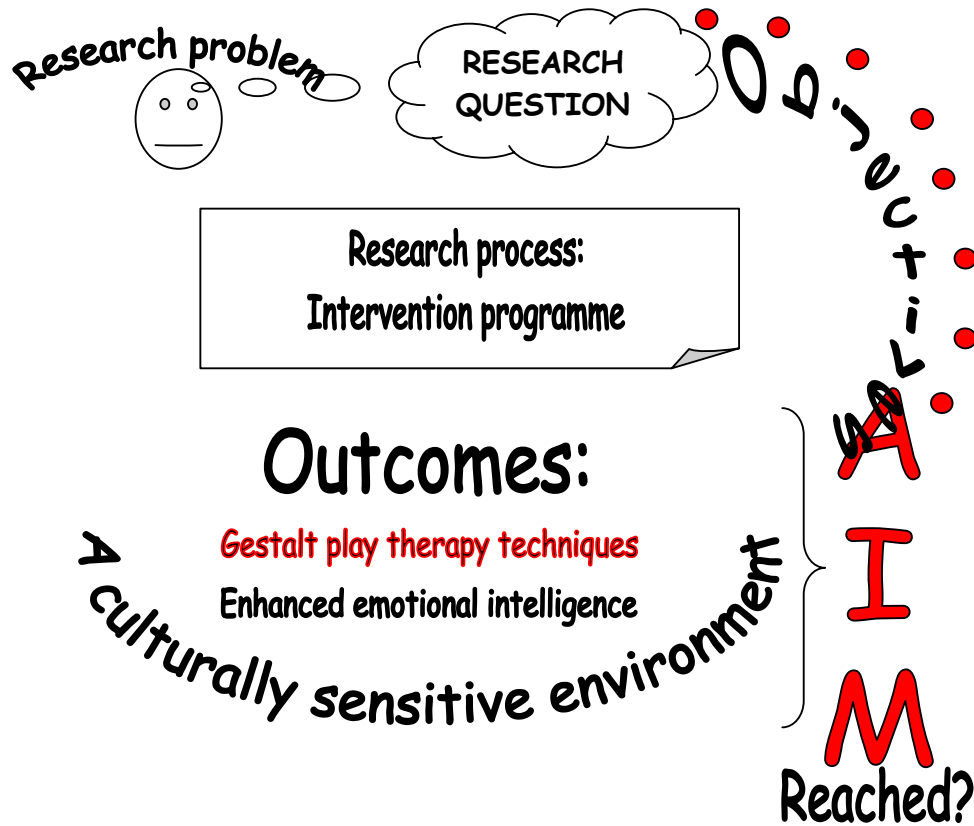


Figure 7.1: Current chapter as part of the research study as a whole

1. INTRODUCTION

The outcomes of the intervention programme are discussed in this chapter, including the results of the post-test and an evaluation of the latter against the aims and objectives of the study. The researcher explained the outcomes of the intervention programme and provided reasons, possible explanations and opinions on this. It is the first step of the dissemination grouping of steps, which is the last part of the research procedure as presented in Chapter 1, Figure 1.6 Research procedure.

The outcomes or results of this study were discussed using the research question. If this question could be answered effectively, the research was successful. The objectives, as steppingstones (short term goals) to the aim (long term goal) were covered and answered.

2. THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

According to Mouton (1996:172) "...a doctoral student must present the new findings or insights in some detail. Not only must she provide evidence of how the findings were arrived at, which involves the same steps as at the master's level, but why these results are worth noting. This means that the weight of the reporting shifts noticeably from a focus on the statement of the Problem and the design/collection of the Evidence to the presentation and discussion of the Conclusions".

Following this quote of Mouton (1996:172), the researcher discussed the research findings in relation to the objectives set in the first chapter of this research report. These objectives, as short-term goals, build progressively on each other to reach the final objective and then answer to the aim of the research study and the research question.

Each objective was copied from chapter one and discussed whether or not the research study could answer to this objective. The researcher also indicated the value of each objective to the final intervention programme and research study. The latter is the attempt to show "why these results are worth noting" (Mouton, 1996:172).

2.1 First objective

Study the characteristics of the **developmental phase of the primary school child** using available literature.

2.1.1 Objective answered

This objective was answered to in chapter two, where the researcher discussed the characteristics of primary school children found in literature in detail. Some other chapters, like chapters one, two, four, five and six, also referred to these characteristics. The implications of these characteristics were covered in most chapters.

The characteristics of primary school children especially those, which relate to emotional intelligence and Gestalt play therapy, are listed in the following paragraphs:

2.1.1.1 Physical characteristics:

They have stronger and more mature bodies and have tremendous energy.

2.1.1.2 Emotional development:

They need to build their self-images and do this through achievement in schoolwork and/or skill related activities, and relationships with peers, parents and authority figures. They need to develop two important skills for adulthood namely, effective interpersonal skills and a good work or task orientation.

2.1.1.3 Moral development:

These children judge right and wrong by the expectations of their social environment and their caretakers. They will also be influenced by others' approval of their morality and what is expected of them in their cultural environment.

What is morally right depends much on culture – the researcher thus did not directly teach morals in this programme.

2.1.1.4 Cognitive development:

Children in primary school show very steep improvement in attention processes. (Levine, 2002:83). They start to reason logically, basing their reasoning on concrete facts – they are thus not very good with abstract reasoning.

Children learn in different ways according to their preferred learning styles. These include children who learn better through listening, children who learn better through visual information and other who learn better through activity. The children also use a preferred brain hemisphere to process information. Left-hemisphere focused children are more auditory learners (listeners), systematic and logical. Right-hemisphere learners are more visual learners and doers. They learn by seeing the whole in its relation to the parts, by understanding, doing and by insight.

2.1.1.5 *General needs:*

These children still need to be cared for on physical level and to be kept safe from physical and psychological harm or negligence. They especially need to be loved unconditionally, to belong somewhere, and to have a good self-esteem. They also need the opportunity to develop to their full potential.

2.1.2 Contribution of the answer to this objective to the final intervention

As a result of their high-energy physical characteristics, children in primary school need a programme, which is based on activity. They seemed to understand the meaning of a theme the best when they tried it out in an experiment. Their emotional skills are based on a good self-image, interpersonal relationships and a feeling of worth concerning task completion. These skills were thus enhanced in the intervention programme presented.

Their cognitive abilities are based on reasoning with concrete facts. The activities in the intervention programme were thus active and concrete, requiring reasoning based on experiences in the session.

They develop cognitively in relation to others who are more skilled – cognition is thus influenced by culture. The children's family cultures could thus also have an influence on how they learned emotional skills. The intervention programme included a session on sharing family culture and open-ended questionnaires to the caretakers of the group members. This was used to explore the influence of family cultures on the learning ability of the children. The researcher as therapist used this information to understand the children's field, rather than the influence of the field on their learning ability. The relation of the field to the children's learning ability should thus still be refined in further research studies. The processes of the children influenced how well they could relate to activities – the latter should include activities to relate to lookers (right-hemisphere), listeners (left-hemisphere) and doers (right-hemisphere). It should be systematic and routine-oriented and also open, creative and flexible. The current intervention programme seemed to be more focused on children who are open, creative and flexible. Children who's cognitive processes related to stronger systematic and routine tasks than their creativity's learning style have been neglected. This programme should therefore still be adapted in further research studies to optimally accommodate a wider variety of cognitive styles.

