THE SELF-CONCEPT AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS OF STUDENT TEACHERS

by

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Lastly I thank God for giving me strength and courage.
I declare that THE SELF-CONCEPT AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS OF STUDENT TEACHERS is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

L.L. Mampa  

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SUMMARY

The aim of the research was to determine the relationship between the self-concept of student teachers and their interpersonal relationships. A literature survey focused on these two variables. This was followed by an empirical investigation involving 300 students. Findings include: A significant, positive correlation was found between self-concept and interpersonal relationships for males and females and for all three year groups involved. Significant, positive correlations were also found between: cognitive self-concept and relationships with lecturers; self-concepts of male students and relationships with parents; self-concepts of female students and relationships with lecturers. For all three year groups the relationships with lecturers contributed most to their self-concepts. For males, the emotional self-concept; and for females, the cognitive self-concept contributed significantly towards their interpersonal relationships. For first- and second-year students, the social self-concept contributed most towards their interpersonal relationships; while for third-year students, the cognitive self-concept contributed significantly towards interpersonal relationships.

Key-words:

self-concept
cognitive self-concept
social self-concept
emotional self-concept
moral self-concept
physical self-concept
interpersonal relationships
questionnaires
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION

1.1 AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM

Nine years experience as a lecturer at a college of education in Bophuthatswana has brought the researcher closer to the student teachers and enabled her to observe their behaviour patterns, personalities and attitudes. These concepts contribute to the development of positive or negative self-concepts, and affect interpersonal relationships. It was of interest to observe whether students had positive or negative self-concepts, whether there were any observable constraints in the development of positive self-concepts and interpersonal relationships, whether students made any independent efforts to enhance their self-concepts, and if not, what restrained them from doing this.

In this regard this study addresses the issue of the development of the self-concept and interpersonal relationships of student teachers during an important segment of their life course - late adolescence. Furthermore, this study seeks to distinguish between several dimensions of the self-concept and interpersonal relationships of student teachers and how these are related.

Many researchers have noted that adolescence is a stage in an individual's life particularly characterised by increased and often acute self-consciousness. This is due to rapid physical changes, peer involvement and the transition from family to adult worlds, and is often associated with self-dissatisfaction. The main psychological task for individuals is the crystallisation of their self-concept and its expansion in new directions, as well as the establishment of long-lasting interpersonal relationships with significant others (Gecas 1986: 272).
1.2 ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

1.2.1 Historical background of education in Bophuthatswana

The Republic of Bophuthatswana gained independence from the Republic of South Africa in 1977. In 1978 the Department of Education in Bophuthatswana established a commission of enquiry into education in Bophuthatswana. It became known as Bophuthatswana National Education Commission. The tasks of this commission were to

- study, investigate and evaluate the system of education in Bophuthatswana;
- report its findings and recommend measures to be taken to improve the system;
- investigate the medium of instruction used in schools and institutions in Bophuthatswana and report its findings and recommendations in connection therewith;
- study the Bophuthatswana Education Act no. 9 of 1973 as amended in order to determine shortcomings and to suggest improvements (Lekhela 1987: 55).

Proposals were made by the commission for a new structuring of education, amended curricula and revised syllabuses. "The whole education machinery in Bophuthatswana does not exist for its own purposes, but to enable the teacher to do an active and creative contact with children in the teaching-learning-situation" (Lekhela 1987: 57).

Throughout its investigation the commission realised that "whatever the aspect of education it might be discussing at any particular juncture, it has always come back to the teacher" (Lekhela 1987: 56). Thus the commission recognised that the character, personality and professional competency of teachers, their commitment to the task of education and their interpersonal relationships are of vital importance to enhancing their success as teachers.
It was the findings of this commission, in addition to personal observations, that influenced the choice of the topic: *What is the relationship between self-concept and interpersonal relationships of student teachers?* According to a preliminary literature study, these two aspects seem to be the main personality traits that could inspire and assist teachers to realise the goals of competency, commitment, dedication and understanding in their task as a teacher.

Another important aspect of the education in Bophuthatswana is the academic background, professional training and further educational development of teachers during their teaching career. The type of teacher that is produced at the colleges of education, (particularly for secondary schools), is often in a vulnerable position. These teachers are often under-equipped for their task, usually because they are forced to teach beyond the level for which they were trained, both academically and professionally. This may be damaging to their self-concepts because they lack confidence in their abilities.

If the self-concepts of student teachers could be enhanced, overcoming lack of confidence in their abilities may be improved and they may be less scared to tackle challenges in their teaching careers. Their interpersonal relationships may also improve. In order to do this, it is necessary to establish the nature of the relationship between the self-concept and interpersonal relationships of student teachers.

The problem may be aggravated by the fact that contemporary young people are both socially and politically aware. They are exposed to the influences of the mass media and happenings in their townships. Hence they are very radical as far as established norms and values are concerned. This may influence their interpersonal relationships.

It is consequently important that the student teacher in Bophuthatswana be helped to develop a personality that includes a positive self-concept. This may enable the student to eventually, as a teacher, meet the challenges of teaching and to maintain healthy interpersonal relationships with pupils, parents and colleagues.
Most of the commission's recommendations were implemented and the developments in teacher training occurred faster than anticipated by the commission. "Training schools were developed into Colleges of Education, administered by the department of education and are professionally affiliated to the University of Bophuthatswana (UNIBO)" (Lekhela 1987: 59).

A three-year post-standard ten diploma in education (early-learning, primary and secondary) was introduced into the colleges of education. New curricula, designed by the institute of education at UNIBO, have been developed in all subjects. This institute of education was established to facilitate direct linkage of colleges to the University of Bophuthatswana. The task of colleges is now to help student teachers cope with the academic as well as the professional demands put upon them by the new curricula.

In light of this, students should be given every opportunity to develop their awareness of the teacher's role and of their own abilities in this regard. In other words, a positive self-concept should be encouraged. We should produce teachers of quality, teachers with patience, initiative, enthusiasm, ability and determination to work with people.

If students have positive self-concepts, they should be able to positively evaluate their knowledge of the curriculum content and their competence with regard to their studies and to teaching.

In spite of various programmes which have been established for teacher education in Bophuthatswana, there seems to be a lack of programmes to enhance the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers.

In order to understand why the self-concept is important, the influence of the self-concept on the teacher will be briefly described. This is discussed very shortly since it is only a preliminary literature study, but is necessary in order to justify the importance of studying the self-concept and interpersonal relationships of student teachers.
1.2.2 The influence of self-concept on the teacher

Once the self-concept of the student teacher is established in a positive manner, it could influence interpersonal relationships and give individuals "the opportunity to succeed in school, in sports, in friendships and all interpersonal relationships" (Gardner 1980: 522).

When the self-concept is positive, performance is invariably be enhanced. The naturally following assumption is that positive self-concepts enable student teachers to be competent in their professions. This, however, does not imply that student teachers must have unrealistically positive professional self-concepts. Student teachers should be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills for competence and should also believe in their own ability to reach their aspirations independently.

Burns (1982: 6) claims that "having a positive self-concept seems to depend, according to many writers ... on possessing well-grounded feelings of acceptance, competence and worth". Consequently student teachers need to evaluate themselves as competent - a necessary element for a positive self-concept. Student teachers also need to learn how to work with principals, inspectors, parents and children. With a positive self-concept and healthy interpersonal relationships, a student teacher could prove to be capable at all times and in all situations.

Burns (1982: 296) remarks that the self-concept "plays a far more significant part in academic achievement than factors such as intelligence, social class and parental care." He also quotes several researchers whose findings confirm that the self-concept both influences and is dependent on the performance of both students and teachers (Burns 1982: 207).

Burns further maintains that psychologists and educationists are becoming more aware of the fact that individuals' self-concept, or their attitudes to and perception of themselves, are intimately related to how they learn and behave. Evidence suggests that low performance in schoolwork, poor motivation and academic disengagement, all
characteristic of the underachievers, are due in part to negative self-concepts and perceptions (Burns 1982: 5). He reiterates that many students do not achieve well, not because of low intelligence, but because of low or negative self-concepts. In other words, these students have come to perceive themselves as unable to achieve academically. Success in school, work or life appears to depend equally on how people feel about qualities and attributes they possess as on those qualities themselves (Burns 1982: 6).

Consequently, a positive self-concept seems essential for personal happiness, adjustment and effective functioning as a teacher (Burns 1982: 6). However, in several informal interviews with the researcher, quite a number of interviewees expressed anxiety in cases where they felt lonely or where lecturers were negligent and did not do enough to help or guide them.

The self-concept is not stable. (This aspect is discussed in section 2.4.2.) It may change as we interact with other people and gain experience in new situations. Our self-concepts change because of new information we acquire about ourselves. This information can come from the way we perceive our own behaviour as well as from the evaluations of other people. The implication here is that student teachers may be helped to develop a good self-concept in order to achieve their goals in the classroom. However, although much has been written about the importance of personality and attitudes in teaching, there is still a lack of literature exploring ways of enhancing the self-concept and inner locus of control.

1.2.3 Factors influencing the self-concept of the student teacher

A preliminary literature study reveals that the exposure to different subjects offered at college leads student teachers to make discoveries about their academic ability and the demands of subjects. This puts pressure on them to be committed and to study hard. These aspects can influence their self-concept, as do students' performances in tests, assignments, examinations, as well as their evaluation of their interpersonal relationships.
Such positive outcomes tend to result in positive self-concepts. Negative self-concepts tend to follow repeated unsuccessful outcomes (Gecas & Schwalbe 1983: 77).

A study of the various factors influencing the physical, cognitive, moral-religious and social self-concept is described in chapter two.

1.2.4 The self-concept and interpersonal relationships

Research has shown that students at college have a much more sophisticated view of what is involved in a sense of self than younger children have. (Harter in Conger 1988: 59). The self-concepts of younger children tend to centre on concrete characteristics, whereas those of adolescents are likely to be more abstract and to consider, amongst others, interpersonal relationships.

Self-conceptions also become more differentiated and better organised during adolescence (Chandler et al in Conger 1988: 59). Thus adolescents describe themselves in terms of their beliefs and personality characteristics, which in turn influences interpersonal relationships (Montemayor & Eisen 1977: 318).

Research indicates that the family also plays a prominent role in the development of the self-concept and in the establishment of interpersonal relationships. (This aspect is discussed in more detail in section 2.5.5.3.) This is because an adolescent's freedom to explore a variety of possibilities in forming an individual self-concept is significantly influenced by relationships within the family (Cooper, Grontevant & Condon in Conger 1988: 60).

One study of family interactions found that adolescents who scored high on a measure of self-concept were more likely to come from families in which self-assertion and freedom to disagree were encouraged. This was also related to 'connectedness' to the family, openness or responsiveness to the views of others, and sensitivity and respect for the ideas of others (Cooper, Grontevant & Condon 1983: 54). These theorists further
maintain that adolescent student teachers who score lower in self-concept exploration are more likely to come from families in which individuality is not encouraged and mutual support and agreement are emphasised (Cooper et al 1983: 55). One low-scoring woman, referring to her efforts to choose a career, said: "I am having a hard time deciding what to do. It would be easier if they would tell me what to do, but of course I do not want that" (Cooper et al 1983: 55).

The findings of such studies are consistent with Erikson's view that people with positive self-concepts perceive themselves as separate, distinct individuals. These findings also support the idea that openness and responsiveness to the views of others are important, because a positive self-concept requires the consideration, selection and interpretation of possible sources of information about the self and others (Cooper et al 1983: 53).

The development of the self-concept seems to be a complex phenomenon. Patterns of self-concept formation may vary widely as a result of influences that range from the parent-child relationship to cultural pressures and the rate of social change (Archer & Waterman in Mussen, Conger, Kagan & Huston 1990: 96).

Student teachers need to be accepted by other student teachers: "... the greater your acceptance of other people, the more you will confirm their personal self-concept. Accepting yourself and accepting others make it easier to maintain and deepen relationships" (Johnson 1986: 173). This theorist proposes that students make an effort to assist others to build their self-concepts through expressing acceptance of them and reinforcing interpersonal skills (Johnson 1986: 173). This acceptance should be communicated in a reciprocal fashion as the mutual communication of acceptance leads to feelings of psychological safety and a belief that no matter what you do or what you disclose about yourself, or whether you have a low or a high self-concept, others in the relationship will react in an accepting, non-judgmental way (Johnson 1986: 182).

At college level students' self-concepts are enhanced when they make independent decisions and take initiative to study and do research independently. Their self-concept
is also enhanced when they have cordial and long lasting interpersonal relationships with others. This statement is supported by Johnson (1986: 183) when he says there is an almost universal recognition that a degree of warmth in interpersonal relationships is absolutely essential for psychological growth.

Interpersonal skills for building and maintaining fulfilling relationships do not appear magically when a person reaches a certain age. They are learned throughout a person's life and are based on the person's history on interpersonal interactions (Johnson 1986: 188).

Consequently, the way in which student teachers behave is very important in determining their interpersonal relationships. It also measures their self-awareness in relationships with others. This self-awareness depends largely on receiving feedback from the individuals with whom they interact. Even the quality of feedback they are likely to get from these individuals depends in part on how much they disclose about themselves.

The interpersonal relationships of student teachers are examined in depth in chapter three.

1.2.5 Summary

The researcher believes that the aforementioned arguments are also relevant to students at the college of education where she teaches. As children experience the pain of failure and the joy of success long before they reach school stage, they already have a low or a high academic self-concept by the time they reach college level (Burns 1982: 202). Many adolescent student teachers have negative self-concepts with regard to their abilities. Apart from this (or because of this), many student teachers also experience difficulty in their interpersonal relationships. As these two aspects may negatively influence their self-actualisation as teachers, the problem needs to be addressed. In doing so, the relationship between the students' self-concepts and their interpersonal
relationships should be analysed and described, and recommendations for the enhancement of these self-concepts and interpersonal relationships made. This study attempts to achieve these goals.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the previous sections the researcher explained how she became aware of the fact that student teachers have low self-concepts and struggle with their interpersonal relationships. This awareness emerged by means of observations.

After an analysis of the problem by means of a preliminary literature study, it soon became clear that the relationship between the self-concept of student teachers and their interpersonal relationships needs to be examined. This should enable the researcher to make recommendations on how to aid them to enhance their self-concept and relationships and to actualise themselves as teachers. Therefore the research problem for this study can be formulated as follows:

- What is the relationship between the self-concept of student teachers and their interpersonal relationships?

- What recommendations can be made for enhancing the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of these students?

A literature study and empirical research will be undertaken in order to answer these questions.

1.4 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The first aim of this research is to establish which factors are significantly related to the self-concept and interpersonal relationships of student teachers. In order to fulfil this aim, the following procedure will be adopted:
An extensive literature study of the work of different theorists will be carried out, exploring the different aspects of the self-concept. This will be followed by a literature study of interpersonal relationships during adolescence, and especially late adolescence.

Empirical research will also be conducted. It will be nomothetic in nature and will therefore involve a large group of student teachers with the aim of generalising the results to the student population. Hypotheses will be formulated after an intensive literature study, and will be based on the findings therein. Thereafter data will be collected and analyzed by means of suitable statistical analysis.

The second aim is to come to some conclusion regarding the relationship between different aspects of the self-concept and diverse interpersonal relationships. Recommendations for the enhancement of these self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers will be formulated.

Before commencing with the literature study, it is necessary to define and explain the most important concepts referred to in this dissertation.

1.5 DEFINITION AND EXPLANATION OF IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

1.5.1 Self-concept

According to Vrey (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg 1988: 84), the self-concept refers to the "configuration of convictions concerning oneself and attitudes toward oneself, that are dynamic and of which one is normally aware or may become aware."

Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988: 84) state that the self-concept includes three components:

Self-identity (I am ...)
The self-concept is the core of the personality and the focal point of relationships.

The following are seen as fundamental aspects of the self-concept:

- the self-concept is a psychological construct
- it is formed to understand a particular reality
- it is derived from the body as a concrete object and from presuppositions of the physical and physio-psycho-spiritual self
- differentiation and generalisations are important factors in the self-concept
- it is the combination or an integrated structure of the concept of the self
- it is measured against subjective standards
- the evaluative aspect of the self-concept is known as self-esteem
- it is highly significant for the self
- it affects the entire personality
- self-identity, self-esteem and the personality are facets of the self-concept

The self-concept is an internal concept (image, model or theory) that evolves as people interact with others. The self-concept influences how people act. Actions in turn, change self-concepts (Davidoff 1987: 458).

Furthermore, the self-concept can be described as an organised, consistent pattern of the perceived characteristics of the "I" or "Me". Also included are the values attached to the attributes (Rogers in Davidoff 1987: 459).

Apart from the above, the self-concept can be explained as a multidimensional construct, involving the conscious, cognitive collection of self-presentation (Markus & Wurf 1987: 299).
The self-concept can also be explained through different situation-related self-concepts or representations, such as the actual, ideal and ought-to-be selves (Higgins 1987: 319). The ideal and ought-to-be selves are considered to be possible selves, reflecting how individuals think about their potentials and their future. While the actual self refers to individual's present and actual perceptions of themselves, the ideal and ought-to-be self-concepts present selves which are worthwhile to pursue (Markus & Nurius 1986: 954).

The researcher feels the self-concept to be the sum total of what individuals feel about themselves after evaluating themselves.

The self-concept and how it differs from the self, the identity and the ideal self is explained more fully in section 2.2.

1.5.2 Interpersonal relationships

Interpersonal relationships are concerned with the ability to relate to other people, to have relationships that are based on needs that can be satisfied through interacting with other humans and that require us to seek out relationships with others (Johnson 1984: 14).

According to Johnson (1984: 14), interpersonal relationships are based on the needs that can be satisfied through interacting with other people, needs that require us to seek relationships with others - to belong or to relate in a positive way. In this research interpersonal relationships are seen as the interaction of student teachers with significant others.