Using group therapy in the intervention programme seemed effective because the children in the groups were influenced by each other – they could learn from each other, support each other and have fun together. Group therapy thus fulfilled in a variety of needs of the group members. Concerning the needs of primary school children as found in the literature study, the developed intervention programme provided in belonging needs, self-esteem needs and self-actualisation needs of the group members.

2.2 Second objective

Find the origin and define **emotions**. Explain **the operation of emotions** based on the literature studied.

2.2.1 Objective answered

This objective was answered from literature mainly in chapter 2 of this study. Some applications of the role of emotions in the human as a holistic being, with many interrelated systems, are mainly found in chapter 1 as an overview of the literature study, chapter 4 as application of emotions to the programme, and shortly in chapters five and six as part of the research process.

The literature study indicated the origin of emotions to have a physical or bodily relation.

Emotions were defined as the carriers of information, connecting and influencing different systems and levels of being. Emotions are equally influenced by all the other systems.

Emotions operate on a body-mind level. It usually works from the prefrontal areas in the brain, where projections on sensory information are sent to the neo cortex for interpretation and the prefrontal lobes orchestrates a reaction. The frontal lobes are the base of the cognitive control over emotions. Emotions might not originate in the frontal lobes, but they are controlled from there. The frontal lobes are thus related to emotional intelligence in this study. Emotions also interact with the body on molecular base, transferring messages to and from body cells. Emotions can make the body sick or healthy and vice versa.

2.2.2 Contribution of this answer to the final intervention

Bodily reactions on emotions are represented in the Gestalt contact boundary disturbances like psychosomatic symptoms defined as retroflexion (Chapter 4, 2.2.3.4 Retroflexion).

An understanding of emotions helped the researcher as therapist to understand the children in the intervention groups' behaviour. The researcher as therapist had a better understanding of the group members who suffered from concentration problems and the related emotional difficulties like poor emotional control and poor self-images. The researcher as therapist also had a better understanding of the influence of the children's emotions on their learning difficulties and vice versa.

The intervention programme included awareness of the influence of emotions on thinking and the control of emotions by controlling thinking.

Sensory techniques as part of the Gestalt play therapy techniques of the Schoeman-model (Schoeman, 2004:118-180) are related to the body-mind operation of emotions. The researcher aimed to help children to be aware of their emotions by making them aware of themselves on a sensory level.

The body-mind operation of emotions was therefore used in the intervention programme to understand and control the self on many different levels including the emotional, cognitive and physical levels. Children were made aware of emotions and were helped to control it using sensory techniques and thinking. They were made aware of the influence of emotions on their cognitive abilities and of the influence of their physique on their emotions and vice versa. Comprehending the operation of emotions on body-mind level led to an improved understanding of the self as a whole, which is an important aspect of Gestalt therapy.

2.3 Third objective

Study the characteristics of an **appropriate level of emotional intelligence for primary school children** through a literature study.

2.3.1 Objective answered

As with the previous objective, this objective was also answered from literature mainly in chapter two of this study. An overview of emotional intelligence was given

in chapter one as an overview of the literature study. Emotional intelligence was applied in techniques in chapter four as part of the intervention programme. It was also shortly covered in chapters five and six as part of the research process.

The level of emotional intelligence of a primary school child was not overtly determined. The importance of emotional intelligence for the effective completion of the psychosocial tasks and other demands of this developmental phase was determined. The researcher used the information related to good levels of emotional intelligence from literature to connect to the psychosocial tasks of this developmental phase. The most important psychosocial tasks are achievement in tasks and effective interpersonal relationships.

The following aspects of emotional intelligence are directly linked to these tasks: self-awareness that leads to a positive self-image. Self-confidence, a positive attitude towards life, and goal orientation that lead to success in achievement related tasks (a good level of emotional intelligence leads to well-developed cognitive processes). The group members were made aware of the skills to develop effective interpersonal relationships. A good level of emotional intelligence in this developmental stage thus includes good intra- and interpersonal relationships and enough self-confidence to achieve well in work or achievement related tasks.

2.3.2 Contribution of this answer to the final intervention

An indication of what is included by a good level of emotional intelligence for this developmental phase was a valuable guideline on what to include in the final intervention programme. The researcher could also identify links between Gestalt therapy theory and the emotional intelligence needs of primary school children. The sessions of the intervention programme were compiled using themes, which were common in Gestalt therapy, emotional intelligence and the needs of primary school children.

The intervention programme was developed to continue over 12 to 15 weeks. Due to this time limit, it was thus important to focus on the most important skills for this developmental phase and not only a wide variety of general emotional intelligence skills.

The researcher could also more effectively determine which Gestalt play therapy techniques to use, when knowing the most important emotional intelligence skills for the primary school child.

2.4 Fourth objective

Study the **essence of culture** and its influence on emotional intelligence using a literature study.

2.4.1 Objective answered

This objective was answered in Chapter 3, it was also, as with many other objectives, covered in chapters one, four, five and six, because this is applicable to the context of the study as a whole. The definition and origin of culture was studied, as well as the fundamentals or characteristics thereof. All this was related to the rest of the study. The influence of culture on emotional intelligence and the choice of Gestalt play therapy techniques were also studied.

Culture in general is seen here as having both a biological as well as a social base. The following is a working definition for culture applicable to the context of the current study:

“Our culture is ... the process of which we are part, it is our present, it is part of ourselves. Our culture is the way we give meaning to life, the way we think and feel about things, and therefore also the way we express ourselves, and the way we behave” (Chapter 3, 2.1 Culture within the Gestalt framework – the field theory). The fundamentals of culture in Chapter three cover a vast amount of information to increase the understanding of culture. The essence of culture according to the researcher is though, that the human being is part of his culture and that this shapes his thoughts, feelings and actions. The children’s cultures are the fields within which they live and give meaning to life.

2.4.2 Contribution of this answer to the final intervention

“If a child thus experience improvement in emotional intelligence, it will not only affect his own self, but also the rest of his field – family, culture, community etcetera. This improves the value of such a programme. It means that not only will the child be more content, but this will also influence the community within which he functions as part of his field” (Chapter 3, 2.2.1 The child’s whole self and the field).

The following are short discussions on different contributions of an understanding of the children’s cultures to the intervention programme:

2.4.2.1 The child as a whole

The child as a whole will be influenced by his culture (or field in Gestalt theory) and changes in his self will influence his field. A child's cultural field influences his perception of his cognitive abilities, his physical being, his image of himself and his emotional processes. The group therapy situation in the current study was also part of the children's fields. They brought the contributions of their own fields to the group field. A healthy field, which promoted growth during the therapy sessions, to the opinion of the researcher, contributed to the well-being and emotional growth of the children.

A good understanding of the field or culture of a child thus contributed to the researcher as therapist's understanding of the children in the research groups as holistic beings. Their cultures were part of their beings and thus necessary to understand if one wants to understand the child as a whole.