The interpersonal relationships of student teachers are discussed in chapter three.
1.5.3 Student teachers

This concept refers to students undergoing training at a college of education. Student teachers involved in the empirical study will also be referred to as "respondents". This study will be carried out with students at a college of education in Bophuthatswana.

Most of the students are late adolescents. As a result, reference in this study is made to either "students" or "adolescents."

The period of late adolescence extends from approximately 18 to 22 years of age. Late adolescence is a period during which individuals prepare themselves for adult responsibilities and roles relating to occupation, marriage and parenthood. The adolescents define their identity, values and goals in respect to these roles.

According to Keniston, young people in this stage "... are neither psychological adolescents nor sociological adults; they fall into a psychological no man's land, a stage of life that lack any clear definition" (Gerdes 1989: 275).

This is confirmed by the statement that, like the school-age child, the late adolescent shuttles back and forth between cultures - that of adults and that of peers. For example, this is characterised by a profound rejection of the values of society or an isolation from other people (Mussen et al 1990: 654).

1.6 PROGRAMME TO BE FOLLOWED

This study comprises the following chapters:

Chapter 2: The self-concept of the student teacher

The second chapter of this study will be devoted to a review of the literature focusing on self-concept development and the self-concept of the student teacher. Research
dealing with the self-concept of adolescents and factors influencing the development of these self-concepts will be reviewed.

A study will also be made of ways that the self-concept of student teachers may be enhanced.

Chapter 3: Interpersonal relationships of student teachers

In this chapter literature focusing on the relationships between student teachers and peers, between student teachers and lecturers, and finally between student teachers and family, will be reviewed. Literature dealing with the enhancement of interpersonal relationships will also be examined.

Chapter 4: The research design

This chapter will start with the formulation of hypotheses derived from the literature study. This will be followed by a description of how the empirical research is to be conducted. This description will include an explanation of the methods of collecting data and how the data will be analysed.

Chapter 5: Results and discussion of the results

In this chapter the results of the empirical research will be presented and discussed.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations

In the sixth and final chapter of this research conclusions on the relationship between self-concept and interpersonal relationships will be made. These will be based on the results of the empirical research as well as on the literature study. Recommendations for enhancing the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers will be given.
Chapter 2

THE SELF-CONCEPT OF THE ADOLESCENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher examines the various aspects of the self-concept. The analysis is based on views propounded by various theorists.

Firstly, the following concepts are analysed: self; identity; ideal self and self-concept during late adolescence. Their development and how they influence the overall self-concept of an adolescent is also shown.

The characteristics of the self-concept during late adolescence are also focused upon. The stability of the self-concept and positive and negative influences on the self-concept are also examined.

Aspects of the self-concept of the late adolescent are studied, including the physical self-concept and aspects of the physical development of an adolescent which enhance the self-concept.

Literature on the cognitive self-concept is reviewed. The focus is on the development of the cognitive self-concept and how it contributes to achievement and growth. Another area of investigation is the development of the moral-religious self-concept, and how it can be enhanced in the late adolescent.

The social self-concept is examined. Several social relationships are explored, such as relationships with the family and the peer group.

In addition, the affective self-concept is discussed. Finally, the focus of this chapter turns to the enhancement of the self-concept.
2.2 ANALYSIS OF THE TERMS SELF, IDENTITY, IDEAL SELF AND SELF-CONCEPT

To be able to distinguish between self, identity, ideal self and self-concept, it is necessary to explain what is meant by each of these. All these concepts are related.

2.2.1 Self

The self is that part of us of which we are consciously aware. It is what we know about ourselves. A person's self is the sum total of all he can call his own. It includes his system of ideas, attitudes, values and commitments. It is his total subjective environment, his distinctive centre of experience and significance, his inner world as distinguished from the outer world of people and objects (Van den Aardweg 1988: 205).

Adolescents have a much more sophisticated view of what a sense of one's self encompasses than younger children do. While the self-descriptions of younger children tend to centre on concrete characteristics, those of adolescents are likely to be more abstract and to include psychological characteristics, interpersonal relationships, self-evaluations, and conflicting feelings (Harter et al in Huston 1990: 618).

Horrocks and Jackson (1972: 7-8) define the self as a process by which the individual derives and constructs self-products which, taken together, represent the individual's interpretation and meaning of the self. In this relationship the individual is the entity, and self is the process that evaluates related mental and behavioural activities.

According to Vrey (1994: 78), the self is the core or origin of the individual's awareness of the different aspects of his personality. Individuals experience themselves as a thinking, feeling, wanting and doing entity with the ability to fulfil various roles as a person. The self can therefore be seen as having many facets.
In conclusion, the self is the means by which individuals are aware of and understand themselves as corporate beings with a past history and a probable or possible future.

2.2.2 Identity

According to Van den Aardweg (1988: 113), identity is knowing who and what one is, and knowing that one is distinguishable from all others. It is a sense of the self. It is concerned with those elements of character or personality that are unique to an individual.

During adolescence the achievement of a sense of identity is crucial in order to lay the foundation for subsequent personality development. The process of identity development begins in early childhood, but becomes a developmental crisis demanding resolution during the period of adolescence and late adolescence if a clear definition of identity is to be achieved (Gerdes 1989: 288). If a clear definition of identity is not achieved, role and identity confusion as well as uncertainty will stand in the way of commitment to adult roles and long-term objectives (Gerdes 1989: 64).

However, the formation of identity does not begin in adolescence. All previously developed capacities, relationships with different people, experiences of tenderness, affection, playfulness, anger, frustration, jealousy, triumph, mastery and joy are the raw materials from which the adolescent weaves an identity (Stone in Huston 1990: 617). Most psychologists agree that, in adolescence, two problems must be confronted and overcome. These are:

(1) achieving a measure of independence or autonomy from one's parents, and
(2) creating an integrated self that harmoniously combines different elements of the personality (Hill 1987: 13).

Apart from the above, Gilligan (1987: 63) says that, in adolescence, cognitive powers of formal operational thought allow adolescents to analyse roles, see inconsistencies and
conflicts in some of the roles, and restructure them to form a new identity. This process sometimes requires abandoning old roles and establishing greater independence from parents and relatives.

Adolescents derive many of their ideas of suitable roles and values from reference groups. Reference groups may consist of individuals who are close to them and whom they see everyday. Sometimes these groups may be broader social groups with whom they share attitudes, ideals, and philosophies - religious, ethnic, nationalistic, generational or interest groups. These serve as sources of identity (Craig 1989: 399). By adolescence, many individuals have come into contact with a variety of reference groups. Groups that the child belonged to during childhood, such as family, the neighbourhood gang or church youth groups are no longer as attractive or fulfilling. Many adolescents have conflicting loyalties between their families, their ethnic group and their peer group (Craig 1989: 399).

According to Erikson (1985: 24), the process of self-defining, called identity formation, is rich and complex. It ensures continuity between the individual's past, present and future. It provides a framework or structure for organising and integrating behaviours in diverse areas of one's life. This inner sense of identity helps to give a direction, a purpose, and a meaning to one's future life.

The search for identity usually peaks in adolescence when young people is able for the first time to think abstractly. They consider not only what they observe in concrete reality, but also other possibilities. They now become increasingly introspective, as they are able to ponder on their own thought processes and wonder how they think and why they think certain thoughts (Gerdes 1989: 87).

Late adolescents are expected to accept more responsibility, since they are regarded as being almost adult and therefore capable of assuming more adult roles. Adolescents question the attitudes and beliefs they adopted through identification with others during childhood, and form a clear picture of their own unique attributes, values, interests and
needs. So they begin to seek answers to the questions "Who am I?" "What am I?" and "What do I want?" (Gerdes 1989: 87).

Craig (1989: 400) asserts that although significant others may exist for individuals at all stages of life, they often have their greatest impact during adolescence, when the teenager is actively seeking models. Thus, adolescents are surrounded by a bewildering variety of roles offered by a multitude of reference groups and significant others. These roles must be integrated into a personal identity and the conflicting ones reconciled or discarded.

During college years, individuals who previously experienced foreclosure or identity diffusion have generally been found to shift to identity achievement (Seifert & Hoffnung 1987: 683). There are indications that differences may exist between the identity formation of females and males, due to their different roles and experiences in society (Gilligan 1982: 85). Erikson's view is that male identity develops in relationship to the world of work, and female identity occurs through intimate relationships with others. Gilligan supports this when he says that women's development of morality, which is an important aspect of identity, focuses not only on rights and rules as it does for men, but also on responsibility and relationships with others (Gilligan 1982: 86).

While adolescence is the last stage of childhood, the adolescent process is complete only when individuals have subordinated their childhood identifications to a new kind of identification, achieved in absorbing sociability and in competitive apprenticeship with and among their age mates (Hudson 1986: 601). These new identifications are no longer characterised by the playfulness of childhood and the experimental zest of youth. Rather, they force the young individual into choices and decision which, with increasing immediacy, lead to commitments "for life". As adolescents become capable of doing more things their self-concept changes and enlarges, and, with educational assistance, an identity unique to the individual emerges (Hudson 1986: 602) and so by late adolescence, the formation of an identity is complete.
Adolescence is a time during which many young people formulate ideas and raise questions concerning their identity. With the acquisition of formal operational thought and a growing ability to think abstractly, many adolescents become involved in exploring who they are, what they value, and what they hope to become (Roscoe, Richard & Kelsey 1987: 393). With regard to this research, it is important for the adolescent to identify with the role of teacher.

2.2.3 Ideal self

Different authors have similar explanations and definitions of the concept "ideal self". Some of them are as follows:

Ideal self is the self-concept an individual would most like to have. In a psychologically healthy person the ideal self provides valuable guidelines for growth and development because it reveals the characteristics and ideals towards which the individual strives towards (Meyer et al 1990: 379).

Gerdes (1989: 80) says one's self-evaluation is closely related to one's ideal self, that is, to the characteristics one would like to possess and the kind of person one would like to be. It serves as an ideal to which the individual aspires and, if realistic in terms of his actual abilities and limitations, provides valuable guidelines for development. The extent to which the individual attains his ideal self will largely determine his self-concept.

Similarly, Hills (1982: 247) says that the ideal self is our image of how we could or should be. In agreement with Hills, Carver and Scheier (1988: 289) say that the ideal self is an image of the kind of person that you want to be when at your best.

Burns (1982: 25) explains the ideal self as a set of interpretations about individuals, when they reveal their most personal wants and aspirations, and is made up partly of what he wishes to do or be and partly what he ought to do or be.
Murray describes the idealised picture of the self as a set of ambitions leading to a goal conceived by the person as himself or herself, as his or her highest hope (Burns 1982: 25).

According to Allport, the ideal self defines one's goals for the future. Every mature personality may be said to travel towards a port of destination, selected in advance, or to several related ports in succession, their ideal always serving to hold the course in view (Allport in Burns 1982: 25).

Similarly Combs and Soper (in Burns 1982: 26) regard the ideal self as the kind of person the individual would like to be or hope to be, the aggregate of those characteristics of self which the person feels are necessary to attain adequacy.

Burns (1982: 47) points out that individuals do not only build up a concept of themselves (for example, what they are like and how they are seen by others) but also form an idea of what they would prefer to be like. For some individuals, the ideal self, sometimes called the ego ideal, is a distant goal, something to be worked towards. It may be modelled on one or several admired persons. Sometimes the ideal self is realistic, sometimes it may be pure fantasy.

Some theorists maintain that there are various forms of ideal selves that may conflict with one's real self. Discrepancies between one's positive or desired selves and one's negative, feared, or possible selves may be experienced as either motivating or distressing (Markus & Nurius 1986: 954).

In conclusion, it can be stated that the ideal self is the image that individuals create for themselves and it represents the way they would like to be. The ideal self should serve as a guideline which guides individuals in what they should do to achieve the results they want. This is important for this study because a great discrepancy between the perceived self and the ideal self may negatively influence the self-concept. On the other
hand, if adolescents see the ideal self as within reach, it can motivate them and positively influence the self-concept.

### 2.2.4 Self-concept

In addition to the analysis given in section 1.5.1, the self-concept can be explained as follows:

In recent years, many researchers have concluded that it is necessary to understand the concept of "the self", however hard it may be to define, in order to understand human development. This is because the self is the locus, or centre, of developmental change across the life course, the "I" that experiences growth and change (Blasie 1983: 190).

One researcher explains the self as "the most fundamental process by which the individual organism comes to terms with the surrounding world, gives meaning to it, and ultimately adjusts to it (Blasi 1983: 190).

On the other hand, Rogers emphasises the importance of the person's subjective experience of himself or herself and its influence on personality, and it is this that makes up the self-concept. He sees individual persons as the central figure in the actualisation of their own potential, with the environment playing only a facilitating or inhibiting role (Meyer & Engler 1985: 281). Furthermore, he maintains that potential is actualised or realised in an atmosphere in which individuals are unconditionally accepted for what they are and feel free to develop without external restrictions.

Rogers further maintains that the purpose of all life is to become "that self which one truly is" (Meyer et al 1985: 376). Unlike animals, people have the ability to be aware of their experiences and to evaluate them. Each person, therefore, develops a specific view of himself or herself, which Rogers calls the self-concept (Meyer et al 1985: 377). He further says the tendency to actualise potential and the self-concept are both central to human functioning.
Rogers further defines the self-concept as "the organised consistent conceptual 'gestalt' composed of perceptions of the characteristics of the 'I' or 'me' and the perceptions of the relationships of the 'I' or 'me' to others and to various aspects of life, together with the clues attached to these perceptions" (Rogers & Engler 1985: 281). Therefore, the self-concept refers to the "picture" which people have of themselves and the value they attach to themselves, how they see themselves, what their characteristics are, how they judge themselves in the areas of appearance, ability, talents, motives, goals, ideals and social interactions and relationships.

In contrast, Gerdes (1988: 63) stipulates that the self-concept is socially determined by the way in which individuals and their behaviour are evaluated by others. At the same time she agrees with Rogers in his belief that congruence between individuals' self-concept and their real potential will develop only if they are allowed the freedom to be their real self, for example, if the children's parents accept them unconditionally, as they really are. Once accepted by others, one can accept oneself and develop a sense of self-worth, which according to Rogers, is of the utmost importance for psychological well-being and contentment.

Burns adopts a more holistic approach to the self-concept. He says that the self-concept is a composite image of what we think we are, what we think we can achieve, what we think others think of us and what we would like to be (Gerdes 1988: 77).

Engler (1989: 280) adds to this by stating that the self-concept frequently includes values that are taken over from other people rather than from the actual experiences of the organism. This can be illustrated in the example of a young boy who quickly learns that his parents withdraw their affection when he hits his baby brother. Even though hitting his brother is a satisfying act, the boy forfeits this satisfaction in order to support a conception of himself as lovable to his parents (Engler 1989: 281).

Engler further states that values may become divorced from the organisms actual experiences through introjection. When children deny or distort the symbolisation of
their experiences, they are no longer aware of them. They begin to experience the attitudes of others, such as their parents, as if these were the experiences of their own organism. Therefore, the "self" that one forms may be at variance with the real experience of one's organism (Engler 1989: 281).

In contrast to Engler, Rogers does not believe that the self-concept must be formed on the basis of denial and distortion. He believes children evaluate the experiences of their organism as positive or negative. If parents are able to accept their children and their feeling of satisfaction, and also accept their own feelings that certain actions are inappropriate, they can help their children to curb actions without threatening the integrity of the child's self-concept (Gerdes 1988: 64).

According to Markus and Nurius (1986: 954) the self-concept consists not only of various identities that individuals currently possess, but of selves that we would like to be, or that we imagine we might be. These "potential selves" can include ideals that we would like to attain, and standards that we feel we should meet, sometimes called the "ought self". This can originate from our own thoughts or from the messages of others (Deaux & Wrightsman, in Markus & Nurius 1986: 954).

The content of a specific self-concept depends very much on one's particular experiences and characteristics. Whether one is male or female, for example, is inevitably part of that person's self-concept (Deaux & Wrightsman 1988: 67).

Herman, Zanna, Higgins and Jones (1984) state that race and gender are likely to be salient elements of one's self-concept because they usually are the most visible of one's attributes. People may shape their behaviour toward us in accordance with their beliefs about people of our race and sex. In fact, any visible characteristic is likely to influence other people's views of us and our views of ourselves as well. Thus height, weight and physical appearance will probably be part of our self-concept.
Contrary to this, Felson and Reed (1986: 103) say that self-concept is influenced by the self appraisal of friends. Thus, if we associate with people who tend to stress athletics and card games those dimensions are likely to find their way into our own self-concepts. Therefore, the self can roughly be interpreted as the more or less objective awareness of one's needs, interests, attitudes and overt behaviour at any age, in relation to one's physical and social environment. Continuing interaction between physical and social awareness result in a developing consciousness of the self in the world of selves.

In conclusion, the self-concept can be seen as an attempt to explain ourselves to ourselves. We thus build a scheme that organises our impressions, feelings and attitudes about ourselves. However, this model or scheme is not permanent, unified or unchanging. As in the words of Woolfolk (1990: 100) "our self-perceptions vary from situation to situation and from one phase of our lives to another". Therefore, the self-concept can be changed and enhanced by shunting aside all forms of negative influences, for example, current or past social influences that inhibit the development of a positive self-concept.

Consequently, for this dissertation, the self-concept is the total picture that the students have of themselves, how they see themselves, what their characteristics are, how they judge themselves in appearance, ability, talents, attitudes, feelings, motives, goals and ideals, as well as values communicated by other people and own experiences. It is also be influenced by what they would like to be, and by their race and gender.