2.4.2.2 Gestalt play therapy techniques

The researcher needed to apply Gestalt play therapy techniques that will enhance a group field that is health provoking. These included attributes of the therapist self, namely self-awareness – knowledge of the influence of her own culture on her cognition, emotions and behaviour. The researcher needed to focus on acceptance of cultural differences and on understanding certain behaviour as relating to a child's culture or field. It also included a good comprehension of the children's processes as influenced by their fields. If a therapist or the researcher as therapist knows the children well, it is possible to know which parts of their cognition and behaviour are cultural related and which not. This knowledge thus directed the researcher as therapist's choices of techniques and understanding of the children's handling of these.

2.4.2.3 Culture and morality

Another technique related issue concerning culture, includes the teaching of morals. In chapter 3, 1.4.6 Culture and morality, a clear distinction between culture and morality has been made. In Chapter 2, 1.4 Moral development, it is clear that morality is partly influenced by culture. It was thus important not to teach morals as part of a culturally sensitive emotional intelligence programme. A therapist's moral values might differ from the group members',

because their cultures or fields might be different. The researcher as therapist could therefore not teach what is morally right or wrong. The children could at most be aware what is expected of them within their family and community cultures. They could learn to use emotional intelligence skills, like self-control and responsibility, to adhere to these expectations. In such a way higher levels of emotional intelligence could increase the children's adherence to the morals of their families and communities.

2.4.2.4 Culture and language

Children communicate the way they make sense of life through language and movement. Language and the way it is used are thus closely related to culture. It is important to understand the children's cultural background to also understand the way they communicate. (Chapter 3, 1.4.5 Language and culture) Language is also an important part of Gestalt theory and techniques. Children can be made aware of their tendency not to take responsibility for themselves, but blaming other people or things through the way they use language. They will use phrases like "I have to" instead of "I want to" or "The rain caused ..." instead of "I am late...". Here language is related to taking responsibility for one's own life. (Chapter 4, 5.3.3.1 Language exercises) Culture can influence children to use language, which ignores responsibility. A family culture of always using phrases like "the rain stopped me from coming" or "I have to bake this cake now", thus influences the family members not to take responsibility for their own lives. This is another level of influence than the expression or not of emotions using language, which is also culturally based. It was thus important to be aware of phrases like these throughout the intervention programme. If children were using such phrases, the researcher as therapist could make them aware of what they were saying and the meaning of that. The children could change their language and attitudes to a more responsible way of being and communicating using the paradoxical theory of change (Chapter 4, 1.12 Change). The paradoxical theory of change means that someone can change to be more true to himself just by being aware of unfinished business etcetera (compare Ivens, [sa]:4; Jarosewitsch, 1995:2).

2.4.2.5 Culture and emotional intelligence

In relation to emotional intelligence culture has an influence on the way that emotions are expressed. The children in the research groups' culture depicted how emotions are handled and therefore influenced emotional intelligence. The following quote shows one relation between emotional intelligence and cultural influences: "It is important for the researcher to have knowledge of these processes to know which parts of a child's emotional intelligence might for example be introjects" (Chapter 3, 3.4.1 Emotional intelligence and culture). In this intervention programme introjects could be cultural values, which are accepted unconditionally as the truth by the group members. These introjects could have a negative influence on emotional growth, because the children were not aware of their own feelings concerning these issues.

2.4.2.6 Observations of the researcher as therapist

The researcher as therapist observed that although the children were from different cultural groups, they still operated in much the same way. This might be the case because all the children were selected from people living in the city (Windhoek), which also has a culture of its own. It seemed to the researcher as therapist that the group members were very alike in their way of being in the groups and very different in their own beings. The groups were multi-cultural on the base of ethnic cultures, but more homogenous concerning their lives in the city. It is important not to over-generalise here, because differences in their community cultures became apparent in the session on the group members' different homes and values (Chapter 6, 5.4.2.5 Session 5: Exploring our different homes and values). The researcher can therefore note that the group members were very different and at the same time also very much the same.

2.4.2.7 Summary of the contributions above, the literature study and the researcher as therapist's experiences in the research groups concerning culture

A culturally sensitive programme should therefore include the following characteristics:

- **Theoretical knowledge about the ethnic cultures represented in therapy**

The researcher as therapist gained knowledge about the ethnic cultures of the children in the programme.

- **Awareness of the children in therapy's cultures**

The children's home and community cultures were explored as part of the programme to enhance awareness and acceptance of each other's cultures within the therapy group.

- **Self-awareness relating to the therapist's culture**

The researcher as therapist was aware of her own culture and the influence of this on her way of being. It was important not to expect of the children in therapy to have the same cultural values than herself.

- **Culture and morality**

The researcher as therapist did not attempt to teach morals, but used emotional intelligence skills to help the children to adhere to their culture's moral standards.

- **Culture, language and emotional intelligence**

The researcher as therapist needed to learn to know the cultural related ways of emotional expression of the children in therapy by spending a considerable amount of time on self-awareness exercises with the children. During this process the researcher as therapist was aware of the ways in which the children express themselves, the language they were using and whether they avoided responsibility with their language. The latter could be changed in the therapy process as part of enhanced emotional intelligence where the children learned to take responsibility for their own lives. They therefore had to learn to use language to express responsibility for their own lives. The researcher as therapist neglected this part of the therapy process. She did not continuously focus on the children's use of language.

2.5 Fifth objective

Identify **appropriate Gestalt play therapeutic techniques to enhance emotional intelligence** during the primary school years in the literature study.

2.5.1 Objective answered

This objective is mainly answered in chapters four, five and six, where the focus was on relevant techniques and the application thereof in the pilot study and the final intervention programme. An overview of these was given in chapter one.

A wide variety of Gestalt play therapy techniques were discussed in chapter 4. An appropriate selection of these was made and presented in chapters five and six where the intervention programme was discussed. The most appropriate Gestalt play therapy techniques to enhance emotional intelligence were chosen on the base of its applicability to reach the aim of the research. The most appropriate techniques “to give acceptable precision for the effect you are studying” (Hopkins, 2000:8) were used (Chapter 6, 3.1 The sample of Gestalt play therapy techniques). This sample of techniques is closely related to the emotional intelligence themes selected to apply in the intervention programme. The emotional intelligence themes were selected on the base of its appropriateness to primary school children and its relation to Gestalt therapy theory. As stated in chapters five and six, the researcher chose techniques that seemed the most appropriate to each specific theme presented in the intervention programme.

The selected sample of techniques was applied in a group setting, because of the importance of interpersonal relationships in this developmental phase (Chapter 4, 5.3 Gestalt play therapy groups).

The sample of Gestalt play therapy techniques used was finalised only during the pilot study. The researcher soon during the pilot study found that the experiential nature of Gestalt therapy was most important to fulfil in the needs of the children in the groups. Another technique that seemed very efficient is the relationship between the researcher as therapist and the members of the research group. Specific factors of the relationship seemed more salient in the attempts to lead the children towards change and emotional growth – ‘bidding one’s time’ was the most important factor here. The researcher as therapist found that by fully giving herself to the needs of the children at a specific moment in time was very important. If the researcher focused on the

relationship and thus effective contact between her and the group members, she experienced that they had a better understanding of concepts and there was also more depth in the session. Effective contact would therefore also be included as a salient relationship factor to include in the sample of techniques.