2.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SELF-CONCEPT

How does the self-concept (of student teachers) develop? In answering this question the following theories should be taken into account.

According to Rogers (Jones 1992: 6), four of the primary propositions of personality provide the foundation for theory relating to the development of the self-concept:
(1) The self-concept may incorporate the values of others.
(2) The self-concept is a result of a person's interaction with the environment.
(3) The self-concept strives for consistency.
(4) The self-concept changes as a result of maturation and learning.

Battle (Jones 1992: 6) maintains that a person is not born with a self-concept, but forms one as a result of interaction with the environment. In this way, the self-concept can be described as a picture that individuals form of themselves from their interaction with experiences in their environment.

In a similar vein, Videbeck (in Jones 1992: 6) maintains that the self-concept may incorporate the values of others, with the evaluative reactions of others playing a significant role in the learning process. Gergen (in Battle, 1928) agrees with Videbeck in asserting that the self-concept may be moulded not only by direct labelling from others, but also by self-labelling. In this regard, self-concept suggests more than a picture of one's self, but includes the individual's evaluation of that picture as good or bad.

The self-concept takes shape as individuals develop and interact with significant others. This occurs when children learn about their environment and themselves (Battle, 1982: 13). Specific self-perceptions depend on the circumstances of the social role which changes as the personality and social requirements evolve throughout the lifespan (Gergen 1977: 141).

There is a distinction between the self as subject or agent and the self as object of the person's own knowledge and evaluation. The most immediate sense in which we experience the self is as an active agent, an executor, and a doer (Symonds in Rosenberg 1979: 6). These authors note that it has long been recognised that one of the distinctive characteristics of individuals are their ability to serve simultaneously as both subject and object.
Battle (1982: 26) states that the self-concept has traditionally been regarded as a "single pervasive entity" that included the whole of the personality. Over the past few decades, researchers have typically approached self-concept investigation from that point of view. Battle further says that people as people mature, they learn to use an evaluative component to assess their own performance in actions and behaviours, in various situations and in relation to peers, parents and academic performance, and in accordance to an 'ideal' which is dictated by the superego (Battle 1982: 25). It is in this way that the self-concept develops.

According to Lerner and Shea (1982: 131), the development of the self-concept begins in infancy and continues throughout one's lifetime. It constantly undergoes modification in response to the environment - in this study, also the environment being the teachers' training college.

Jones (1988: 6) supports this statement in stating that by the time children are six months old, they have begun to give evidence of having formed some more or less definite concepts about themselves. These self-concepts or the awareness of self-characteristics are predicated upon the interaction of factors including the following:

(1) athletic skill
(2) personal physical attractiveness
(3) social attractiveness
(4) special aptitudes
(5) intelligence
(6) academic performance
(7) peer acceptance
(8) moral code of leadership qualities

(Biehler & Hudson 1986: 78).

Hendrick (1991: 224) says that it is during childhood that individuals appear to gain their basic sense of who they are and what their place is in the world. This occurs
partly through the process of identifying with admired others and by behaving as much like them as possible. They do this through conforming to the expectations of others to obtain their support and approval. The support and approval that they get from significant others contribute to children's ideas of what it means to be a member of a particular ethnic group, what it means to be a boy or a girl and what they can look forward to becoming when they grow up (Hendrick 1991: 224).

Apart from that, teachers and parents must realise that, in addition to these basic processes of socialisation, many other factors contribute to children's and students' developing self-concepts. These include many elements over which teachers and parents have little control (Brim & Kagan 1980: 119). Brim and Kagan (1980: 119) agrees by defining what they call "the natural setting of developing children". This includes the type of families, the type of communities, the friendship group, the characteristics of the school, contact with the adult world and similar environmental factors.

Brim & Kagan (1980: 120) adds that this knowledge is important, not only because it helps pinpoint influences, but also because it reminds us that we must not underestimate the significance of slums, television, the neighbourhood children, family size, an urban or rural setting, overcrowding, climate, and so forth, on the development of individuals (in this case students) and their self-concepts.

However, Werner (1984: 69) points out that we must not underestimate the positive effect home and school can have on the way young children see themselves. Hendrick agrees with Werner in saying that if we define the self-concept as being children's gradually developing idea of who they are, we can say that the self-concept is developing when they feel themselves to be a valuable, worthwhile person (Hendrick 1991: 225).

In addition, many teachers think of self-concept as being something they bestow on children by praising them or making them feel important. Although it is true that merited praise and recognition are valuable for enhancing the self-concept over a period of time, children should not remain dependent on constant barrage of "you're wonderful"
in order to feel good about themselves. Instead they should be provided with sources of a positive self-concept that come from within themselves whenever possible (Hendrick 1991: 225).

Although Jones (1988: 6) sees signs of a developing self-concept at six months, Gerdes sees the first signs of a budding individual self-concept at the age of about one year, when infants begin to recognise themselves in a mirror. About a year later children begin to refer to themselves using their name or pronouns such as "I", "me" or "mine". This development indicates that children see themselves as being separate and different from others, whom they call "you" (Gerdes 1989: 86).

However, an individual's self-concept is never fully formed in childhood, because although children see themselves as separate and as differing in various respects from other people, the development of their self-concept at this stage depends mostly on their unconscious identification with others. This means that they tend to imitate and incorporate into their personality the beliefs, attitudes, values and personal characteristics of those who play a significant role in their life (Gerdes 1989: 87).

The initial development of the self-concept depends on children's awareness of being separate individuals who resemble, but also differ, from others. In adolescence and adulthood, however, their self-concept involves the image of their attributes, strengths and weaknesses; and it is this assessment that causes perceptions and behaviours to correspond with this image (Gerdes 1989: 88).

In summary then, the self-concept is developed as a result of a person's interaction with the environment, including the environment at college. It grows or takes shape as individuals develop and interact with significant others. It also grows with maturation and learning. No one is born with a self-concept, but forms one as a result of experience within the environment. However, because self-conceptions are learned, the self-concept may incorporate the values of others.
The evaluative reactions of others play a significant role in the development of one's self-concept. This is indicated by Gergen's statement that the self-concept may be moulded not only by direct communication from others but also by observation for self-labelling. Battle agrees, stating that as people mature they learn to use this evaluative component to evaluate their performance. This includes actions and behaviours in various situations and in relation to peers and parents. It also includes academic performance, and in accordance to an "ideal" which is directed by the superego. Consequently the self-concept may be fairly resistant to change.

In contrast, Montemayor and Eisen investigated self-concept development from childhood to adolescence, using a cognitive perspective and provide similar evidence of change. They concluded that young children primarily conceive of and describe themselves in terms of their physical appearance and possessions. Adolescents, on the other hand, conceive of themselves in more psychological and interpersonal terms - a reflection of adolescents' greater use of various constructs to describe themselves (Burns 1982: 46).

What is important for this study is that the self-concept develops over many years. This means that the self-concept of the late adolescent is influenced by various factors between the ages of 18 to 22 years. Some authors see the self-concept of the adolescent as fairly stable, but others feel that it may still change in interaction with the environment. This is very important for this study, which is concerned with the relationship between self-concept and interpersonal relationships and hopes to make recommendations for the enhancement of the self-concept.
2.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SELF-CONCEPT DURING LATE ADOLESCENCE

2.4.1 General characteristics of the self-concept

Contradictions and conflict begin to decline in late adolescence. The capacity to coordinate, resolve and normalise seemingly contradictory attributes emerges, reducing the experience of conflict within one's self-concept (Harter & Monsour 1992: 251). There is considerable evidence to support this statement in that during late adolescence the self-concept becomes more differentiated (Damon et al in Harter & Monsour 1992: 257). In addition, during this stage the self-concept becomes characterised by differentiation of various selves, and manifests itself in role-specific self-descriptions, such as the self with parents, friends and romantic others and the self in the classroom (Harter & Monsour 1992: 251). For example, these self-concept descriptions include being both talkative and shy in romantic relationships; caring and insensitive with friends; quiet and talkative in school (Harter & Monsour 1992: 225).

Hill and Steinberg (1990: 255) maintain that the self-concepts of most adolescents are not overwhelmingly negative, nor do most engage in major conflict with their parents on larger issues and values.

Burns (1982: 42) states that self-concept development is not an additive process. Adolescents do not simply add more complex and abstract ideas about themselves to their earlier, childish concrete conceptions. Compared to children, adolescents see themselves quite differently. Earlier notions either drop out or are integrated into a more complex picture. The preadolescent's self-concept seems rather shallow and undifferentiated; adolescents, however, describe themselves in terms of their beliefs and personality characteristics. These are qualities which are more essential and intrinsic to the self, and produce a picture of the self that is sharp and unique (Burns 1982: 41).
In addition, adolescence brings further changes in the contents of self-description and an increased emphasis on beliefs, values, attitudes and relations with others. These presumably reflect adolescents' attempts to understand themselves and achieve a stable, enduring sense of self which incorporates basic values as part of the characteristics of the self-concept (Burns 1982: 46).

Oppenheimer (1990: 99) says self-concept during late adolescence includes all the characteristics which individuals bring in connection with themselves when answering the question "What am I like?". In answer to this question a list of contrasting characteristics can be compiled. This list would include characteristics such as

(1) appearance,
(2) cognitive abilities,
(3) interests and ambitions,
(4) personality and attitudes towards others.

In summary, the following points are pertinent to this study:

(1) The overall self-concept is complex and consists of several smaller concepts.
(2) The self-concept of every person is unique.
(3) The self-concept is the core of the self.
(4) The self-concept is an organised configuration of conceptions.
(5) The self-concept is dynamic and develops cognitively and affectively as a result of the person's life experiences (Raath & Jacobs 1993:15).

The question can now be posed: how stable is the self-concept? The next section records the attempt to answer this question.
2.4.2 Stability of the self-concept

As this research focuses on the relationship between self-concept and interpersonal relationships, and hopes to make recommendations for the enhancement of the self-concept, the question of the stability of the adolescent's self-concept is a very important one.

Rosenberg (1986: 85) reports on a number of studies which reveal the self-concept to be barometric or volatile during adolescence. He observes the following:

(1) During adolescence there is tremendous concern with the impression that one is making on others, and with what others think of oneself. Given that adolescents depend so heavily on what others think, the difficulty of dividing their impressions leads to ambiguity about others' attitudes towards the self. This in turn accentuates one's uncertainty about what one is really like.

(2) Self-concept volatility is also fostered by the fact that different people, in different roles or contexts, will have different impressions of the self. Given that adolescents are so heavily dependent on the reflected appraisals of others, these differing perspectives that others have of oneself create contradictory feedback that must necessarily result in uncertainty about the self.

(3) The adolescent is preoccupied with self-presentation or impression management. As part of this process, one may tentatively adopt (and as readily abandon) a variety of roles. To the extent that one observes oneself enacting these varying and often contradictory roles, one comes to experience the self as highly mutable.

A positive self-concept is more likely to be cognitively stable than a negative self-concept (Greenwald 1980: 35). Furthermore, a positive self-concept is associated with the conception that one is engaged in effective course of action.
In a study of the developmental changes in self-concept, Lamed and Muller (in Burns 1982) found that the self-concept level remained stable across time in relation to physical self and peer relations. However, the academic self-concept revealed a fairly drastic decline. For example, the evidence suggests that individuals who are low in academic self-concept may be high, average or low in non-academic self-concept. It is also possible for some individuals who are low in academic self-concept to obtain considerable comfort from a positive, non-academic self-concept (Burns 1982: 213).

Consequently, the academic self-concept is more important in determining whether or not individuals will voluntarily engage in other school-related activities when they are free to do so. Again, a low academic self-concept increases the probability that individuals will have a generally negative self-concept (Burns 1982: 213). Consequently, thinking, caring parents and educators would not wish to encourage pupils of limited academic potential to appraise their overall work in terms of scholastic success, but rather focus on children's strengths and positive attributes which, given the guiding hands of supportive significant others, can be made the basis of enhanced self-concept evaluation.

With regard to the development, maintenance and change of the self-concept, Gerdes (1989: 83) maintains that this is an ongoing process. Several points are relevant here. Firstly this researcher believes that the manner in which different people react to change is strongly influenced by the nature of their self-concept in terms of flexibility, rigidity or diffuseness. She maintains that a "flexible self-concept" accommodates change. Optimal development of the self-concept occurs when individuals are able to realistically perceive the discrepancies between their expectations of themselves and their actual performance. This means people with a realistic self-concept will make adjustments to their self-concept if necessary.

Secondly, rigidity prevents self-concept change, in that a "rigid self-concept" is strongly resistant to change. According to Gerdes (1989), people with this type of self-concept simply distort their experiences to fit in with their self-concept. For example,
individuals who see themselves as highly intelligent may retain this image despite the fact that they fail one examination after another. On the other hand, people with a rigid, negative self-concept may also not change easily. Cognisance of this is very important with regard to this study.

Thirdly, individuals with a diffuse or vaguely defined self-concept are unable to judge themselves consistently because they assess themselves differently in various situations. Like a chameleon, they change their behaviour to suit the situation. This attitude may lead to a sense of aimlessness which may eventually force individuals to critically examine their feelings about themselves and their self-concept.

Gergen (1977: 144) reports that it has been suggested that a unified core of self-relevant experiences is crystallised into a core self of identity, and remains stable over time and across diverse circumstances. Rogers, however, differs when he maintains that self-concept changes as a result of maturation and learning. Gerdes (1988: 19) further differs from Rogers in her assertion that one's self-concept is influenced more by external factors such as roles, relationships and social norms and expectations, and hence are less likely to be constant over the life span.

Battle (1982: 26) gives another perspective of the self-concept. He believes that, in the striving of the self for consistency, the self-concept (especially the general self-concept) tends to be stable and fairly resistant to change, which is an enduring personality characteristic.

Thus we see that there is little consensus regarding the stability of the self-concept. It can therefore be concluded that a "negative" self-concept in some student teachers need not be fixed and may be enhanced. As will be demonstrated, this conclusion is very important for this study.

The different aspects of the self-concept will now be discussed critically. These are:
the physical self-concept,
- the cognitive self-concept,
- the moral-religious self-concept,
- the social self-concept, and
- the affective self-concept.

2.5 DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF THE SELF-CONCEPT OF THE LATE ADOLESCENT

2.5.1 Introduction

The discussion which follows pertains to various aspects of the self-concept of the late adolescent. These include the physical self-concept, the cognitive self-concept, the moral-religious self-concept, the social self-concept and the affective self-concept.

2.5.2 Physical self-concept (body-image)

According to Battle (1982: 31), "body image is essential in the development of a sense of self". The process of developing an accurate body image (physical self-concept) begins with body awareness, which is initially manifested as total body response to sensory stimulation and movement. In other words, children become aware of their body through visual exploration of self; sensory exploration with hands and mouth, for example, sucking fingers, playing with toes; and studying themselves in the mirror (Battle 1982: 14).

Jones (1988: 252) adds to this by stating that the concept of body image develops concurrently with cognitive and fine motor skills. Children develop an understanding of object concept and are able to discriminate between themselves and objects and others.
In agreement with Battle, Jones further maintains that body image continues to develop as children use locomotion (for example crawling or walking) and when they move through space and becomes aware of directionality. Body image and concepts of maleness and femaleness begin to develop as young children identify with the same sex role during play activities (Jones 1988: 253).

With regard to physical attractiveness, Lanyon and Goodstein (1982: 16) maintain that physical attractiveness includes not only physical beauty, but also good grooming and posture. Attractive and stylish dressing, acceptable hair styles and make-up and a good feeling about one's looks all enhance the self-image.

In most societies, physical attractiveness is emphasised from cradle to the grave. For this reason, considerable amounts of money are spent on exercise equipment, diets, famous label clothing to enhance one's appearance, and on beauty contests for males and females. This continues from infancy throughout life. This is because physically "beautiful" persons hold a high and privileged status and are given special consideration from that extra cookie as a youngster to a special, perhaps undeserved job assignment as an adult (Lanyon & Goodstein 1982: 17).

The aforementioned authors emphasise this by saying:

Not unexpectedly, it has been shown that a primary determinant of how we are perceived by others is our physical appearance. A large number of research studies support the conclusion that the impression we make is influenced by physical attractiveness and neatness of dress and grooming, plus a number of other immediately obvious characteristics such as the wearing of glasses

(Lanyon & Goodstein 1982: 17).
Similarly, Dion et al (Jones 1992: 12) state that physically attractive people are seen by others as more exciting, more sociable, more interesting, more sensitive and kinder than less attractive people.

Consequently, individuals of all ages who do not fit the picture of the physically "ideal person" may experience significant distress. Also, the greater individual's deviance from the "ideal", for example the physically handicapped and disfigured, the more difficulty they experience in accepting their body image and in developing a positive self-concept (Jones 1992: 12).

According to Fisher and Cleveland (Gerdes 1988: 78), the term "body image" refers to individuals' psychological awareness of their bodies, including internal organs and processes as well as external appearance, as well as associated attitudes and feelings. This body image reflects the value and meaning which individuals attach to various aspects of their physical self. Thus a man may perceive a broad chest as proof of his manliness, and a woman her pregnant body as a symbol of her womanliness.

The importance of physical appearance is emphasised daily through numerous advertisements in the media. Due to the portrayal of women in the media, for instance, a slender, attractive girl can be expected to have a more positive self-image than a plain, plump girl. Other physical factors which affect the self-concept are health and vitality. Sick people often have a negative self-concept because they see themselves as incapacitated and unable to meet certain societal demands such as the successful holding of a job (Gerdes 1988: 79). Therefore, any major physical change in one's body inevitably demands a redefinition of one's self-image, and consequently of one's self-concept. Physical changes occur throughout the lifespan, and so the individual's body image also constantly changes.

In conclusion, the adolescent's overall self-concept is influenced by body-image. An adolescent who is healthy and attractive is more likely to have a positive self-concept. In addition, slenderness in females and masculinity in males would most likely enhance
the physical self-concept. Stylish clothes add to the status of the adolescent and therefore also enhance the self-concept.

2.5.3 Cognitive self-concept

Some theorists argue that cognitive development enhances the adaptiveness of the self-concept system. The cognitive structural limitations of children, narrow their field of awareness and constrict their ability to understand themselves (Burns 1982: 155). Adolescents' greater cognitive maturity enables them to be aware of a broader array of experiences and to conceptualise themselves from perspectives unavailable to the preadolescent. Generally, theorists agree that the developmental constructs of differentiation, abstraction and integration underlie the changes which occur in the self-system as one matures.

Montemayer and Eisen (Burns 1982: 156) found that older adolescents referred more to beliefs and personality characteristics than did younger ones in describing themselves. Livesley and Bromley agree in saying that the ability to integrate personality characteristics does not appear until adolescence.

Some researchers contend that a major development after the age of 15 is an increased awareness of covert and psychological determinants of behaviour. There will therefore be greater differentiation, abstraction, and integration of the self-concept system as one develops through adolescence (Bernstein 1980: 136).

According to Inhelder and Piaget (Burns 1982: 156), abstraction is one of the major cognitive developments occurring during adolescence. The enhanced ability for abstraction appears to be of central importance to the greater differentiation of oneself and one's world, and to the integration of a more comprehensive self-concept system.

On the other hand, Bernstein (1980: 231) says that developing the capacity for abstraction appears to contribute to a transformation from children's dependence upon
surface qualities as behavioural determinants, to adolescents' greater awareness of personality determinants of behaviour. Abstraction also contributes to the integration of information about the self.

Van den Aardweg (1988: 13) adds that this cognitive development crystallises the self-concept in later adolescence. In addition, adolescents begin to frame a philosophy of life which, now that they are able to think abstractly and assess various viewpoints, is exciting and interesting. They establish a foundation on which to base their behaviour and they have absolute freedom in doing this.

Furthermore, adolescents are able to take part in arguments, debate logically and sensibly. They are able to wrestle with problems, all of which are stimulating and enlightening. They are unafraid and confident to voice their opinions and speak out on social and other injustices. They also look forward to their future career with its possibilities of further study or training, job satisfaction, marriage, their own home and, above all, emancipation (Van den Aardweg 1988: 13). This may lead to the development of a positive self-concept.

According to Archer (Craig 1989: 399), as adolescents grow older, the measuring stick by which they evaluate themselves and those around them changes. Their ideas about the way they fit into their world may come more from their own discoveries about themselves than from others. Their evaluation may reflect sincere, idealistic, long-term commitments to certain values instead of short-term commitments to friends (Craig 1989: 402).

Marcia (1980: 30) mentions that the development of this new idealism is the reason why the first two years of college are often a period of such transformation. This change in the way adolescents see themselves and others is caused by their exposure and reaction to the college atmosphere. Much of the change is also caused by the maturation of their rational processes.
Apart from the above, Fischer (1980: 477) says that at the first level of single abstractions which emerge in early adolescence, one can construct abstractions about the self as, for example, outgoing, self-conscious, obnoxious, empathic, cheerful and depressed. He further discusses what he calls "abstract mapping", which is his term for abstractions. These do not emerge until middle adolescence. He specifies that, with the advent of the ability to relate attributes to each other, individuals can now evaluate the postulates of the self-concept based on whether they are internally consistent or not.

Fischer (1980: 478) also adds that adolescents at this stage do not yet have the cognitive skills to resolve such contradictions. As a result, opposing self-concepts, such as outgoing versus self-conscious; obnoxious versus empathic; or cheerful versus depressed, become very salient as well as conflictual and distressing.

Lastly, conflict should begin to diminish in late adolescence with the emergence of "abstract systems". According to Fischer, this new cognitive level brings with it the ability to integrate single abstractions into compatible higher order abstractions about the self. For example, cheerful and depressive attributes can be combined into the higher order abstraction of "moody". Thus more advanced cognitive skills allow older adolescents to cognitively coordinate and resolve seemingly contradictory self-concepts (Fischer 1980: 579).

Fischer (1989: 37) further found that adolescents' role-related self-concepts become increasingly differentiated as they move through this developmental period. Research reveals that opposing and conflicting self-concepts peak in middle adolescence and begin to decline in late adolescence.

From the preceding paragraphs it can be concluded that cognitive ability, especially the ability for abstract thought, plays a major role in the development of the self-concept.
2.5.4 Moral-religious self-concept

One of the widely held ideas about adolescence is that individuals forge the basis for a stable adult personality during this period (Cole 1989: 582). The ability to reason about society, to tell right from wrong, and to examine the basis for one's moral principles are all important for establishing an integrated adult sense of identity. Two aspects of forming an integrated sense of moral self have dominated discussions of adolescent personality development. They are as follows:

1. the need to come to terms with the problems brought on by sexual maturity and
2. the need to cope with the new social relations of work and responsibility in the adult community.

Cole (1989) further states that adolescents show that they experience a decision-making period about their choice of occupation, for example, or their political or religious commitment.

Wegner (Gerdes 1989: 79) says that the moral self-concept relates to people's perception of the extent to which they satisfy the prescribed rules of conduct in a given society or community. He further stipulates that morals are rules regarding interpersonal behaviour which, as they become internalised, give rise to the moral self.

Apart from the above, Skolnick (1986: 463) says that when adolescents gain the capacity for more abstract hypothetical modes of thought, they are also likely to be concerned with issues of self-consistency and continuity. For example, adolescents might act like a model of politeness and good behaviour when in the presence of parents and teachers. However, behaviours including swearing, smoking and delinquent acts may be performed when among their peers.

The point that Skolnick makes is that when adolescence is reached, individuals may be bothered by what they may now see as inconsistency. They may wonder which is their
real self: the rebel or the conformist, and try to reconcile the two ways of behaving (Skolnick 1986: 463).

Kohlberg (Gerdes 1988: 79) says the foundation of the moral self-concept lies in the desire for approval and the avoidance of disapproval, first from parents and later from other significant persons. Kohlberg suggests that spiritual and religious beliefs and values often determine individuals' definition of what is morally right or wrong.

Finally, Coleman (1987: 32) maintains that adolescents' self-concept and morality have moderate correlations with their perception of family environments, and more modest relationships with their perceptions of school environments.

Thus it seems as if the moral-religious self-concept of the adolescent is inconsistent. This implies that the moral-religious self-concept may be influenced positively. This is a very important finding for this study.

2.5.5 Social self-concept

2.5.5.1 The effect of the self-concept on socialising

Burns (1979: 229) declares that "putting social distance between self and others appears to be a means of protecting an inadequate self-concept and thereby preserving psychological security". In line with this, Coopersmith (1968: 98) found that children with negative self-concepts do not mix easily with a group, stating: "In the presence of a social group at school or elsewhere, they remain in the shadows, listening rather than participating, sensitive to criticism, self-conscious, preoccupied with inner problems." Similarly, MacCandless (1977: 520) came to the conclusion that a child with a positive self-concept will mix with a group more easily than the child with a negative self-concept. He explains that individuals with a low self-concept are less popular, and "while they are generally rated as less effective in groups, they have a stronger need for groups and may overact to group acceptance".
2.5.5.2 The social self-concept during adolescence

Adolescents come to know and define themselves largely through social interaction. In part, adolescents' social self-concept may be a product of the incorporation of others' communication. For example, if family and relatives all proclaim the daughter to be the spitting image of the mother, the daughter may come to think of herself in those terms (Mcquire et al in Lapsley & Power 1988: 71).

Lapsley and Power (1988: 74) say that adolescents who think of themselves as "shy" are perhaps implicitly comparing themselves to friends or peers who are more socially outgoing. Adolescents' social interactions are not all the same, and some facets of the self-concept become more apparent through self-examination in particular relationships. For example, knowledge of one's popularity among peers is more accurately drawn from conversation with and the reactions of friends and schoolmates than from the statements of parents.

The different social contexts of the adolescent not only reveal the self-concept, but also shape it. Each social context exerts unique role demands. For example, there may be expectations to be obedient, helpful and polite with parents; with friends, loyal, talkative and active. These role expectations may not determine the adolescent self-concept, but they surely influence it (Lapsley & Power 1988: 75).

Several factors contribute to both decreasing similarity among social selves and the weakening of their organisation during adolescence. One of the most apparent factors is the discrepancy between what parents and peers expect from the adolescent. Although there is substantial debate about the magnitude of the discrepancy between parental and peer expectations, Hartup (1983: 103) has found that it is greatest during early adolescence, particularly for antisocial acts. According to Adelson and Doehrman (1980: 76), the growing schism between the self-with-parents role and the self-with-peers role may make it especially difficult for the adolescent to discern important similarities among the different social selves.
A second factor is the deterioration during adolescence of the perceived social self provided by the parents. To adolescents the hierarchy of different social selves is dictated by the demands, values and goals of parents. For example, religious parents are likely to have children for whom the self-concept of churchgoer is important (Adelson & Doehrman 1980: 99).

On the other hand, Burns (1982: 4) says that a positively enhanced social self-concept seems to depend on possessing well-grounded feelings of acceptance, competence and worth, for every human wants to belong and to be accepted by a group, initially a family group. Such acceptance implies that others regard one as worthy and competent in some relevant behaviour.

In addition, a person derives a sense of worth from being a valued member of a group. For most students, school behaviour culminates in the mastery of subject matter. For most teachers, school behaviour has its end in the mastery of the science of controlling and teaching students to a required standard. Successful achievement of these aims encourages the student or teacher to evaluate themselves as competent, a very necessary element for a positive self-concept (Diggory & Felker in Burns 1982: 5).

Burns (1982: 5) stipulates that these three basic elements of belonging, competence and worth are learned in a social environment through interaction with others. Parents, teachers and peers provide much of the feedback concerning students that tells them they are wanted. This feedback may concern such areas as students' physical development, social competencies, their academic achievement and emotional balance.

Adler built his theory of "individual psychology" around this idea that individuals are a unified personality who must always be seen in a social context. They are "embedded" in their family and their community and are constantly involved in reciprocal social relations. Thus, people's social self relates to the strength and nature of their social interest in an involvement with others and their reactions to them (Ansbacher & Ansbacher in Gerdes 1988: 79).
Group membership influences the self-concept in two ways. Firstly, individuals are evaluated by the members of their own group and, in turn, the group is evaluated by people outside it. Membership of a high status group may thus contribute to an enhanced self-concept. Coopersmith further points out that individuals' relationship with their parents is the most important factor in the formation and enhancement of the self-concept (Coopersmith in Gerdes 1988: 79).

However, developmental changes in role-related self-concepts become necessary over the course of adolescence. One such shift involves the greater differentiation of selves associated with the varying social roles that adolescents must come to adopt. There are also socialisation pressures to develop different self-concepts in different social contexts (Grontevant, Cooper & Kramer 1986: 182).

The fact that adolescents necessarily encounter different people in various roles and contexts that have different impressions of oneself adds to the perplexity over which is one's true self (Rosenberg 1986: 183). For example, one's self with parents may be open, depressed or sarcastic. With friends, the self may be caring, cheerful or rowdy. However, with a romantic partner, the self may be fun-loving, self-conscious or flirtatious (Harter & Monsour 1992: 251).

This is an indication that socialisation pressures during adolescence force individuals to differentiate the self vis-à-vis social roles, given the different expectations of the various significant others within different social contexts. This means the period of adolescence brings with it the formidable task of establishing roles and identities in familial, ideological, friendship, occupational and romantic sexual areas and differentiating between one's various selves accordingly (Harter & Monsour 1992: 251).

The most important influences on the social self-concept of the adolescent is discussed below. In each instance the possibility of enhancing the self-concept is taken into consideration.
2.5.5.3 Influence of the family

The developing self-concept of the child is profoundly influenced by parents and other family members in the early years. As the child grows older, friends, schoolmates and teachers influence the self-concept.

During the school years the self-concept seems to become organised along both academic and non-academic lines (Byrne et al in Shavelson & Bolus 1982: 123). How students feel about themselves outside school may, for example, be based on how well they do in sports; their appearance; how they get along with friends and family, and so on. They also gauge the verbal and non-verbal reactions of significant people such as parents or siblings (Shavelson & Bolus 1982: 124).

Knowles (1990: 6) specifies that young children and adolescents derive their self-concept largely from external definers. That is, their parents, brothers, sisters and extended families, where they live and what churches and schools they go to. As they mature, they increasingly define themselves in terms of the experiences they have had. The slight difference is that for young children experience is something that happens to them; to adolescents their experience is who they are.

During early and mid-adolescence, adolescents' self-concept is most embedded within the immediate social context of family, for example parents and thereafter, friends, schoolmates and peers (Lapsley 1988: 74). For example, families of high ability or gifted children and adolescents typically demonstrate strong commitment to their children. They make conscientious efforts to facilitate and promote the development of their positive self-concepts in abilities and talents (Bloom et al in Callahan & Cornell 1990: 257).

According to Cooper, family communication affects adolescent self-concept formation which, in turn, influences self-esteem. However, because adolescence is a time of increasing independence and emotional autonomy from parents, there is potential strain
in the parent-adolescent relations at this time (Monks & Ferguson 1983: 18). This may negatively influence the adolescent's self-concept.

Rosenberg found high self-concepts to be related to parental interest in adolescents. This includes interest in their friends, their academic performance and their contribution to mealtime conversations. Similarly, Bachman found enhanced self-concepts in a number of adolescents to be positively related to "good" family relations. "Good" family relations means such things as affection between family members, common activities, fairness and inclusion of children in family decision making (Rosenberg et al in Burns 1982: 157).

Apart from this, Coopersmith's findings are of special interest in the emphasis he places on parental control, along with parental acceptance and affection, as a variable enhancing children's self-concept (Coopersmith in Burns 1982: 157).

Consequently, adolescents who are raised in families that are affectionate and supportive typically develop higher evaluations of themselves as persons. They tend to think of themselves as competent and worthy individuals. When the affection and support comes from the mother, their view of themselves as persons of worth is strengthened. When this comes from their father, the impact is on their evaluation of themselves as competent and effective individuals (Parsons in Burns 1982: 158).

In conclusion, it can be stated that warm, accepting and supportive family members enhances a positive self-concept in adolescents. As this insight applies to this study, it may be difficult to influence the family relationships of student teachers. Another group which plays a very important role in the development of the adolescent's self-concept is the peer group. This aspect is discussed below.
2.5.5.4 Influence of the peer group

The peer group also plays an important role in the development of the social self-concept. This is not only true of adolescents at secondary school, but also of adolescent students who are being educated as teachers.

Shavelson and Bolus (1982: 124) state that the self-concept evolves through constant self-evaluation in different situations. Children and adolescents continually ask themselves, "how am I doing?" and compare their performance with their own standards and with the performance of peers. Similarly Kagan and Cole (1989: 237) say that during the high school years, adolescents develop a self-concept in terms of the peer group. They say that the process of self-concept formation continues into later adolescence with the development of the skills necessary to uphold oneself independently in the culture and the community.

Apart from that, Kagan and Cole (1989) say that adolescents, having begun the process of self-concept crystallisation, are ready for a new phase of development. This is based on their adaptation to physical changes in appearance, development of formal operations, and ability to cope with peer pressures and values.

In addition, Schcciamberg says that the central feature of the early adolescent world is the organisation and evaluation of adolescents' self-concept in terms of the high school and peer group (Schcciamberg 1982: 415). Peer relationships in later adolescence usually occur in the contexts of work and/or college. According to this author, these relationships are usually not rigidly organised around age as in early adolescence (Schcciamberg 1982: 420).

The peer group is one source from which adolescents may derive ideas concerning roles and values. These peers serve as models for attitude and value formation. When membership in several peer groups creates a conflict, adolescents may face the problem of reconciling or rejecting loyalties (Craig 1989: 419).
Consequently, the standards of friends and the peer group become a particularly important yardstick for self-evaluation during adolescence. In trying to become more independent of their parents, adolescents may, for a time, depend heavily on their peers for support and self-definition (Gerdes 1989: 82). One of the primary developmental tasks of adolescence is to find belonging, recognition and status in social groups. It is therefore of paramount importance for young people to be accepted by their peer group (Rice 1984: 302).

Thus, the adolescent peer group can be an extremely important and powerful social force in the development of an adolescent's self-concept. When adolescents separate from their families, they turn to peers for the support previously received from parents and siblings. As a rule, adolescents associate with others who are like them, and who share their social, economic and educational background. Apart from that, adolescents affiliate with others from whom they can gain strength and who can help them establish positive self-concepts and personal boundaries. In a very important sense, they become emotionally bound to others with whom they can share their vulnerabilities and deepest sense of self. Therefore, acceptance by and identification with a peer group facilitates adolescents' efforts to form an identity and stable self-concept because it provides a temporary and readily recognisable sense of self (Bensman & Liliesfield in Stevenson, Roscoe, Richard, Brooks & Kelsey 1987: 394).

According to Rice (1984: 303), a key factor influencing acceptance by peers is conformity to group norms, in that each group takes on a self-concept of its own. Members are characterised, for example, according to dress and appearance, scholastic standing, extracurricular participation, social skills and qualifications. Consequently the most obvious way to become part of a group is to adopt the behaviours, appearance and orientation of the group's members. Adopting a specific style of clothing is an important means by which an adolescent discovers and expresses a newly acquired self-concept (Diensfrey 1982: 68; Rice 1984: 303).

These overt signs and symbols help adolescents feel
accepted,
- separate from their families,
- part of a peer group, and
- involved in a process of forging self-concepts.