2.5.2 Contribution of this answer to the final intervention

This objective contributed to the final programme in the form of a list of Gestalt play therapy techniques, which were used and therefore tested for its effectiveness in a culturally sensitive emotional intelligence programme. The following is a list of these techniques:

- Imaginary techniques
- Creative techniques
- Dialogue
- Sensory exercises
- Biblio play
- Experiments
- Cognitive exercises
- Conscious breathing
- Games
- Dramatic play / experimenting / active play
- The therapeutic relationship
- Bidding one's time

The most important techniques, as discussed in 2.5.1 Objective answered, seemed to be the therapist's healing relationship with the group members, which include good contact and "bidding one's time" and the focus on active learning and the use of experiments or learning through experience (Chapter 6, 5.4.4 Gestalt play therapy techniques used).

The value of this objective was therefore the identification of appropriate techniques to use to enhance the emotional intelligence of primary school children in a cultural sensitive way. The most effective ones as stated above can be summarised as follows:

- The healing therapeutic relationship
- Bidding one's time
- Active learning using experiments

The relationship with the group members in the research study was healing and ‘bidding one’s time’ provided an accepting climate where children could experiment with new behaviour. The children preferred learning by active engagement in experiments related to their own experiences and fields.

2.6 Sixth objective

Develop a cultural sensitive emotional intelligence enhancement **programme** using Gestalt play therapeutic techniques.

2.6.1 Objective answered

The answering of this objective is a compilation of the information gained by the previous objectives. Here the characteristics of the primary school child, emotional intelligence, Gestalt play therapy techniques, and the influence of culture were all applied. This was done to develop an intervention programme, which applies Gestalt play therapy techniques (group therapy) to enhance the emotional intelligence of primary school children in a culturally sensitive way.

The objective is thus answered in Chapters five and six where an overview and discussion of the intervention programme is given – both of the pilot study as well as the finalised, adapted programme after the pilot study. The final intervention programme is included in this study as an addendum.

2.6.2 Contribution of this answer to the final intervention

This contribution is related to the outcomes of the study. Having an intervention programme available provided the opportunity to assess the use of the Gestalt play therapy techniques. It could be assessed using the improvement or not of emotional intelligence assessed before and after the application of the intervention programme.

The most effective Gestalt play therapy techniques could be identified through the experience of the researcher as therapist while applying the intervention programme. The latter has been done by taking process notes on the observations of the researcher as therapist. An analysis of these process notes provided valuable information concerning the most useful Gestalt play therapy techniques.

2.7 Seventh objective

Apply this programme to a **research group**.

2.7.1 Objective answered

This objective is also answered in chapters five and six. Here the researcher selected research groups according to specified criteria from the literature study. The following criteria were used in the selection of the group members of the pilot group:

- The use of the results of a specific pre-test to determine the need for enhancement of emotional intelligence (low planning processes)
- Gender (groups with both genders)
- Age (7-12 years, but not children on edges of the range in one group)
- Cultural groups (multi-cultural)
- Maintaining an ethical approach to the group members and their caretakers

(Chapter 5, 4.1 Selection of group members for the pilot study)

2.7.2 Contribution of this answer to the final intervention

This objective provided guidelines for the selection of the final research groups for the intervention programme.

Following the selection criteria for the pilot study, the researcher adapted this list to the list below after the pilot study:

- Primary school children
- Children in need of increased emotional intelligence according to an assessment with the Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System
- Children from different cultural groups in Namibia (groups not representative of all the cultures in Namibia, because these were children who needed improvement of emotional intelligence who came to the practice for assessment and help)
- Group size between five and six (Schoeman, 2004:90)
- The children should be able to use the same communication language

(Chapter 6, 3.2 The research group as part of the sample used in the intervention programme)

2.8 Eighth objective

Determine the **outcomes**.

2.8.1 Objective answered

This objective was answered by determining the outcomes of the study was in the following three ways:

Firstly the effectiveness of the intervention programme to enhance the emotional intelligence of the group members of the two research groups was assessed. This provided information concerning the effectiveness of Gestalt play therapy techniques to enhance emotional intelligence.

Secondly the process notes on the observations of the researcher as therapist were analysed to identify the most effective Gestalt play therapy techniques.

Thirdly the researcher analysed the effectiveness of Gestalt play therapy techniques in a culturally sensitive approach. This was also done by analysing the process notes on the observations of the researcher as therapist.

The following are discussions on the three ways in which the outcomes of the study were assessed:

2.8.2 The outcomes in relation to enhanced emotional intelligence

This objective was answered after the post-test, which was part of the final session of the intervention programme discussed in chapters five and six. The outcomes concerning emotional intelligence are represented in the tables following Figure 7.2, which clears the concepts used in the tables covering the outcomes of the research study.

Quick overview of PASS theory concepts and their meanings appearing as cognitive processes in the Cognitive Assessment System:	
<u>Planning processes:</u>	frontal lobe functioning, related to emotional intelligence skills.
<u>Attention processes:</u>	the ability to focus attention
<u>Simultaneous processes:</u>	executive processes related to visual material, understanding and insight in instructions and explanations
<u>Successive processes:</u>	executive processes related to auditory material, logical and systematic thinking, detail and factual information

Figure 7.2: Overview of PASS theory concepts

Table 7.1: Outcomes of the English research group**ENGLISH GROUP:**

Pre-test scores:	Needs:	Post-test scores:
R: High average executive processes Average planning & attention processes Simultaneous processes higher than successive.	Good academic abilities, needs EQ for task-orientation, responsibility.	Slightly higher score on planning, good interpersonal skills, still needs more task-orientation and goal-orientation must lead to realistic outcomes.
P: Well below average simultaneous processes, below average planning processes. Attention low average and successive average.	Learning problems and low self-image and general coping skills, needs to increase EQ to possibly increase simultaneous processes too.	Very slight increase in planning processes. Did not always own projections, thus might need further EQ training on individual base to increase insight
K: Low average planning and attention processes. Simultaneous & Successive average. Simultaneous higher than successive processes	Hyper-activity, learning problems due to little attention control, behavioural difficulties, poor social skills	Increase in planning processes to one point away from average level. Self-discipline and social skills in-creased, needs more work on self-image and self-control
J: Below average planning and Simultaneous processes. Average attention and low average successive processes.	Learning problems, work on self-image and courage and determination to keep going, thus increased goal oriented life and responsibility for life	No increase in planning processes. Reported to have applied skills learned, but might not have had enough insight in themes taught
V: Low-average planning and successive processes, average attention and simultaneous processes	Learning problems, work on self-image and courage and determination to keep going despite of learning difficulties. Self-awareness and acceptance of self.	No post-test and not consistent attendance of programme – recommended attention to learning difficulties to improve self-confidence.