Ironically, in attempting to be a unique person, adolescents conform to the ways of a smaller group, shaping their self-concept in line with other group members. This is consistent with Elkind's discussion of adolescent egocentrism. Adolescents do not recognise the hypocrisy of the professed self-concept uniqueness, but simultaneously adhere to group expectations and standards and base their self-concept on these (Elkind in Stevenson et al 1987: 394).

In sum, one way of acquiring a self-concept that is separate from one's family of origin is to become aligned with a peer group which can facilitate the transition from family self-concept to a full, independent self-concept (Stevenson 1987: 395). If adolescents are accepted and supported by a peer group, this enhances their self-concept.

2.6 AFFECTIVE (EMOTIONAL) SELF-CONCEPT

The emotional self-concept pertains to emotions, feelings, passions, moods, sentiments and whims. Because adolescents find themselves between the expectations of childhood and adulthood, their affective self-concept follows an unstable course (Burns 1982: 126). Burns states that behaviour derived from early childhood is ambivalent, and vacillates from one behaviour to its opposite. This seemingly incomprehensible aspect of adolescence involves rapid shifts from hating to loving, from accepting to rejecting, from anger to joy. The emotional instability of the early years with their contradictions in thought and feeling are reactivated again in adolescence (Burns 1982: 127). This leads to a self-concept which is emotionally unstable.

Adolescents' rebellion against authority represents the conflict between loving and hating, between the desire for independence and the need for dependence, when the
harsh light of reality illuminates the daunting prospects ahead. Sometimes rebellion and non-conformity can be a defence mechanism. If adolescents can rationalise that parents are old-fashioned, restrictive and out of step, then the breaking of old emotional ties is easy (Burns 1982: 128).

Apart from the above, the experience of separation and loss that can occur at adolescence can be seen to parallel the adult phenomenon of mourning and grief which accompanies the death of someone close. Blos terms this state "object and affect hunger" which results in adolescents' need for intense emotional states. This includes delinquent activities, involvement with drugs, mystical experiences and short-lived but intense relationships as means of coping with the inner emptiness (Blos in Burns 1982: 127).

Even the need to do things "just for kicks" simply represents a way of combating the emotional flatness, depression and loneliness which are part of the separation experience. "Object and affect hunger" finds some relief in adolescent gang or peer group. This is a substitute for adolescents' families, within which they may experience all the feelings which prompt individual growth, such as stimulation, empathy, belonging, role playing, identification and sharing of guilt and anxiety (Burns 1982: 129).

In agreement with this, the psychoanalytic school views adolescence as being a period of vulnerability of personality which is due to instinctual upsurges in puberty. Emotional bonds developed from infancy have to be broken to establish mature emotional relationships outside the home. A period of self-concept development and diffusion occurs as adolescents attempt to become autonomous individuals. The total picture is therefore one of emotional turmoil (Burns 1982: 130).

According to Gilligan (in Harter & Monsour 1992: 259), the affective self-concept of the adolescent girl is embedded far more within the family, and embraces more involvement and concern with relationships. In contrast, adolescent boys forge a path of independence and autonomy in which the logic of their moral and social decisions
take precedence over an affective empathic response to others, with whom one has formed emotional bonds.

Jordan (1991: 136) supports Gilligan when he says that the self-concept in adolescent girls is more likely to be defined in terms of relationships. Thus the relational network impinges more strongly on the emotional self-concept. This aspect is important for this research.

Can the self-concept be enhanced positively? This question is central to this research and is critically discussed below.

2.7 ENHANCEMENT OF THE SELF-CONCEPT

According to Byrne (1991: 125), when people speak about their self, they often describe it in static term: "This is me", they seem to say, "don't expect anything different". While they thus imply that the self is unchanging, most people realise that they are different today, in some respects, from what they were like in the past, and they recognise that they may well change again in the future.

Indeed, it is a rare individual who has not daydreamed at some time about various possible selves. These daydreams includes, for example, what one might be like under other circumstances, how one might change by getting married or divorced, entering another career or moving to another country. Consequently we do not seem to possess only a single, unchanging self. Rather, we are all somewhat aware of a whole succession of possible selves (Byrne 1991: 126).

Similarly Markus and Nurius (1986: 954) state that the self-concept we possess at any given time is really only a "working self-concept". This self-concept is open to change as we encounter new experiences and receive an unending array of feedback and other forms of information about ourselves. We frequently imagine alternative selves, including the self we would like to become, for example, slimmer, more attractive and
more accomplished. It also includes the self we would not like to become, for example, plumper, less attractive and locked in a dead end job.

According to Byrne (1991: 126), we often ponder the "ideal self" (what we should ideally be like) and the "ought selves" (what we should be in the eyes of others or according to social and moral norms). Such possible selves are significant for the following reasons (Markus & Nurius 1986: 957):

1. **They can play an important role in our motivation.** One reason why individuals are motivated to work long and hard for various goals is so they can conceive of themselves as reaching them. They can envision themselves as college graduates, physicians, attorneys, scientists, successful entrepreneurs, proud parents and so on. If individuals cannot imagine themselves in these states, there is little reason to strive for them. In short, possible selves may serve as "incentives" or goals towards which individuals strive. In this manner, they may play a key role in human motivation and enhancement of the self-concept.

2. **Possible selves help account for the frequent lack of agreement between individuals' self-concepts and how they are viewed by others.** In other words, individuals may see themselves as possessing certain traits which others do not consider them to have. Such discrepancies may arise, at least in part, because outside observers cannot take into account individuals' possible selves. Individuals see themselves in terms of what they would like to be and of what they hope of becoming.

Van Hook and Higgins (1988: 625), however, focus on the emotional impact that the self-concept can have on individuals. They maintain that possible selves influence our affective states. Discrepancies between what we would like to be and our current state can be quite painful and indeed can lead to considerable emotional turmoil.
Markus and Nurius (1984: 959) differ when they state that the nature of a person's repertoire of possible selves can be a significant source of individual differences. In this context, optimists are those who see mainly positive changes in the self ahead. Pessimists, in contrast, are those who extrapolate current shortcomings in future scenarios and predict further negative changes relating to their self-concept.

According to Meyer (1989: 377), the greater the congruence between the self-concept and true potential, the greater the possibility that the individual will actualise his potential.

The same authors reiterate that, if the self-concept is not congruent with individuals' potential, they will tend to move in a direction that agrees with the image they hold of themselves. This can be a movement away from the actualisation of potential. People who believe that they are incapable will not use their talents or actualise their potential (Meyer et al 1989: 377).

Accordingly, Rogers states that the great ideal is to create an environment which allows individuals to see and accept themselves exactly as they are so that they can fully actualise the whole of their potential (Gerdes 1989: 76).

Gerdes (1989: 76) maintains that one's self-concept undergoes constant modification throughout life. Often such a change is no more than a subtle, barely perceptible shift, but sometimes a sudden and major change occurs. This tends to happen when a life situation or role is changed dramatically or a sudden and new insight about oneself is gained. This can cause a major change in one's self-perception and self-concept (Gerdes 1989: 77).

As people interact with their environment, they gradually acquire ideas about themselves, their world, and their relationship to that world. They experience things that they can or cannot control. Those experiences that appear to enhance one's self-concept may be valued and incorporated into one's self-image. On the other hand, those
experiences that appear to threaten the self may be denied and experienced as foreign to the self (Engler 1985: 281).

The self-concept can be facilitated and enhanced in the classroom setting by allowing students with poor, low self-concepts to experience success and by intellectually challenging the students. Students should be given tasks which they are able to complete successfully since this is likely to contribute positively to the enhancement of the self-concept (Curtis & Shavers 1981: 212).

In addition, Mwamwenda (1989: 271) lists the following ways by which self-concepts can be enhanced:

(1) Appropriate responses should be acknowledged by positive comments such as the following: "That's a good question!"; "Very good!" "Good point!" or by a nod or smile in recognition of desirable behaviour.

(2) Students should be allowed the freedom to express views which differ from those presented during the lesson as long as such views are supported by logical reasoning.

(3) As far as possible students must be treated equally, and as many as possible should be given the opportunity to contribute to proceedings which include debates, discussions and general arguments in a lesson. This practice enhances their self-concept.

(4) Teachers should learn each student's name and use it often as a sign of recognising individual identity. When time permits, lecturers should chat with students on a one to one basis in an attempt to build and enhance the student's confidence and self-concepts.
Added to this, in one of the studies that he conducted on fourth year Canadian students in Education, Mwamwenda (1989: 272) stated:

One of the main ways I learned .. in the course was from the professor's caring and concerned attitude for his students. I felt like I was an individual in his classroom, that I was thought of individually and not as a part of the whole. His greeting to me in the morning made me feel good, so my students, I am sure would feel just as good if treated in this way.

This student was in her early twenties, yet being treated positively made a tremendous impact on her.

(5) Teachers should show their students that they care about them and regard them as their friends. If they should be sick or have any serious problems that keep them away from school, they should show sympathy and concern. When the students returns to school their presence should be acknowledged by a warm welcome.

(6) As far as possible teachers should avoid harsh words in disciplining students and instead focus on reinforcing positive behaviour.

(7) Teachers should set reasonable assignments and examinations, so that every student who has studied diligently stands a good chance of doing well (Mwamwenda 1989: 273).

This author finally observes that students with positive and enhanced self-concepts are better adjusted and perform better at school than people with negative self-concepts. Therefore, teachers can foster or enhance their students' self-concepts by interacting with them in a positive and non-threatening manner.
The development and enhancement of the self-concept portrayed by the popular media does not necessarily imply that individuals become integrated, culturally tuned, honoured and well respected members of society (Hattie 1992: 138). Many individuals have negative thoughts, and restructuring these thoughts may be needed for these individuals to enhance their self-concepts. Individuals should also learn to monitor their own thoughts.

Educational programmes are another common form of intervention used to enhance self-concepts. These interventions are often based on the strong belief that self-concept enhancement will resolve a number of problems in school situations, and will aid in

- increasing academic achievement,
- eliminating behaviour problems, and
- reducing vandalism (Hattie 1992: 222).

 Teachers are thus often given the task of enhancing self-concepts although there is a dearth of understanding as to which programmes are effective.

Burns (1982: 399) discusses various exercises that can be done by students to enhance their self-concepts. These are mentioned below.

(1) **Positive thinking exercise**

This is aimed at expressing pride in one's accomplishments. Students should be encouraged to think and feel more positively about themselves, to like themselves, laugh at themselves, express pride in themselves and describe personal strengths and weaknesses with greater accuracy.

Burns also suggests that students be involved in discussions focusing on the questions such as the following:
Is it important to know what you can do well and what you can't?

Where is it safe to talk about these things?

Do you have to be good at everything?

What are the ways others can make you feel good about yourself?

What are the ways you can make yourself feel good about yourself?

Is there a difference between promoting yourself and bragging?

What is the difference?

According to Burns, such discussions provide a basis for students to assess both their own capabilities and potentials and to distinguish these abilities from their own worth. He reiterates that as students become more familiar with their many and varied strengths and weaknesses, they generally develop a more trusting attitude towards their own capabilities, as well as towards other members of the class. They start to learn that even the "smartest" and most popular students have weaknesses, and that the "dullest" and most unpopular students have strengths. This attitude allows students to begin feeling better about themselves, and are able to develop foundations for accepting responsibility for personal thoughts, feelings and actions.

(2) Self-concept projection exercise

This exercise requires group members to write two self-concept sketches, each on a separate sheet of paper. One of these is a description of how the group members see themselves and is in fact an outline of the concept they have of themselves. They are encouraged to record this as honestly as possible.

The second self-concept sketch explores the way that members think they project themselves to the rest of the group. They write down the way they think they come across to other people. The value of this exercise is that students discover that others see certain potentials and characteristics in more favourable terms than they see themselves:
(3) **Weekly report sheets**

Part of enhancing students' self-concept is helping them become more aware of the control they actually have over their daily life. Weekly reaction sheets help students see how effectively they are using their time. For example, the following questions could be asked in this exercise:

- What was the major thing you learned about yourself this week?
- Did you institute any major changes in your life this week?
- How could this week have been better?
- Identify three decisions of choices you made this week. What were the results of these choices?
- What was the high point of the week?

The purpose of this is to encourage students to keep a daily journal of their reactions. This includes feelings, thoughts and behaviour. This practice helps students to keep an account of how they are growing, of what is happening to them and how uniquely they respond to a given situation. It provides a cumulative record of who they are, how they see themselves, and how others see them.

(4) **Friendship**

One of the factors that erodes self-concept is the inability of some adolescents to make and keep friends. The following activities are designed to help students expand their repertoire of skills in building and enhancing self-concepts and relationships with their peers:

(a) Have the class discuss the methods they use to make friends, and act out the best one.

(b) Lead the class discussion around the questions:
Do you have a best friend?
Do you like to do the same things?
Did you like to do the same things?
Did you ever want to do something that he or she did not want to do?
What happened? Were you still friends?
What is there about you that makes your friends like you?

(5) Words that describe "me"

In this exercise students are asked to write down three words that describe themselves. They are also asked to write down three words which they wished described themselves. They are then encouraged to take one of these words from the second list and to outline specific behaviours that this type of person would exhibit. By the time that most group members have participated, a number of generally accepted goals have been established and specific ways of attaining them have been outlined.

(6) Success visualisation

Possibly the greatest power that people have to enhance the self-concept is through using the imagination. Consequently, students are encouraged to visualise the way they want to behave in situations which may not have been seen as very successful in the past. At this stage the concept of positive thinking is stressed.

(7) Use of quotations

Another approach that works very well is to use thought-provoking quotations as a stimulus to discussion, self-examination and sharing of experiences.

One of the things that should emerge during the course of the discussion is the fact that students can choose to make themselves more self-confident by thinking more positively. If a student says he or she has no success, classmates could chime in with successes
they have seen him accomplish. The teacher will also look for successes to be pointed out to the student with an extremely low self-concept. This can serve as a review which provides students with a sense of accomplishment and motivation for an enhanced self-concept. Knowing that they can achieve adds positively to students' self-concept.

(8) A classroom newsletter or college magazine

The creation of a classroom newsletter or college magazine is a good way to provide students with the opportunity to see their articles in print. Recognition, in print, of positive services, activities and achievements enhances and improves the self-concept.

(9) Learning to accept negative feelings

It is necessary to discuss negative or "bad" feelings if one is to develop a healthy self-concept. If students think some of their feelings of hostility, aggression, anger and hate are unnatural or "bad", they will begin to perceive themselves as bad or unnatural.

Being able to talk about these feelings in a group has two positive effects students' self-concept:

- First, it provides them with an opportunity to defuse some of these feelings by talking them out rather than acting them out in a potentially destructive way.

- Secondly, students will see that their feelings are natural and common responses to emotional situations that are shared by many of their classmates.

In this way, they discover that it is acceptable to have these feelings and that it is all right to be the person they are.

In conclusion, whatever exercises are used to attempt to enhance the self-concept of students, the most important aspect is the ethos within which they occur. The teacher
must create an environment of mutual support or caring. Self-concept is enhanced in a supportive environment that contains little dissonance.

Another important aspect is the safety and encouragement students sense in the classroom. They should be able to express their feelings openly without ridicule. They must also believe that they are valued and will receive affection and support. Without the critical environmental dimensions of trust, caring, openness and empathy, efforts to enhance students' self-concept will be seriously limited (Burns 1982: 403).

Consequently, adolescents attempt to protect and enhance the self-concept by viewing their positive attributes as central to self whereas negative characteristics are relegated to the periphery and are viewed merely as behaviours in which one occasionally engages (Lapsley & Power 1988: 64).

Adolescents attempt to discount those domains in which they are not successful in order to maintain their sense of self-worth. This pattern emphasises the evidence that adolescents take more responsibility for their successes than their failures to enhance their self-concepts (Lapsley & Power 1988: 64).

Similarly Biggs and Telfer (1987: 515) stress that the school atmosphere should be such as to encourage an "origin" self-concept rather than a "pawn" self-concept. Rules and regulations should be minimal and consistent. With efficient administration and smooth running, students' opportunities for exercising choice may be maximal. These authors further agree that the whole atmosphere of the school and the classroom (and therefore also the college) should allow the learner freedom of choice and the opportunity to develop an "origin" self-concept. This involves two aspects:

- Ownership or proprietorial interest in the task. Students feel special relationship to their work.
A self-concept of self-efficacy, based on beliefs of competence with regard to work

In addition, individuals are more likely to emphasise and take credit for their successes than for their failures. This is a mechanism to protect and enhance the self-concept (Greenwald & Harter 1986: 137).

Apart from self-concept, interpersonal relationships play a very important role in the life of student teachers. This aspect will be discussed in the following chapter. Eventually the relationship between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers will be determined.
Chapter 3

INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS OF STUDENT TEACHERS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Humanistic psychologists suggest that we create psychological climates which are experienced as safe, caring, accepting, trusting, respectful and understanding. Field theorists especially emphasise "collaboration rather than competitiveness, encouragement of group loyalties, supportive interpersonal relationships and a norm of interactive participation" (Knowles 1990: 123).

The statement above indicates that student teachers are in a position which often makes extraordinary demands with regard to maintaining good interpersonal relationships with everyone with whom they make contact during the course of their studies. To bring about harmony and good relationships, they often have to be unusually diplomatic, respectful, sensitive, tactful and a model of correct professionalism, goodwill and friendliness (Van der Westhuizen 1991: 587). Student teachers have to show patience in the most trying situations, and deal with conflict in such a way that it does not degenerate into a dispute affecting the healthy "esprit de corps" of the college. At the top of the list of frustration activators are the demanding requirements of lecturers' time pressures and tests and assignments (Van der Westhuizen 1991: 588).