ENGLISH GROUP – GROUP SCORE SUMMARY

Pre-test scores:	Needs:	Post-test scores:
V: 5 Lowest on planning 2 Lower simultaneous than successive 2 Suppressed attention scores	5 needed enhanced emotional intelligence for: 1. academic success (3) 2. self-skills (1) and 3. interpersonal skills(1)	3 Increased planning processes 1 No increase (lower simultaneous processes) 1 No post-test

Table 7.2: Outcomes of the Afrikaans research group**AFRIKAANS GROUP:**

Pre-test scores:	Needs:	Post-test scores:
D: Average planning & attention processes Simultaneous processes high average and successive processes on low average.	Learning difficulties and very poor self-image.	No increase in planning processes. Observations during programme showed increased self-confidence and good social skills
STE: Successive and attention processes much higher than planning and simultaneous processes (low average).	Self-awareness and increased insight in self, control of emotions to decrease performance anxiety	No increase in planning processes. Observations and discussion with mother showed increased self-confidence, social skills
STA: Below average planning and low average attention processes. Simultaneous & Successive average. Simultaneous higher than successive.	Learning problems due to little attention control, self-discipline and emotional control, responsibility, self-awareness.	Significant increase in planning processes.
E: Below average planning and low average Simultaneous and attention, with the latter little higher, average successive processes.	self-image, self-awareness (understanding of self) and self-discipline. Emotional control, responsibility for tasks.	Increase in planning processes. Observed to still not have much insight in self, but better self-image (participated in academic help programme too)

AFRIKAANS GROUP – GROUP SCORE SUMMARY**Pre-test scores:****Needs:****Post-test scores:**

V: 4 Lowest on planning 2 Lower simultaneous than successive 2 Suppressed attention scores	4 need to increase emotional intelligence for: 1. academic success (3) 2. self-skills (4)	2 Increased planning processes 1 No increase (lower simultaneous processes) 1 No increase (learning difficulties big influence on low self-confidence)
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The results of the emotional intelligence post-test showed an increase in emotional intelligence processes in just more than half of the group. Two of the three children who did not show an increase in planning processes, had weak right-hemisphere (simultaneous processes on the Das-Naglieri Cognitive Assessment System (Naglieri & Das, 1997a) skills. Planning processes are related to functions of the frontal lobes, which were related to emotional intelligence in this study. One child (E) in the Afrikaans group had an increase in planning processes and lower simultaneous processes (right-hemisphere skills), but the researcher as therapist observed that her insight in herself was still not very well developed. One child (P) in the English group with very low simultaneous processes showed an increase in planning processes, although this was a very slight increase.

Out of the total of five children with increased planning processes in the post-test, three had higher simultaneous processes (right-hemisphere skills). The researcher as therapist experienced those children with higher simultaneous processes to comprehend the self-skills themes in the intervention programme better than the other children. Children with really weak simultaneous processes seemed to find it more difficult to understand the self-skill themes than the other children.

This tendency is rather a qualitative outcome of the study than an outcome that can be proofed with quantitative methods. The researcher did not use a big enough sample to proof the observations above as quantitatively significant.

The researcher provided a discussion on this unexpected outcome in 3.2 A possible explanation for unexpected phenomena, in this chapter.

2.8.3 The outcomes in relation to Gestalt play therapy techniques

The success of the Gestalt play therapy techniques as a tool to enhance the emotional intelligence of primary school children in a culturally sensitive way, was measured by the results of the post-test of emotional intelligence related processes (planning processes / frontal lobe functioning). The outcomes were also determined, using the process notes of the observations of the researcher as therapist relating to the group therapy sessions.

The results of the post-test showed an increase in emotional intelligence related processes in more children than not. This shows successful outcomes of the effectiveness of Gestalt play therapy techniques.

The most effective techniques were indicated in the process notes of the researcher after each therapy session. These notes indicated the value of the healing possibilities of a healthy therapeutic relationship with the children in the groups, active learning and experiments. The researcher also found that “biding one’s time” was a very important requirement. This went together with experiments and the relationship between the researcher as therapist and the group members. The researcher had to focus on the children’s foregrounds and had to make time to handle those issues, rather than to try to complete all the planned exercises to teach a theme. This was biding one’s time in relation to the relationship and in the following statement it relates to experiential learning: The children in the groups had to grow through experience, rather than by learning facts. The researcher as therapist had to help the group members to experiment with their foreground issues.

2.8.4 The outcomes in relation to cultural sensitivity

The programme was successfully presented in a culturally sensitive way, because most of the children from different cultural backgrounds in one group experienced an increase in emotional intelligence. The increase or not of the planning processes of the children in the research groups were not related to specific cultures.

The rule systems of families were part of the children’s cultural fields and had an influence on their behaviour. The researcher as therapist attempted to gain an understanding of the family cultures of the children in the research groups. This understanding was applied to unconditionally accept the children and provide a safe and accepting field for them during the therapy sessions. Figure 7.3 Process notes, indicates the influence of the family culture of group members.

ENGLISH GROUP**SESSION 11 – FLEXIBILITY AND RESILIENCE**

K's home culture had an influence on her behaviour today. She tends to give up easily and felt tired today. She did not want to participate in group discussions and continuously interrupted by attempting to switch the music louder or open / close the window or laugh out loud and complaining. I addressed it by explaining why she might feel this way and asking her to participate so she could also learn something. I also gave her a lot of attention... K's bad manners were annoying to me today, but I realised that this was part of her home culture and I need to accept her with this without judging her.

Figure 7.3: Process notes to indicate the influence of family culture

The cultural systems of the children were thus taken into account on a continuous base. Acceptance of the children, although they were thinking differently about certain things because of their cultures, seemed one of the most important points of importance in a culturally sensitive programme.

2.8.5 Contribution of this answer to the final intervention

The positive answer to this objective proofed the results of the research study to be successful in relation to the objectives determined. The researcher thus reached the aim of this study, copied in Figure 7.4 Aim, below.

AIM

The aim of this research is to identify Gestalt play therapy techniques to enhance the emotional intelligence of primary school children within their cultural context.

Figure 7.4: The aim

The aim was reached because a sample of Gestalt play therapy techniques was applied successfully to enhance the emotional intelligence of the research groups. Some techniques were identified as more effective than others, namely the therapeutic relationship, experiments as active learning and “biding one’s time” as a method used in the relationship and experiments. This could be done in a culturally sensitive environment.

Figure 7.5 The research question, is a copy of the question, which had to be answered in this research study.

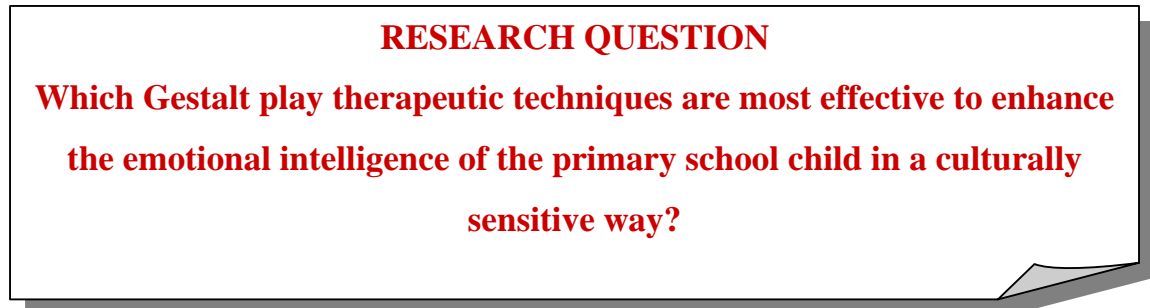


Figure 7.5: The research question

The following is the answer to the research question derived from the outcomes of the research study on the developed intervention programme:

Although a wide variety of Gestalt play therapy techniques proved effective in the intervention programme, the following techniques were emphasised as most effective by the observations and experience of the researcher as therapist:

- A healing therapeutic relationship between the group members and the therapist
- The focus on experiments, rather than learning exercises, thus active learning through experience
- “Biding one’s time”, thus to focus on experimenting with a child’s foreground need and not to focus on the completion of planned exercises to teach certain skills.

According to Harris (1998b:14) researchers should train themselves to be good observers. They should observe without bias and prejudice, which is important in a culturally sensitive programme such as the current study. Researchers should attempt to describe and not explain when they are observing and should treat each observation as having equal value. (Harris, 1998b:14-16)

The researcher followed these indications in the observations made throughout the process of the intervention programme and the pilot study. Observations are thus descriptive. The researcher did not attempt to explain the observations, although some indications on how to adapt the programme accordingly were made. The latter was important for the successful application of Gestalt play therapy techniques in this intervention programme.

The following are copies of the observations of the researcher as therapist to show the importance of and the need for the techniques listed earlier:

AFRIKAANS GROUP
SESSION 5 - DIFFERENT HOMES

They were sharing valuable things about their families while drawing their homes and situating their plastic figures. Instead of leaving them to this activity and just listen and share in the conversations, the researcher ended the exercise and asked for individual feedback. They did not like this much, because they got bored and wanted to still fiddle with their own homes. In these groups it seem necessary to focus on active learning experiences and to go into confluence with the group members.

AFRIKAANS GROUP
SESSION 6 - EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

The children enjoyed telling about times that they experienced certain feelings. It was more about sharing something from their own experience that was valuable here, than really understanding when they felt certain feelings. The children also would not listen to all the stories of their group members, but the one telling the story enjoyed that I listened and I found that valuable. The children still prefer active participation. It is thus difficult for the researcher to focus on one child's experience and create an experiment. The rest of the group might not participate well enough here, they will start to entertain themselves with other things, rather to focus on the experiment, which only focuses on one child's needs.

AFRIKAANS GROUP
SESSION 7 – CONTROLLING EMOTIONS

The group also discussed some behavioural strategies that they are using with success. These discussions also seemed very fruitful as it was applied to the group members' immediate circumstances at school. I neglected to show the robot technique here, as we focused much longer on the ABC-theory. Still the session seemed effective as the children could share what is working for them and what they can try out...

For future use, the programme should always touch the children's present lives or what is happening in the group. Although this is a reflective group, some activity is also required. They get bored if we only talk.

ENGLISH GROUP
SESSION 7 – CONTROLLING EMOTIONS

Handling emotions in an effective way was applied to their own circumstances from the beginning of the session. It seemed very effective to work on their emotions and emotional experiences of anger / temper or test anxiety... She misbehaved and irritated Kav to such an extend that he spilled water on the table. I then scaffolded K and we handled what she could do to help her control her feelings. Going in confluence with the children was great – it is good to take a situation in the group and handle it as an experiment. The group members all have learning difficulties. They tend to find it difficult to understand the real meaning of the lesson. Learning from experience is much more effective for them.

ENGLISH GROUP**SESSION 9 – FRIENDS AND COMMUNICATION**

It is mid-term break for the private schools. Most children therefore did not turn up for the session today. Only two boys, P and R, were there. After playing around a little, we settled down discussing friendships. We talked about what things put other people off. They used some of the behaviours of K in the group as examples – she has irritating behaviour patterns. We did not follow the planned programme to the letter – using all the exercises, but I introduced the two board games. Through this it was apparent that these boys also don't know why children are nasty, and also not what to do to make new friends. It was good to have time to discuss situations from their own lives and see why the children act in a specific way.

ENGLISH GROUP**SESSION 11 – FLEXIBILITY AND RESILIENCE**

The group's action oriented learning style was again confirmed today. They wanted to do things rather than to discuss things. Although the latter was the case they all showed some difficulties with spelling and reading and wanted to know how to handle the problem. Discussions on this were needed and done in the group. J shared an experience at school where she used the skills we learned from the story of session 9 – friends and communication. ... We also shared that they should handle testing situations by giving positive messages and believing in themselves. They should still practice this.

Figure 7.6: Process notes on observations to indicate the need for certain Gestalt play therapy techniques

2.9 Conclusion on the objectives and the objectives answered

All objectives were answered and applied to the research study. The following is a short summary of the information gained from the objectives:

The characteristics of the primary school child, emotions, emotional intelligence, culture and Gestalt play therapy techniques were the main focus points in the literature study. The theory gained from the literature study was applied to the development and application of an intervention programme.

The other objectives related to the development of an intervention programme, which incorporated Gestalt play therapy techniques, the enhancement of emotional

intelligence and cultural sensitivity were answered using the outcomes of this intervention programme.

Gestalt play therapy techniques seemed to be an effective tool to enhance the emotional intelligence of primary school children. A variety of possible Gestalt play therapy techniques were applied and the most important techniques to enhance the emotional intelligence of primary school children could be identified.

Most of the group members showed an increase of their frontal lobe functioning (planning processes) during the post-test, which was related to increased emotional intelligence in this study. The intervention programme was applied successfully in a culturally sensitive way, because children from a variety of cultural backgrounds showed increased emotional intelligence.

3. POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS FOR THE OUTCOMES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

Although the emotional intelligence related processes generally improved during the post-test, the researcher found that only two of the members of the research groups showed a big difference between pre-test and post-test results. The researcher therefore needs to give possible explanations for these less than perfect results. The researcher also found other outcomes in this research study than was planned for. Possible explanations need to be given for these outcomes, because the researcher reasons that these might deliver valuable input to the current knowledge base in this field of study. It is important to note that the following will be possible explanations of the outcomes of the programme and is not yet critique and recommendations. Although this is the case, some of these explanations also occur in the following chapter, which focuses on critique and recommendations.

3.1 Factors with a negative impact

The researcher listed factors that could have had a negative influence on the effectiveness of the techniques used. This might have caused the less than perfect outcomes or results of the post-test as stated above.

3.1.1 Practical considerations

The following were practical considerations, which interfered with the possibility to present techniques effectively and to promote optimal emotional growth in all the members of the group.

3.1.1.1 Sessions missed

If sessions were missed the child missed important opportunities for growth and if he/she would miss many sessions, like in the case of V in the English group, that child might not gel well with the rest of the group. The group later start to form a 'social click' and a child who missed many sessions could be excluded from this. Such an experience is very negative for emotional intelligence growth. In V's case, the group still accepted her and welcomed her back each time she turned up again. This compassion shown by the group members contributed positively to the emotional growth of V. The researcher therefore decided to still use her as a group member. She missed a lot of learning and growth opportunities and might not have benefited optionally from this intervention programme. Other children missed many sessions and then discontinued the programme. These ones include KA in the English group and two boys (who were not discussed as part of this study) from the Afrikaans group who attended the first few sessions here and there.

3.1.1.2 Coming late for sessions

Children who came late for sessions either caused the session to start up to 15 minutes later than planned or they missed the first part of the session, which usually included making contact and sharing life books and the sensory contact exercise for the day. These children therefore started some sessions without having the opportunity to get into contact with their emotions using their senses. In cases when the whole group waited for the latecomer, some

very important time for learning and growth was lost. This led to the negligence of the self-nurturing exercise at the end of the session, because time was running out.