The following facets concerning the interpersonal relationships of student teachers are discussed in this chapter:

- the relationships of student teachers with peers;
- the relationships of student teachers with lecturers;
- the relationships of student teachers with family; and
- ways in which these relationships may be enhanced.
3.2 RELATIONSHIPS OF STUDENT TEACHERS WITH PEERS

3.2.1 Introduction

During adolescence the importance of peer groups increases enormously. Adolescents usually seek support from others in coping with the physical, emotional, and social changes that occur during adolescence. Understandably, they are most likely to turn to others going through the same experience for support. These others are their peers. Studies have shown that adolescents spend most of their time at college with their peers, friends, and classmates and much less time with their families (Csikzentmihalyi & Larson in Craig 1989: 412). Relationships with peers have many functions in the life of the adolescent. The following functions are discussed below:

- the development of social skills;
- the formation of an identity and self-concept development; and
- the provision of support for one another.

3.2.2 Development of social skills

Peer relationships are essential to the student teacher's development of social skills. The reciprocal equality that characterises adolescent relationships also helps develop positive responses to the various crises these young people face. It is from their friends and peers that adolescents learn the kinds of behaviour that are socially rewarded and the roles that best suit their own needs. Social competence is an important element in an adolescent's ability to make new friends and maintain old ones (Fischer et al 1986: 14).

In this regard, student teachers experience a need to be liked and they feel strong pressures to conform to the peer group. Therefore, as individuals become increasingly independent of their families, they depend more upon friendships as well as partnerships to provide emotional support and to serve as testing grounds for new values (Craig 1989: 418).
One of the key factors in student peer relationships is the amount and quality of peer interaction. Peer relationships play a larger role in social development than relationships with parents. The reason for this is that there is an obvious imbalance of power and authority in relationships between students and parents. Within adolescent student groups, however, there is greater equality, greater give and take, and greater need for consensus in reaching decisions. Even the concept of kindness has a different meaning. Whereas relationships with peers imply acting socially, helping and caring for others, relationships with adults require obedience to adult authority without complaining. Rules are handed down to adolescents by adults (Sprinthall 1990: 194).

Peer group relationships offer multiple opportunities for witnessing the social strategies of others, seeing how far these are effective and learning self-presentation. In addition, peer interpersonal relationships are seen to require distinct forms of reciprocity, in which the self and others are called on to interact in quite different ways. The exercise of these forms of reciprocity leads to desperate conclusions about who the self is and who the self may be within interpersonal relationships (Youniss 1980: 33). Students need friends and peers who are their equals and with whom they can discover the relational possibilities of cooperation (Youniss 1980: 289). Peers are potent sources of reinforcement and serve as social models.

### 3.2.3 The development of an identity and self-concept

It is with close friends and peers that student teachers work out an identity. To be able to accept this identity, student teachers must feel accepted, appreciated and liked by others (Craig 1989: 418). On the other hand, Entwistle (1990: 1009) states that the physiological and psychological changes experienced by all adolescents require them to reappraise their self-image. At this stage, it is important for these self-images to be reinforced by peers. According to Erikson (in Burns 1982: 144), a sense of identity is achieved when young individuals best learn to be themselves in interaction with others who are important to them and to whom they are important.
3.2.4 Supportive environment

Student teachers' relationships with their peers are based on dependence on one another for companionship and comfort. These friendship relationships provide a loving context for personal and interpersonal development. The love that friends have for one another nourishes and affirms individual lives and heartens involvement in the lives of others. There are many personal benefits of positive interpersonal relationships among student teachers and their peers. These include feeling special, being accepted and cared for, experiencing interest and understanding of one's pain as well as one's dreams. They can find the encouragement to be themselves and to risk becoming whom they wish to be. Close interpersonal relationships are self-affirming and promote growth (Becker 1992: 160).

3.2.5 Summary

Close friendships are the most important interpersonal relationships student teachers can form with peers. Such friendships avert the loneliness that can be experienced even in a group. The most positive interpersonal relationships arise where student teachers and peers meet as equals, feel at home with one another and feel free to share intimate secrets, and private thoughts and emotions. When interpersonal relationships between students and peers are good, there is no need to pretend or to fear that confidences will be betrayed. Both student teachers and their peers can criticise one another without condemning.

Good interpersonal relationships are very important for student teachers who attend class with their peers and relax with them in the college grounds and elsewhere. Their peers are both company and sounding-boards for their voices and opinions. Some of these opinions cannot be aired in front of adults, for example, their views on lecturers, parents, discipline, personal problems at college and relations with the opposite sex.
Various facets of student teachers' interpersonal relationships with their peers are important for the development of their self-concepts. Even though the peer group demands conformity, student teachers' self-identity develops in such a way that their uniqueness and their difference from the peer group is accepted. During differentiation from the peer group, closer interpersonal relationships (more mature because they are now less egocentric), are formed. Heterosexual relationships are also formed which could lead to infatuations which could later evolve into love and permanent interpersonal relationships (Vrey 1992: 185).

3.3 RELATIONSHIPS OF STUDENT TEACHERS WITH LECTURERS

3.3.1 Introduction

Kalekin-Fishman and Kornfeld (1991: 151) state that, given the motivation and interpersonal skills, student teachers could improve their performance in their academic work. A training programme designed to include preparation for interpersonal relationships would therefore be useful. In agreement with the above, Landman, Van der Merwe, Pitout, Smith and Windell (1990: 16) say that the interpersonal relationships of student teachers with lecturers should involve, amongst others, care, trust, knowledge and understanding, support, sensitivity and authority. These aspects are discussed below.

3.3.2 Care

According to McLaughlin (1991: 182), one of the central ethical tensions that lecturers face is how to care for their student teachers while establishing and maintaining control. He describes some constraints on teachers' power to care, examines how legitimate authority is established, and mentions the ethical responsibilities of lecturers. In several recent studies, lecturers with varying levels of experience remarked that caring for students was a central feature of their desire to teach (Kleinsasser et al in McLaughlin 1991: 183).
On the other hand, lecturers have spent little time determining what it means to care for students. In this regard Noddings (1986: 496) has called for an ethic of caring in teaching and has focused on the need for fidelity, defined not as a duty bound to law or principle but as a willingness to be "reflectively faithful to someone or something". In an ethic of caring, fidelity is a way of relating to students "that supports affection and steadfastly promotes both the welfare of the other and that of the relationship" (Noddings 1986: 497). Noddings reiterates that such fidelity is established and nurtured through acts of caring for students. He noted four ways in which lecturers enact caring. These are as follows:

- The modelling of caring actions

This refers to establishing caring relationships with student teachers. This is a challenge for all lecturers because their attempts to care may conflict with the assumption of an authoritative professional stance. Problems in classroom control force them to reconsider what it means to care for students.

- Practice in the classroom

A number of researchers have examined efforts to maintain control in the classroom. Overwhelmingly, research into the socialisation of student teachers has found that novice lecturers tend to become increasingly custodial or controlling of student's behaviour (Goodman et al in McLaughlin 1991: 181). Many researchers have posited that this increase in controlling results from student teachers' desire to make it through by settling for what works in the short term. Some student teachers consider themselves capable of assuming leadership and becoming equal partners in the classroom. In another study, student teachers asserted that their primary aim as teachers was ownership of the classroom. As student teachers, they felt the need to create a caring atmosphere with other students more than they felt the need to learn better ways of studying (Kleinsasser 1989 in McLaughlin 1991: 182).
Acknowledgement of students

Lecturers support students by acknowledging their intellectual growth, ascribing good motives to their actions and insisting that students strive to do their best. Doing one's best is not only an individual enterprise. Acknowledgement of students includes the social goal of teaching students how to care for others, as part of building a caring community.

Dialogue with students

Lecturers act caringly by engaging students in discussions and by taking student interests into account. Lecturers may encourage group work hold ongoing discussions about current events, and build lessons around topics that interest student teachers. Engaging students in learning is accomplished through dialogue about ideas that constitute the content and through the practice of encouraging wide-ranging questioning about the issues being examined (Noddings 1984: 188).

3.3.3 Trust

Adolescent student teachers are en route to adulthood and are always engaged in exploring the world. They should thus have the confidence to venture into the unknown. Within the safe space of the education situation, lecturer and student enter into a special relationship of trust. Without such a safe space students lack courage and confidence to explore the world and to gradually transform it into a familiar sheltered world. Trust is therefore a fundamental characteristic of students' way of being in the world. It is clear that it is their need for support that evokes the interpersonal relationship of trust (Landman et al 1990: 16).
3.3.4 Knowledge and understanding

Aware of their want of knowledge and experience, student teachers turn to those who can lead them to certainty and knowledge, whom they know and who know and understand them. Both lecturers and students have responsibilities within the educational interpersonal relationship. The lecturer ought to know students' natures and their goals, while students must know how to behave in a becoming and fitting manner and know the demands of propriety that constitute the pedagogic interpersonal relationship of knowing and understanding.

The relationship of understanding comprises more than a mere understanding of each other as "educator" and "educand", but also implies coming to grips with reality. That is why the relationship of knowing is also a process of discovery; and it is in this respect that lecturers should assist students (Landman et al 1990: 16).

3.3.5 Authority

Landman et al (1990: 17) believe that authority is fundamental to the educational interpersonal relationship. They further state that students accept lecturers' authority and the latter provide students with the support that they need. The relationship of authority dictates that the students listen to what lecturers have to say. Students, too, have something to say and lecturers should take heed of this. Furthermore, lecturers show that they not only have their own authority, but also accept the authority of norms which have a distinct bearing on their lives and actions. This means that lecturers should be examples of norm exemplification and norm acceptance to student teachers.

3.3.6 Support

Should students become depressed, lecturers are able to support and encourage them with optimism and cheerfulness (Landman et al 1990: 18). Lecturers should always stress students' good qualities to other students and outsiders. The lecturer's task is that
of a diplomat, shock absorber and, particularly involves smoothing the way for students. For this reason, lecturers should have a clear idea of students' preferences, dislikes and methods of work. Similarly, students should study their lecturers' reactions and if they discover that there are certain things which irritate or upset lecturers, student teachers should avoid them. If student teachers make a point of observing their interaction with lecturers, their knowledge of their own management skills and unique personality traits could be greatly enhanced. An effective, harmonious interpersonal relationship between lecturer and students can only be founded on basic mutual respect.

Apart from the above, lecturers must realise that student teachers need to be given advice, constructive criticism and, above all, encouragement.

The lecturers should establish both personal and professional relationships with students. They should, however, avoid emphasising the personal aspects of these relationships to the neglect of such professional aspects as consultation on method, classroom management or other learning issues (Morris 1980: 149). Student teachers need clear lines of communication on professional issues, particularly issues of competence. Without such links, they experience frustration and neglect.

3.3.7 Sensitivity

Lecturers in colleges of education need to be sensitive to cognitive and personality dispositions, and should provide hospitable environments and programmes in which student teachers may flourish intellectually and professionally. Lecturers should implicitly and functionally assist student teachers to develop the personalities, cognitive dispositions and habits of study that they require in order to acquire a selfless devotion to learning, independent and self-evaluating personality traits, and an ability for enduring long and arduous hours of study at home and in libraries.

Most student teachers do not possess the necessary interpersonal skills needed to continue and complete a tertiary education programme when they first enter college. As
diverse human beings they relate differently through their personalities and modes of learning. Consequently, they need their lecturers' assistance and appropriate interpersonal guidance in an atmosphere and environment which takes this individuality into account. Student teachers may need the lecturers' assistance in matters including relaxation and reduction of impulsive habits such as excessive drinking, eating, sleeping or watching television. Moreover, each student has his or her own unique repertoire of habits and impulsive behaviours, requiring lecturers to pay individual attention and carefully cultivate cordial interpersonal relationships with all of their students.

Students who do not enjoy interpersonal relationships in which they can study effectively may eventually become discouraged and often depressed. This in turn may result in students' belief that they are not appreciated and may lack the confidence that they are "smart enough" for college education. If interpersonal relationships are negative, they may struggle unsuccessfully for a while longer and further confirm their beliefs that college is not a place for them. They may eventually drop out of college or develop psychological problems.

On the other hand, lecturers who are sensitive to students' personalities and interpersonal relationships can provide an environment in which students who do not possess the traditional "college dispositions" may be able to realise their potential through interpersonal guidance. Thus colleges become the places for special groups of people with professional study habits. Colleges should also be hospitable learning centres where people of all cognitive dispositions may find opportunities to develop their highest intellectual and professional potential.

According to Aspy and Roebuck (1982: 489), lecturers must not only be sensitive about others, but also about themselves. They must be persons who know something about themselves and how their own beliefs and feelings affect their work with students. In agreement with this, Carkhuff (1982: 486) maintains that lecturers with high levels of interpersonal skills are more effective in teaching students a variety of cognitive skills, including those addressed by traditional achievement measures. This means that it is
psychologically secure lecturers who can best step back to permit students to discover without the need to represent authority or the source of all knowledge (McKay & Fanning 1987: 210).

3.3.8 Summary

The interpersonal relationships between student teachers and lecturers should be characterised by unconditional acceptance, honesty, respect and tolerance. It is the lecturer who must provide the right climate for positive interpersonal relationships together with authentic instruction without moralising. The affective atmosphere should encourage the transfer of authentic information and the freedom for students to discuss intimate problems without embarrassment to either party.

3.4 RELATIONSHIPS OF STUDENT TEACHERS WITH FAMILY

3.4.1 Introduction

Relationships between student teachers and their family are those closest to their hearts and through which they seek personal and interpersonal fulfilment. Becker (1992:128) states that the relationships between parents and children begin at birth and involve essential aspects of intimacy, honesty, presence, sharing, commitment, freedom, vulnerability, trust, mutuality, generosity, desire, hope, loss, disappointment, loneliness and emotional comfort. Starting with parents and siblings, the people that student teachers love and who love them assist them to grow, change and actualise themselves (Becker 1992: 128).

Becker (1992: 129) further maintains that from childhood, student teachers begin the longest relationship they will have in life - their relationship with their parents. This relationship is their first - it is foundational and continues long after their parents are dead. Throughout life parents are the touchstone of their interpersonal selves, the place they began, and, often, the place to which they must return to truly know themselves.
It is through these first interpersonal experiences that children begin to be and to become themselves. These experiences last throughout their lives and thread through all other relationships.

The following aspects of this parent-child relationship are discussed below: security, autonomy and freedom and modern issues which effect the parent-adolescent-relationships.

3.4.2 Security

With enough interpersonal validation from parents, each student teacher experiences primary ontological security. This is a security of their most fundamental being. When they feel ontologically secure, they feel whole, real, alive, continuous, and autonomous. The first experiences of being loved occur in the parent-child relationship. The first confirmation of being unacceptable, bad, shameful and unworthy also happens in interactions with their parents (Becker 1991: 131).

3.4.3 Autonomy and freedom

With the onset of adolescence the inequalities between parents and children narrow and the relationship approaches a more equal one. Therefore, student teachers expect to be more responsible, dependable and independent than they were as children. Similarly, parents expect to give more autonomy and freedom to adolescents and to respect their privacy and integrity while simultaneously monitoring their responsible use of freedom. Thus adolescence is a transitional period from childhood to adulthood in which both adolescents and parents want the adolescent to successfully attain adult skills and status (Becker 1991: 136).

Similarly, Berryman (1991: 213) sees the relationship between parents and adolescents (such as student teachers) as often a greater problem for the parent than for the adolescent. For those parents who are unwilling to let their offspring break away from
them, or those who invest all their devotion in their children, adolescence may prove an ordeal. Many families worry about conflicts over granting autonomy to adolescents.

Typically, student teachers want independence to do things such as smoke, select their own clothes, go to bed or stay out when it suits them, whilst many parents are not prepared to accept this. However, Berryman (1991: 214) finds that most adolescents remain attached to their homes in a positive way and continue to depend upon their parents for emotional support, goodwill and approval. The family continues to be of critical importance to adolescents, just as it was during childhood (Berryman 1991: 214).

Nevertheless, Becker (1991: 136) says that student teachers are in the process of defining the persons they are and will become. They must consolidate the values that will direct their lives and the aptitudes and skills they can rely on to form stable working interpersonal relationships. Students must make commitments to both their careers and relationships, and, as they clarify their identities and live values, separate from parents and launch into their adult lives. Student teachers stop being children, leave home and form other interpersonal relationships.

It is exceptional for student teachers to feel torn between the two "worlds" of parents and peers, especially regarding important issues. There are more likely to be differences of opinion on minor issues such as hairstyle, fashion, social habits and privileges, where parental views are likely to be rejected in favour of the standards of the peers. Research shows that the majority of adolescents share their parents' attitudes toward moral and political issues (though they may not always admit it to them) and are prepared to accept their parents' guidance on academic, career and personal issues (Berryman 1991: 215). However, it does appear that rebelliousness and alienation are more likely in adolescents who, in spite of considerable maturity, remain dependent in some way (eg. economically) on their parents, thus prolonging adolescence.

Many shifts in the relationship between parents and adolescents are necessary as student teachers move through adolescence into adulthood. Qualities that once made parents
good parents (for example taking charge, teaching and deciding) must be set aside. Becker (1991: 138) mentions that parents must cultivate giving up control, talking with and learning from their children and respecting their children's decisions. The relationship between family and student teachers fares well if parents and their adolescent children can recognise their differences, seek to understand and appreciate one another, and give, take and learn from each other as they grow and change. These changes enable parents and adolescents to share strengths, to assist one another with weaknesses, and to gratify rather than justify their selves and lives.

Berryman (1991: 217) maintains that we cannot consider adolescents and their problems without considering the manner in which they interact with their parents, who are not without their own preoccupations and anxieties. There are many parents who are in their forties or even fifties when their children reach adolescence. To some extent, parents' preoccupations with, for example, self and body-image, their changing, sometimes disturbing thoughts about the meaning of life, the directions they have taken and choices put upon them, converge with those of their teenage children. This may well contribute to the ambivalence of the parent-adolescent relationship.

According to Hauser, Book, Houlihan, Powers, Weiss-Perry, Follansbee, Jacobson and Noam (1987: 199), parents not only continue to influence adolescent beliefs, but also influence adolescent behaviour. Parenting styles may have a profound effect on later development. For example, fathers tend to be involved in problem-solving activities and discussions within the family. As a result, both boys and girls generally discuss ideas with their fathers.

Adolescent involvement with mothers is far more complex. Mothers and adolescents interact in the areas of household responsibilities, discipline in and out of the home, as well as leisure time activities (Montemayer & Brownlee 1987: 281). This may make for greater strain and conflict between mothers and the student teachers. However, it also tends to make for greater closeness between mothers and their adolescent children than between adolescents and their fathers (Youniss & Kettenlinus 1987: 265).
Hill et al (1987: 32) state that the authoritative parenting style seems to yield "normal" or "healthy" adolescent behaviour in most student teachers. They speculate that warmth, coupled with the sense of confident control displayed by authoritative parents is reassuring for most adolescents. Family dynamics and relationships play an important role in the life of a student teacher. Like parenting styles, these elements begin to shape behaviour long before adolescence. For example, an older brother who dominates his younger brother in childhood will have the same effect on his sibling even in later adolescence when he has left home for college. Thus the interactions between student teachers and family members are a direct outgrowth of earlier experiences.

However, as student teachers become increasingly independent and prepare to "leave home", parents and student teachers must renegotiate relationships and roles. Student teachers require different support systems to when they were younger. This is primarily because student teachers are actively exploring their independence. Separateness and self-assertion are not harmful characteristics of this age but are age appropriate and important for development. Barnes and Olsen (1985: 438) believe that some families encourage this development while others oppose it. These theorists add that in moderate but not extreme levels of cohesion and adaptability in family relationships help during the time when student teachers leave home. The adjustment seems best made if family relationships are somewhat flexible and adaptable, but not so loosely structured that they seem chaotic.

Grontevant and Cooper (1985: 415) also assert that family relationships are best if they can negotiate the changes in a rational fashion, taking into consideration each member's wants, needs and interests. Family cohesiveness can be maintained when parents and adolescents can approach each other as equals and establish a reciprocal relationship. Open communication in relationships helps to preserve the cohesion of the family. On the other hand, parents generally feel ambivalent towards adolescents' increasing maturity and movement away from family, despite this being what they have worked to accomplish. Many find it hard to accept that their child is growing away from them, and some feel they are being rejected. So much effort has been concentrated on their
child for so long that it is often difficult for parents to switch to other interests. However, parents must face and respond to the student teachers' clamour for autonomy, distinguishing between those demands which are real and must be granted from those which are merely token (Sarafino & Armstrong 1986: 500).

Sarafino and Armstrong (1986: 500) find that most student teachers get along well with their parents and siblings. They participate more and more in decisions that affect them and other members of the family. As student teachers enter early adulthood, their attitudes regarding many conflict issues become much like those of their parents. Although parent-student conflicts in relationships are not inevitable, they can be aggravated by a lack of trust and communication.

The interpersonal relationships of student teachers and their siblings depend on many factors, such as their relative age and sex. In most families these relationships become formalised by the parental assignment of duties and roles. That is why older adolescents tend to boss, command and reprimand their younger siblings.

3.4.4 Modern issues influencing parent-child-relationships

Many student teachers appear to accept adult models in their social environment and develop lifestyles commensurate with the values of their subcultural backgrounds and upbringing. However, since student teachers live in a social milieu which is quite different to that of their parents' generation, individuals carry with them into society their own particular family lifestyle which is "tailored" to present social requirements (Entwistle 1990: 1007).

The importance of the family in influencing student teachers' general lifestyles, attitudes to, and success in the education system and their involvement in interpersonal relationships has been clearly demonstrated. There are, however, a number of influences and forces in modern society that may cause changes in the family's potential to uphold interpersonal relationships that would help student teachers in their transition towards
adulthood. Some of these variations in family living patterns, such as the growth of one-parent families, may create a situation where there is less parental interest. In such settings the student teacher is more likely to turn to peers for help and advice. Student teachers conform to social pressures, either from family, lecturers or peers. The direction of this conforming behaviour varies depending on individuals' own psychological resources, social background and interpersonal skills (Entwistle 1990: 1008).

3.4.5 Summary

Families must adjust to student teachers' increasing independence as they prepare to "leave home", and try to minimise conflict within the family. Parenting styles and family dynamics need to accommodate the concerns of student teachers. Families can best adapt to maturing adolescents if they can renegotiate roles, maintaining cohesion, adaptability and good communication.

In developing autonomy, student teachers use rules, values and boundaries already absorbed from parents. Direct parental instruction and supervision, however, is less necessary now. Adolescents now see their parents more realistically, and perceive that they, too, obey accepted cultural norms and are not as "omnipotent" as they used to think them. Though they miss their childhood home, adolescents are self-reliant enough to leave home temporarily or even permanently. They can form their own opinions on fundamental matters such as religion even if these opinions conflict with those of their parents (Vrey 1992: 185).
3.5 THE ENHANCEMENT OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS OF STUDENT TEACHERS

3.5.1 Enhancement of the relationships between lecturers and student teachers

In the interpersonal relationship between lecturer and student teacher, it would seem that lecturers are most likely to enhance students' self-esteem and interpersonal relationships. Entwistle (1990: 987) believes that they should be fair, consistent, friendly, democratic and interested in the students, and rely on encouragement rather than censure, on praise rather than on blame, and on protecting students from the damaging effects of unexpected or repeated failure. Lecturers should also make every student feel a valued, significant and respected member of the class. This treatment helps students towards a realistic appraisal of the world and their own place within it. This implies that the lecturer prizes and values students as unique human beings, with their own unique potential and with their own right to realise that potential (Entwistle 1990: 988).

According to Knowles (1990: 123), cordial interpersonal relationships may reinforce desired behaviours, especially with regard to motivation and the transfer or maintenance of learning. These interpersonal relationships are characterised by the approval of interpersonal relationships, self-improvement, and are thus likely to enhance motivation to engage in learning activities. Knowles further maintains that lecturers who approve and reward good performance and behaviour in students encourage the maintenance of these qualities. In addition to this, the following characteristics of lecturers may be beneficial to their relationships with students:

- orderliness,
- clearly defined goals,
- careful explanation of expectations and opportunities,
- openness of the system of assessment and evaluation, and
- honest and objective feedback, in which the feelings of student teachers are considered to be as relevant to learning as ideas and skills.
Lecturers should also create relationships with student teachers which the latter experience as safe, caring, accepting, trusting, respectful, and understanding. This would imply collaboration rather than competitiveness, encouragement of group loyalties, supportive interpersonal relationships and a norm of interactive participation (Knowles 1990: 124).

According to Burns (1989: 69), teacher education involves close interpersonal relationships with a range of others such as students, lecturers and peers. Student teachers' attitudes to self and to others should be positive in order to enhance these interpersonal relationships in the classroom. Burns (1989: 69) mentions that a number of studies have shown that lecturers who can provide a warm, supportive, accepting ethos in their classrooms tend to facilitate student performance and enhance interpersonal relationships.

This approach nevertheless places the lecturer in an ambiguous position with regard to role and status. Some lecturers have a task-oriented rather than a person-oriented approach, and so a more student-centred, progressive approach to teaching, with its more intensive personal relationships, often is threatening to lecturers with low self-concepts. Lecturers who are determined to enhance interpersonal relationships have no need for defences, and may use a more unstructured, flexible approach. Such lecturers are able to relate to and accept all student teachers, irrespective of their characteristics and behaviours (Burns 1989: 75). In this way, the relationship between the lecturer and the student is positively enhanced.

One worthy goal for the college lecturer is to encourage students to participate. This leads to commitment to the course. Ultimately, such commitment can facilitate greater achievement and increased learning. In addition, teaching techniques that use social interaction methods can also enhance interpersonal relationships between students. For example, the following approaches can be effective (Schwartz 1980: 120):
• Ice breakers

The assumption underlying ice breakers is that providing some structure for acquainting class members with each other may help create a more open classroom climate, which will encourage sharing of thoughts and ideas. One such activity is a student interview. After selecting a partner, students proceed to find out the basics about each other: hometown, nickname, hobbies, how they decided on the college, and so on.

• Group process

There are many benefits of effective group efforts in classrooms. Working in small groups enhances student relationship skills and fulfils the need for affiliation. Students are more likely to take and ask questions in small groups than in large ones. Group work also promotes joint problem-solving, motivation and interest. The strength of a unified group may provide the impetus to achieve that individual efforts do not. Interpersonal relationships could also be enhanced by facilitating classroom group reports, such as where four or five students are randomly grouped and assigned a topic to research and present to the class at a later date.

3.5.2 Enhancement of the relationship between parents and student teachers

Parents can enhance their relationships with the student teachers by fostering independent thinking, personal responsibility, and an atmosphere of communication (Sarafino & Armstrong 1986: 501). These authors mention studies which indicate that student teachers whose parents accept their opinions and discuss family problems are more likely to perceive their parents as being fair and their family life as happy.

In addition, parents enhance their interpersonal relationships with their children by praising good behaviour and performance. Parents and student teachers have accumulated a history of experiences together and this shared history may enhance their interpersonal relationships and make them increasingly unique and meaningful (Seifert
& Hoffnung 1987: 556). Student teachers value the empathy and sensitivity that their parents can provide, and these also enhance their relationships. Family cohesiveness is also maintained when parents and the student teachers can approach each other as equals and establish a positive, reciprocal relationship (Grontevant & Cooper 1985: 415).

Interpersonal relationships between student teachers and parents are enhanced by the presence of love as its dominant feature. Love stimulates many other positive emotions and inhibits many negative ones. The effect of a stable love base is far reaching. Adolescents who feel loved simply because they are their parents' child do not have to constantly strive to keep their goodwill, but may take this for granted even when they differ from them or try their patience (Vrey 1992: 174). For example, student teachers who can rely on parental love and support feel freer to take risks to explore, try out their abilities, develop decision-making powers and openly compare alternatives, particularly with regard to their performance at college.

3.5.3 Enhancement of the relationships between student teachers and peers

Sullivan (in Seifert & Hoffnung 1987: 542) argues that relationships with peers have fundamentally different qualities from those with adults. In particular, peers stimulate skills in compromise, cooperation and competition. Sullivan also emphasises the value of peers in promoting emotional health. Peers create life for student teachers outside their families, and in doing so help correct biases that families inevitably give to student teachers. These authors further believe that the relationships between student teachers and their peers offer an opportunity for acquiring social skills, for evaluating and enhancing interpersonal relationships and for handling competition and cooperation.

Peers play a unique role in enhancing interpersonal relationships of student teachers by fostering cooperation and competition and in laying the basis for more intimate relationships later on in life. Student teachers are generally popular with their peers if they are confident and socially skilful, and unpopular if they are aggressive, authoritative or selfish (Seifert & Hoffnung 1987: 553). Enhanced interpersonal relationships can
create commitments to fairness and reciprocity, at least within an immediate circle of friends. Because peer groups involve social equals, they enhance relationships by giving student teachers unique opportunities to develop their own beliefs without having parents dominate or dismiss them. Acceptance and support by the peer group matter intensely to student teachers. They want to conform to the peer group's expectations in return for continued acceptance and prestige (Seifert & Hoffnung 1987: 552).

Hence positive attention and approval, affection and personal acceptance enhance interpersonal relationships between student teachers and their peers. Friendships in these relationships are also tremendously important. Sharing, in terms of partnerships that provide emotional support, also enhances interpersonal relationships (Craig 1989: 418). In addition, relationships with peers serve to provide adolescent student teachers with emotional support in coping with many changes in their lives and in reducing dependence on parents. Peer relationships are essential to student teachers' development of social skills. Peers act as models and as audiences for one another in experimenting with different behaviours. Interpersonal relationships between student teachers and their peers help students to form their identities (Craig 1989: 419).

Role change is an important feature of student teacher development. Firstly, growing independence from authority figures, involvement with peer groups and sensitivity to the evaluations of others promote positive interpersonal relationships with peers. Secondly, the need for reassurance and support for one's view of oneself is promoted. Thirdly, the effects of major environmental changes (such as changing of schools, moving from school to further education and leaving home) permit involvement with peers in a new set of interpersonal relationships. This can lead to a reassessment of the self-concept and enhanced interpersonal relationships with peers (Burns 1989: 128).

3.5.4 Summary

Persons, things and ideas are mutually connected through interpersonal relationships. Such relationships are usually dynamic and interactive and are initiated by individuals
through their involvement with others (Van den Aardweg 1988: 193). Relationships imply associations between individuals which are carried throughout life, giving them meaning and forming relationships.

The interpersonal relationships between student teachers and lecturers involve both cognitive and affective components. The relationship can be either caring, loving, trusting, accepting relationship, or neglectful, ignoring, distrusting and unpleasant. It is also cognitive in its nature of perception, memory, differentiation, understanding and knowledge.

The relationships with peers is characterised by an involvement in a dynamic relationship of acceptance vs rejection; avoidance vs being avoided; sought after vs not sought after. This relationship is dependent upon mutual knowledge, conformity of behaviour and attitudes, acceptance and preferences for a particular individual, trust and cooperation in social and sporting activities (Van den Aardweg 1988: 193).

Therefore, it is important for student teachers to build positive relationships with both lecturers and peers in the multicultural setting of the college community. Student teachers must remember that "the cement of social life does not consist of grand passions or cosmic philosophies. It consists of casual conversations and relationships, small talk, and the sharing of minor enthusiasms" (Burns 1989: 75). The self-concept of individuals would appear to play a major role in all of this. What people think of themselves do not form an encapsulated system having no relevance beyond the boundary of their own being. On the contrary, it reaches out to influence their interpersonal relationships with others. The self-concept provides a unique perspective for viewing one's relationships with others.
Chapter 4

RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous three chapters of this research were intended to establish which factors are related to the self-concept and interpersonal relationships of student teachers. An extensive literature study of the work of different theorists was carried out with regard to the different aspects of the self-concept. (These aspects will be delineated in this chapter.) This was followed by a literature study on interpersonal relationships during adolescence, and especially late adolescence.

This chapter outlines the empirical design which examines how variables such as gender and year group influence the relationship between various factors and self-concept as well as the interpersonal relationships of student teachers. The general problem will be stated again in this chapter and reference to the appropriate sections in chapter one will be made. Thereafter specific problem statements will be given and justified by means of cross references to appropriate sections in the previous chapters of the literature review.

The hypotheses which were formulated according to the specific problem statements will be stated, and will include both the experimental and the null hypotheses. Cross references will also be made to appropriate sections in the literature chapter.

Finally the research design used to test the hypotheses will be outlined. This is a nomothetic, ex post facto research design. A detailed description of the questionnaire will be given, including the aspects chosen, and the number of questions formulated around each aspect, an explanation of the response scale used and a description of how the sample was selected. Cross references will be provided.
4.2 GENERAL AND SPECIFIC PROBLEM STATEMENTS

4.2.1 General problem statements

What is the relationship between the self-concept of student teachers and their interpersonal relationships? (See section 1.3.)

The literature review has shown that students at college have a much more sophisticated view of what is involved in a sense of self than younger children. The self-concepts of younger children tend to centre on concrete characteristics, whereas those of adolescents are likely to be more abstract and to include, amongst others, interpersonal relationships (Harter et al in Conger 1988:59).

Self-conceptions also become more differentiated and better organised during adolescence (Chandler et al in Conger 1988:59). Thus adolescents describe themselves in terms of their beliefs and personality characteristics, which in turn influence interpersonal relationships (Montemayor & Eisen 1977: 318) (see section 1.2.5).

4.2.2 Specific problem statements

Problem statement 1:
Is there a significant correlation between the self-concept and interpersonal relationships of student teachers?

It has already been stated in the literature review that late adolescents are expected to accept more responsibility since they are regarded as being almost adult and therefore assume more adult roles. They therefore question the attitudes and beliefs they adopted through identification with others during childhood. They now form a clear picture of their own unique attributes, values, interests and needs. So they begin to seek answers to the questions "Who am I?" "What am I?" and "What do I want?" (Gerdes 1989: 87). (See section 2.2.2.)
In addition, Craig (1989: 400) states that although significant others may exist for individuals at all stages of life, they often have their greatest impact during adolescence when teenagers actively seek models. Thus adolescents are surrounded by a bewildering variety of roles offered by a multitude of reference groups and significant others. These roles must be integrated into a personal identity and the conflicting ones reconciled or discarded (see section 2.2.2).

According to Rogers (in Jones 1992: 6), the self-concept may incorporate the values of others, and evolves as a result of a person's interaction with the environment (see section 2.3).

Problem statement 2:
Is there a significant correlation between the self-concept and interpersonal relationships of the following groups of student teachers:
- males
- females
- different year groups?

Section 3.5.3 shows that positive attention and approval, affection and personal acceptance enhance interpersonal relationships between student teachers and their peers. Friendships in these relationships are also tremendously important. Sharing in student teachers' peer relationships enhances interpersonal relationships because of partnerships that provide emotional support (Craig 1989: 418) (see section 3.5.3).

Major environmental changes (such as changing of schools, moving from school to further education and leaving home) permit involvement with peers in a new set of interpersonal relationships. This can lead to reassessment of the self-concept and enhanced interpersonal relationships with peers (Burns 1989: 128) (see section 3.5.3).
Problem statement 3: What is the relative contribution of various interpersonal relationships of the student teachers to the overall self-concept?