3.1.1.3 School holidays, long weekends and public holidays

School holidays, long weekends and public holidays caused unforeseen interruptions in the intervention programme. It interrupted the flow of the skills learned and made the total timeline in which the programme was presented longer than planned. The last few sessions would then extend into school examination times, when the children had less time available for extracurricular activities such as the emotional intelligence group therapy times. This led to children missing sessions or children being less focused on the session because of being worried about study time sacrificed. This had a negative influence on the possibility of growth during these sessions.

3.1.1.4 Early termination of programme

Children, whose caretakers were not committed to bring the children to the sessions, deprived their children of a chance to grow and develop. It also had a negative influence on the group as a whole. The group usually starts to gel after the fourth or fifth session. If some members just don't turn up again, the group needs to adapt a little, to gel as a smaller group.

3.1.1.5 Time limits

The groups were fitted in 90-minute time slots. If the group started later or some members were late or if the group discussed a serious matter, there was no extra time allowed per session. The latter was the case, because caretakers made special arrangements for the transport of the children. Another reason for this was the use of time at the psychological practice where the researcher did the group therapy. Afternoon working hours only extended from 14:00 to 17:00, which is only three hours. Other clients were seen in the time left after the group sessions.

Other time limits to consider was the number of sessions allowed for the intervention programme to finish. The programme had to terminate within 12 to 15 sessions. This was the arrangement with the caretakers and had an

influence on their planning for time and other extracurricular activities for the children. It also had a financial implication, because the caretakers were paying a fee for the time used at the practice. The researcher as therapist could therefore not add sessions indefinitely until all uncertainties were handled. Uncertainties were discussed with the caretakers in a feedback report if necessary and the caretakers were invited for another discussion session about future help for the child.

3.1.1.6 Forgetfulness of group members

Children forgot assignments like life books at home – the researcher as therapist emphasised the importance of bringing the life books to the sessions to share the week's self-exploration activity. At times children were so hurried after school to be in time for the therapy session, that they forgot their books. The self-exploration could still be shared orally without presenting the book, but after a few cases of children forgetting their books, the importance of the activity started to fade. An important opportunity for self-awareness, interpersonal contact by sharing something of the self and thus an opportunity for growth was neglected after a few sessions.

3.1.2 Culture

The children's culture had an influence on their sense of time and how they behave. What is seen as good manners or not differed within families and cultural groups. The researcher had rather thorough contact with the caretakers of the children in the research groups. The researcher thus knew some of the family cultures before the intervention programme commenced. One of the girls in the English group, named K, presented some difficult to tolerate behaviour due to her family culture and attention problems. K needed a lot of attention to improve her self-confidence so that she did not feel the need to act out to get attention. Her family culture was also very unstructured, with little boundaries and some social problems in the family. K did not learn the same behaviour guidelines at home as the other children in the group. Her behaviour provided opportunities to learn to accept people with different values and behaviour styles to the other group members. The other group members did not always understand her behaviour, but learned to still respect and accept her as a person with also many good qualities. Although she provided learning and growth

opportunities, she also consumed a lot of time, which could be used to focus on the needs of other group members.

3.1.3 Energy levels

Most of the groups started at 14:00, which was just after school. Some children only had time to change into more relaxed clothes and had something to eat for lunch on their way to the therapy session. At times the children had hard days at school or had little sleep during the night before and would really be very low on energy at 14:00 in the afternoon. The researcher usually used the sensory exercises also as an energiser, especially the conscious breathing exercise. The researcher observed that the creative nature of many of the initial activities was energising as well as the social interaction of the group members after the fourth or fifth session, when the children started to know each other well.

The researcher as therapist found that her own energy levels played a vital role in the quality of the session. If the first part of the day was exhausting, the researcher needed proper energisers to be able to give good quality time to the children. It helped a lot to be true to the self and the researcher as therapist was also honest about her own energy levels with the children. The groups always shared how they felt and what their day was like up to the time of the session in the beginning of the sessions. The whole group then had more realistic expectations of one another. Although this was the case, low energy levels many times had a negative influence on the quality and / or possibility of growth during the therapy session.

3.1.4 The process or the researcher as therapist

The researcher as therapist worked within her own process and cultural field. The researcher's process is mainly people oriented, extroverted and also a little precise concerning certain tasks. She likes variety and action and can be a little impatient in situations, which seem too slow or ineffective. She is in general very open and flexible and can handle change with ease, but is then also a forgetful, unstructured and indecisive. The researcher as therapist therefore had to work hard on organisational and systematic skills to incorporate the children with more systematic processes. The researcher's flexibility contributed positively to her ability to go in confluence with the group and be led by their needs. The researcher also wanted to apply all the prepared activities for each session to create the most valuable learning experience

possible for the children. In attempting to do this, the researcher's rushed process actually inhibited proper growth and led to more ineffectiveness than when she would focus on the needs of the moment.

3.1.5 Learning problems

Some children had difficulties with reading and writing, which made activities incorporating reading and / or writing nearly impossible. The researcher as therapist attempted to provide a safe emotional climate in which children could write and spell in any way they can without critique. It was communicated that handwriting and spelling were not the important issues here. Although confrontation with their learning difficulties is not very good for their self-images, it was important that the children deal with these feelings in the safe atmosphere of the therapy room. It was used as experiential learning – using the coping with a learning problem as an experiment in the accepting environment provided. Although this situation also provided an opportunity to learn through experience, it had a negative influence on the learning opportunities provided by some exercises as well as the self-images of the children.

3.1.6 Not all intentions came to life

The researcher as therapist planned a few very valuable activities to do on a continuous base. The researcher's process again played a vital role here in neglecting routine like activities. The researcher prefers new and different tasks each week. This programme had to allow for a certain type of structure and systematic work to also relate to children with more structured processes and learning styles.

The researcher therefore neglected important activities only because they were routine tasks. Examples of these are the discussion of the life books at the beginning of each session as well as the completion of the time line for the programme. The latter gave an overview of the whole programme, so children would know what to expect. Because these activities were neglected, the children did not always have a clear vision of where they were in the programme and what to expect further. Except for the negligence of certain activities, the researcher also neglected activities related to children with more structured, systematic and logical processes.

The researcher found some unexpected outcomes of this research study, except for those, which were planned for in the aim, objectives and research question. These outcomes and possible explanations for these are discussed in the following section.

3.2 A possible explanation for unexpected outcomes

The researcher anticipated certain outcomes from the research study based on the literature study done. Although the latter was the case, there was also some unexpected outcomes, which the researcher did not account for initially. The following paragraphs is a discussion on these unexpected outcomes:

3.2.1 Relation between simultaneous processes (right hemisphere skills) and planning processes (emotional intelligence)

There was a tendency to less emotional intelligence growth when children had poor scores on simultaneous processes during the pre-test. Simultaneous processes relate to understanding and insight. (Naglieri & Das, 1997b:4,21-23,109) The researcher reasons that because these cognitive processes are weak, it makes self-awareness and insight in the role of emotions as well as other skills difficult to comprehend and to own. In such cases, other cognitive processes, like weak simultaneous skills, inhibited emotional growth.

The positive relation between right-hemisphere functioning and frontal lobe functioning and emotional intelligence was also found in literature. Goldberg (2001:41) states, “The right frontal lobe is wider than, and protrudes over, the left frontal lobe”. It thus seems that the right-hemisphere in the frontal lobes is structurally stronger than the left. Goldberg (2001:41) also states that a “general belief in the relationship between structure and function” exists. It thus seems as if a structural and functional relationship exists between right-hemisphere functioning and frontal lobe functioning. Furthermore Gamon and Bragdon (2003:16-17) state that most people use the right hemisphere for the perception of emotion. They state that the right hemisphere processes the more negative feelings of disgust, anger, contempt and fear. It therefore seems to the researcher that a relation between right hemisphere function and comprehension of emotion does exist. This might be the reason why the children

with weak right-hemisphere functioning experienced less growth on emotional intelligence skills.

3.2.2 Experiments related to simultaneous processes (right-hemisphere skills)

It was reasoned in the literature study (Chapter 4, 3.1.1 Experiments) that experimenting is a very important technique in Gestalt play therapy. It was also stated that experimenting is a right hemisphere process, because it has an inventive character. It is therefore important to note that children whose right hemisphere processes were weak did not experience significant improvement of frontal lobe functioning. The latter was not the case only because the right hemisphere processes are related to insight. The type of techniques, which seemed important in the research study, also attributed to poor improvement of frontal lobe functioning.

This study was focused on using experiments, which are right hemisphere techniques. The children with weaker right hemisphere functioning could therefore also not utilise the most important techniques effectively. The part of their brains, which were supposed to use these techniques are their weaker parts and would therefore not utilise these techniques as effectively as expected. The techniques, which should have made the biggest difference in their emotional intelligence growth could not be utilised effectively by their brains. Children with weaker simultaneous or right hemisphere processes could therefore not experience effective improvement of frontal lobe functioning or emotional intelligence skills. The researcher also notes that experiments are not only focused on the right hemisphere. It was also stated in Chapter 4, 3.1.1.1 Discussion and definition, that experiments also stimulate the frontal lobes directly, because it is related to effective problem solving, which is a frontal lobe skill. Experiments are thus not totally ineffective for children with poor right hemisphere functioning. It is not as effective as for those whose right hemisphere processes are stronger.

3.2.3 The importance of the child as a whole

The researcher should therefore consider the child as a whole to determine why emotional growth does not take place. It might thus be that other variables, which were not considered in this research study, contributed to either the success or the failure of the intervention programme. The researcher attempted to use Gestalt play therapy techniques in an effective way to enhance the children's emotional

intelligence. This will remain the case, although other factors might also have an influence. A holistic view of the person is part of Gestalt theory as well as emotional intelligence theory. All the different aspects of the person as a whole are interrelated and have an influence on each other. The researcher therefore reasons that if emotional intelligence is enhanced with Gestalt play therapy techniques, it will also have a positive influence on other systems, which possibly inhibit emotional intelligence. The growth that takes place might be slower or less than expected, but it might still occur. The researcher trusts in the human being's self-regulating process. A small change in one system might lead to a chain reaction in many other systems, as all systems are influencing each other. The therapist using this intervention programme therefore only needs to ignite one small fire of self-awareness and the paradoxical theory of change will be effective. The person will start to heal himself if he gets aware of the disturbances of his balance. If the simultaneous processes are weak and lead to difficulties with self-awareness and insight, the person can still enhance his emotional intelligence using processes that do not require that much insight and / or awareness. The researcher reasons that if his self-image can grow stronger, he might be able to utilise this weaker part of his brain more effectively. In such a way a positive cyclic effect will start.

3.2.4 Conclusion on unexpected outcomes

The outcomes of this research study therefore did not only include whether the aim of the research study was reached and whether the research question could be answered. It also included other factors, which contributed to the outcomes of the study. It is important though to realise that the human being functions as a whole. All systems are interrelated. The researcher is of the opinion that one small change in one of the systems can have a ripple effect to enhance the effect of the change.

It seems to the researcher as if there is a very definite relation between Gestalt therapy and creative thinking (compare Mackewn, 2004:131; Zinker:1977). Mackewn (2004:131) stated: "Another unique dimension of Gestalt counselling and therapy is its fresh creative approach". Creativity is also very closely linked to right hemisphere processes (compare Brooke, [sa]:2; Fourie, 1998:19). This is also related to the discussion of the last part of the outcomes above. Gestalt therapy as a therapeutic orientation is focused on right-hemisphere or simultaneous processes. A child with

weaker simultaneous processes will thus not benefit as much from a Gestalt therapy programme than one with stronger simultaneous processes. It is thus necessary that a therapist using Gestalt therapy should be aware of the children's mental preferences. He should adapt his techniques or orientation to accommodate both successive (left-hemisphere) as well as simultaneous (right-hemisphere) focused children. This was not the case in the current research study and led to a negative impact on the growth of the group members.

4. CONCLUSION

This chapter focused mainly on the aim and objectives and whether these were answered and reached in this research study.

The objectives were answered and it was indicated how each objective contributed to the final intervention study. These discussions of the outcomes of the objectives built on each other to reach the outcome of the aim of the study. The study could answer to all the objectives and they could all contribute to the final research study. The study reached the aim of identifying Gestalt therapy techniques to enhance the emotional intelligence of primary school children in a culturally sensitive way.

The research question was also stated again and answered on the base of the discussion of the outcomes relating to the aim and objectives.

The outcomes of this study did not only include the success of the developed programme, but also some indicators, which inhibited the maximum effect of the intervention programme on the emotional intelligence of the research group members in a multicultural environment. These indicators and their possible effect were discussed.

The last part of the outcomes was the unexpected outcomes, which were not indicated in the initial list of objectives. This included the observation of factors with a negative effect on emotional intelligence growth and the positive link between good right-hemisphere functioning and better improvement in emotional intelligence and vice versa.

The research findings can therefore be divided into three groups of outcomes namely, the objectives and aim, factors with a negative effect, and unpredicted outcomes of the right-hemisphere – emotional growth link. The outcomes are indicated as follows in Figure 7.7, Outcomes of the research study.

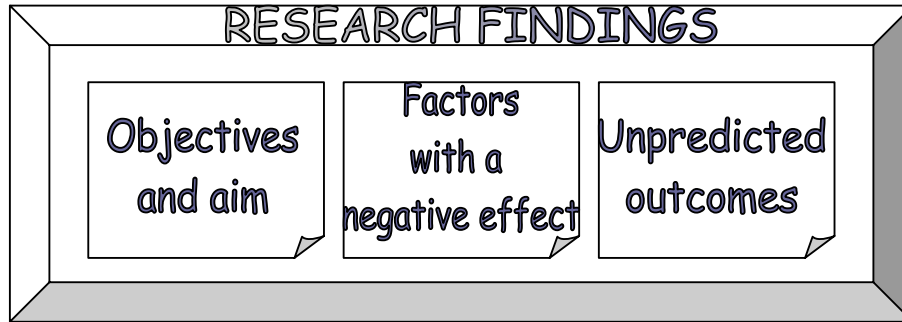


Figure 7.7: Outcomes of the research study

The researcher discussed critique on the research study as well as recommendations for future research in this field in the following final chapter of this report.