Interpersonal relationships may be significant in the development of self-concepts of student teachers. This is indicated by research which has shown that the importance of peer groups increases enormously during adolescence. Studies have shown that adolescents spend most of their time at college with their peers, friends and classmates and much less time with their families (Csikzentmihalyi & Larson in Craig 1989:412). Relationships with peers have many functions in the life of the adolescent, some of which are mentioned in section 3.2.1.

Entwistle (1990: 1009) states that the physiological and psychological changes experienced by all adolescents require them to reappraise their self-image. It is important for these self-images to be reinforced by peers at this stage (see section 3.2.3).

Landman, Van der Merwe, Pitout, Smith and Windell (1990: 16) assert that the interpersonal relationship between student teachers and lecturers should involve, amongst others, care, trust, knowledge and understanding, authority, support and sensitivity (see section 3.3.1). It is lecturers who must provide the right climate of positive interpersonal relationships. An affective atmosphere in which authentic information can be imparted and in which a student teacher feels free to discuss intimate problems without embarrassment to either party should exist (see section 3.3.8).

The literature review shows that the most important relationship in the lives of student teachers is with their family. It is through this relationship that they seek personal and interpersonal growth (Becker 1992: 128). This is evident in the fact that parents are the touchstone of adolescents' interpersonal selves throughout life, and represent the place they began and often the place to which they must return to truly know themselves. It is in this relationship that children begin to be and to become themselves and have their first interpersonal experiences (see section 3.4.1).
Problem statement 4:

What is the relative contribution of each of the aspects of the self-concept to the interpersonal relationships of student teachers?

Self-concept may play a significant role in the forming of interpersonal relationships. For example, the literature review shows that, in most societies, physical attractiveness is emphasised throughout life. Physically "beautiful" persons hold a high and privileged status and are given special consideration by others (Lanyon & Goodstein 1982: 17) (see section 2.5.2). Physical appearance consequently influences self-concept and hence confidence to form interpersonal relationships. Similarly Dion et al (Jones 1992: 12) state that physically attractive people are seen by others as more exciting, more sociable, more interesting, more sensitive and kinder than less attractive people (see section 2.5.2).

Van den Aardweg (1988: 13) adds that cognitive development crystallises the self-concept in later adolescence. In addition, adolescents begin to frame a philosophy of life which, now that they are able to think abstractly and adopt various viewpoints, is exciting and interesting. Adolescents are able to take part in arguments, debating logically and sensibly, and can wrestle with problems, all of which is stimulating and enlightening. They are boldly confident to voice their opinions and speak out on social and other injustices. They also look forward to their future career with its possibilities of further study or training, job satisfaction, marriage, an own home and, above all, emancipation (see section 2.5.3). In this way, cognitive self-concept may influence interpersonal relationships.

Two aspects of forming an integrated sense of moral self are mentioned in the literature review. They are as follows:

(1) the need to come to terms with the problems brought on by sexual maturity and
(2) the need to cope with the new social relationships of work and responsibility in the adult community (Cole & Cole 1989: 582).
Wegner (Gerdes 1989: 79) says that the moral self-concept relates to individuals' perceptions of the extent to which they satisfy the prescribed rules of conduct in a given society. He further stipulates that morals are rules regarding interpersonal behaviour which, as they become internalised, give rise to the moral self (see section 2.5.4). Coleman (1987: 32) maintains that adolescents' self-concepts and morality show moderate correlations with their perceptions of family environments and more modest relationships with their perceptions of school environments (see section 2.5.4).

The literature review reveals that the different social contexts of the adolescent not only reveal the self-concept, but also shape it. Each social context exerts unique role demands. For example, there may be expectations to be obedient, helpful and polite with parents; with friends, loyal, talkative and active. These role expectations may not determine the adolescent self-concept, but they surely influence it (Lapsley & Power 1988: 75) (see section 2.5.5.2).

Burns (1982: 4) believes that a positively enhanced social self-concept seems to depend on possessing well-grounded feelings of acceptance, competence and worth, since every human being wants to belong and to be accepted by a group, initially a family group. Such acceptance implies that others regard one as worthy and competent in some relevant behaviour (see section 2.5.5.2).

Finally, the literature review shows that group membership also influences the self-concept. For example, membership of a high status group may contribute to an enhanced self-concept. Coopersmith (Gerdes 1988:79) states that a person's relationship with her or his parents is the most important factor in the formation and enhancement of the self-concept (see section 2.5.5.2).

Problem statement 5:
Is there a significant difference between the self-concepts of males and females?
There may be significant differences between the self-concepts of males and females because of differences in identity, which is an aspect of self-concept.

The literature review indicates that fundamental differences may exist between the identity formation of females and males, based upon their different roles and experience in society (Gilligan 1982: 85). Erikson's view is that male identity develops in relation to the world of work, while female identity is significantly related to intimacy with others. Gilligan (1982: 86) supports the above statement in stating that women's development of morality, which is an important aspect of identity, focuses not only on rights and rules as it does for men, but also on responsibility and relationships with others (see section 2.2.2).

Problem statement 6:
*Is there a significant difference between the self-concepts of first-, second- and third-year students?*

The literature review indicates that contradiction and conflict begin to decline in late adolescence. The capacity to coordinate, resolve and normalise seemingly contradictory attributes emerges, reducing the experience of conflict within one's self-concept (Harter & Monsour 1992: 251) (see section 2.4.1).

There is considerable evidence to support the above statement in that the self-concept becomes more differentiated during late adolescence (Damon et al in Harter & Monsour 1992: 257). In addition, the self-concept during late adolescence is characterised by differentiation of various selves. At this stage the self-concept manifests itself in role-specific self-descriptions such as the self with parents, friends and romantic others and the self in the classroom (Harter & Monsour 1992: 251) (see section 2.4.1).

Adolescents describe themselves in terms of their beliefs and personality characteristics. These are qualities which are essential and intrinsic to the self, and which produce a picture of the self that is sharp and unique (Burns 1982:41) (see section 2.4.1).
Finally, Oppenheimer (1990: 99) says the self-concept during late adolescence includes all the characteristics of the self considered by individuals when answering the question "What am I like?" (see section 2.4.1).

Problem statement 7:
*Is there a significant difference in the interpersonal relationships of males and females?*

Humanistic psychologists suggest that we create psychological climates which are experienced by the individuals in them as safe, caring, accepting, trusting, respectful and understanding. The field theorists among them especially emphasise "collaboration rather than competitiveness, encouragement of group loyalties, supportive interpersonal relationships and norm of interactive participation" (Knowles 1990: 123).

This statement indicates that student teachers are in a position which may make extraordinary demands on them to maintain good interpersonal relationships with everyone with whom they make contact during the course of their studies. To bring about harmony and good relationships they need to be unusually diplomatic, respectful, sensitive, tactful and professional, while maintaining a sense of goodwill and friendliness (Van den Westhuizen 1991: 587) (see section 3.1). Are female student teachers better at this than male student teachers, or vice versa?

Problem statement 8:
*Is there a significant difference in the interpersonal relationships of first-, second- and third-year students?*

The literature review indicates that peer relationships are essential to student teachers' development of social skills. The reciprocal equality that characterises adolescent relationships also helps develop positive responses to the various crises these young people face. Adolescents learn behaviours that are socially rewarded and the roles that best suit their needs from their friends and peers. Social competence is an important
element in adolescents' ability to make new friends and maintain old ones (Fischer et al 1986: 14) (see section 3.2.2).

In addition, peer interpersonal relationships are seen to require distinct forms of reciprocity, in which self and others are called on to interact in quite different ways. The exercise of these forms of reciprocity leads to desperate conclusions about who the self is and who the self may be within interpersonal relationships (Youniss 1980: 33). Peers are potent sources of reinforcement and service as social models (see section 3.2.2). Hence the question arises as to whether student teachers learn to improve their social skills with age.

4.3 HYPOTHESES

The following six hypotheses (derived from the literature review, and more specifically from the problem statements) are stated to guide the empirical investigation. (The hypotheses are numbered according to the numbers of the problem statements from which they were formulated):

Hypothesis 1:
There is a significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers.

Null hypothesis 1:
There is no significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers.

Section 3.2.3 states that research has shown that student teachers work out an identity with close friends and peers. To be able to accept this identity, student teachers must feel accepted, appreciated and liked by others. It is believed that the physiological and psychological changes experienced by all adolescents require them to reappraise their self-images, and at this stage it is important for these self-images to be reinforced by
peers. Therefore, it is appropriate to anticipate a significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers. (Also see section 4.2.2.)

Hypothesis 2:
*There is a significant correlation* between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of the following groups of student teachers:
  * males
  * females
  * different year groups

Null hypothesis 2:
*There is no significant correlation* between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of the following groups of student teachers:
  * males
  * females
  * different year groups

The literature review indicates that student teachers' relationships with their peers are based on dependence on one another for companionship and comfort. These friendships provide loving contexts for personal and interpersonal development. The love that friends have for one another nourishes and affirms individual lives and heartens involvement in the lives of others. There are many personal benefits of positive interpersonal relationships among student teachers and their peers, for example, feeling special, being accepted and cared for. Student teachers can feel encouraged to be themselves and to risk becoming whom they wish to be. Consequently, there seems to be a significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of diverse groups of students. (See section 4.2.2.)

(No hypotheses need to be formulated for problem statements 3 and 4.)
Hypothesis 5:
There is a significant difference between the self-concepts of males and females.

Null hypothesis 5:
There is no significant difference between the self-concepts of males and females.

It has already been stated in section 2.2.2 that fundamental differences may exist between the self-concept formation of females and that of males, based upon their different roles and experiences in society (also see section 4.2.2). Thus it would seem appropriate to anticipate significant differences between the self-concepts of males and females.

Hypothesis 6:
There is a significant difference between the self-concepts of first, second and third year students.

Null hypothesis 6:
There is no significant difference between the self-concepts of first-, second- and third-year students.

The development of the self-concept is seen to begin in infancy and continue throughout one's lifetime. It constantly undergoes modification in response to the environment, including the environment at the teachers' training college (see section 2.3 and 4.2.2).

In addition, it has been indicated that individuals appear to gain their basic sense of who they are and what their place is in the world in childhood, partly through the process of identifying with admired others, and behaving as much like them as possible (see section 2.3). Therefore, one may anticipate that the way the student teachers perceive others in different year groups might influence their self-concepts.
Hypothesis 7:
*There is a significant difference between the interpersonal relationships of males and females.*

Null hypothesis 7:
*There is no significant difference between the interpersonal relationships of males and females.*

It is indicated in section 4.2.2 that fundamental differences may exist between the interpersonal relationships of males and females. These differences are based upon the roles that the genders play in society. For example, Erikson's view is that male identity develops in relation to the world of work whilst female identity develops through a relationship of intimacy with others. Significant differences may therefore be anticipated in the interpersonal relationships of males and females.

Hypothesis 8:
*There is a significant difference between the interpersonal relationships of first-, second- and third-year students.*

Null hypothesis 8:
*There is no significant difference between the interpersonal relationships of first-, second- and third-year students.*

The literature review in section 3.2.2 shows that there is a reciprocal equality that characterises adolescent relationships. It is mentioned that adolescents learn behaviours that are socially rewarded and the roles that best suit their needs from their friends and peers. Social competence is important in making new friends and in keeping old relationships. These skills may improve with age. Therefore, there may be significant differences in the interpersonal relationships of first-, second- and third-year students (see section 4.2.2).
4.4 METHOD OF EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

This is a nomothetic, ex post facto research design in which the researcher attempts to determine the differences in the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers, or the correlations in the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers. According to Gay (1981: 197), this method involves the observation that groups differ according to a certain variable. The researcher then attempts to identify the major factor(s) that are related to this difference.

Having formulated specific hypotheses, it is necessary to carefully delineate the method and procedure which are followed in testing them. Therefore, the objectives of the empirical research and the statistical techniques which are used to analyse the data are described below.

4.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The objectives of the empirical research are:

(1) to determine the correlations between the self-concept and interpersonal relationships of student teachers (as applied to the whole population, males and females and different year groups);

(2) to determine the relative contribution of various interpersonal relationships of student teachers to the overall self-concept;

(3) to determine the relative contribution of each of the aspects of the self-concept to the interpersonal relationships of student teachers;

(4) to determine if a significant difference between the self-concepts of males and females exists;
to determine if significant differences exist between the self-concepts of first-, second- and third-year students;

(6) to determine if a significant difference exists between the interpersonal relationships of males and females;

(7) to determine if significant differences exist between the interpersonal relationships of first-, second- and third-year students.

4.6 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

The statistical analysis will be done by the Computer Department at Unisa. The analysis will be done by means of the SAS (Statistical Analysis System) version six on Unix. The following statistical techniques were chosen to achieve the objectives listed above:

(1) The statistical technique of correlation will be used to determine any correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers, including moderator variables such as gender and year group.

(2) Stepwise regression analysis will be used to calculate the relative contribution of the diverse aspects of the self-concept to interpersonal relationships of student teachers.

(3) T-tests will be used to establish whether significant differences exist between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of the two genders.

(4) In order to determine the significance of the difference between the self-concepts of the three year groups, an analysis of variance followed by t-tests (if significant differences are found) will be done. This statistical technique will also be used to determine the significance of difference in the interpersonal relationships of the three year groups.
4.7 THE RESEARCH SAMPLE

The research sample includes 300 student teachers, consisting of both male and female students from all the three-year groups at a College of Education. All students follow a three-year university diploma in education programme. They major in one of the following three courses:

- University Diploma in Education Secondary (U.D.E.S.)
- University Diploma in Education Primary (U.D.E.P.)
- University Diploma in Education Early Childhood Learning (U.D.E.E.L.)

Since it is usually not possible to deal with the whole of the target population, one must identify that portion of the population to which one has access (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh 1990: 170). The accessible population comprises 300 to 400 student teachers from which the sample for this study will be taken. This is in line with the statement that one selects a sample from the accessible population in such a way that it is representative of that population. If the sample selected is truly representative of the accessible population, then little difficulty will be experienced in making this first step in the generalisation process (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh 1990: 171).

On the other hand, Gay (1981: 98) maintains that selecting samples using even the very best technique does not guarantee that they will be representative of the population. According to Gay, sampling error which is beyond the control of the researcher can exist. He points out that the sample may have, for example, fewer males proportionally to females. In the case of the present research the latter can be anticipated because at the College of Education used in this study, female students far outnumber male students. For this reason, a stratified random sampling will be used to ensure that the sample is representative of the population from which it was drawn. This method of sampling is emphasised by Gay (1981: 101) as the process of selecting a sample in such a way that identified subgroups are represented in the same proportion in which they exist in the population.
The researcher will not work with the whole population of 450 first-, second- and third-year student teachers but will take a stratified random sample of 300 student teachers. The method used is as follows:

1. A table of random numbers is used to select the sample. Each subject is selected on a purely random or chance basis.

2. A list of all subjects of the population for each year group will be compiled.

3. A desired sample of student teachers is selected by assigning all individuals on the list a consecutive number from zero to the required number for that population.

4. Numbers are selected from the table of random numbers starting at any point.

This process is repeated for all three year groups so that students from each year group are presented in the sample in the same ratio as in the population.

4.8 PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Permission to carry out the empirical part of the research was requested from the rectorate of the College of Education. The researcher explained the purpose of the study to the rectorate. This included the potential usefulness of the study for the college. The researcher assured the rectorate that the questionnaire would be administered by the researcher with the permission of the lecturers involved, and that the administration of the questionnaire would in no way affect or interfere with the normal lecturing periods. The name of the college would not be mentioned in the dissertation. It was pointed out that the results of this study would hopefully highlight important aspects which may lead to the enhancement of the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers. Permission was subsequently granted.
4.9 QUESTIONNAIRE

4.9.1 Questionnaire format

According to Bester and Olivier (1992: 40), the arrangements of items in a questionnaire is partly determined by the nature of the items. If contentious issues or delicate items appear at the beginning, respondents tend to be put off. It is therefore preferable to ask general questions first and then move on to specific ones. Therefore, the questionnaire in the present research focuses first on non-threatening questions such as the gender and the year groups of the respondents.

The research study aims to draw conclusions based on aspects of the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of male and female student teachers in three different year group. This implies that their self-concepts and interpersonal relationships need to be measured. This measurement is done by means of a questionnaire.

The type of questionnaire used in this study is a closed or structured questionnaire. A five point scale is used so that the respondents may choose from the five given alternatives. Responses to statements given may be:

- strongly agree
- agree
- undecided
- disagree
- strongly disagree

The advantages of this type of questionnaire are as follows:

- less time consuming to complete;
- limits respondents' responses;
- relatively objective and acceptable;
convenient to fill in;
- easy to tabulate and analyse;
- all respondents answer the questions within certain limits and according to the same frame of reference.

Each question is carefully weighed to determine whether the response would help to provide the best answer to the research problem (Bester & Olivier 1992: 37).

In designing the questionnaire, the researcher asked the opinion of experts in the field of self-concept and interpersonal relationships about the appropriateness of the questions in the questionnaire. Face validity was thus determined. The researcher also ensured that the questionnaire covered all aspects of the literature study to ensure content validity.

In order to produce reliable and valid responses, the questionnaire

- is concise and neat;
- is clear and unambiguous;
- has short and simple items;
- is brief but sufficiently detailed to collect the required information.

4.9.2 Formulating the questions

The researcher formulated questions by focusing on the following aspects:

- physical self-concept - 13 questions
- cognitive self-concept - 13 questions
- moral-religious self-concept - 13 questions
- social self-concept - 13 questions
- emotional self-concept - 13 questions
- relationships with lecturers - 15 questions
relationships with peers - 15 questions
relationships with parents - 15 questions

This resulted in 65 questions on the self-concept. Fifteen questions on each of the interpersonal relationships examined were designed, resulting in 45 questions on interpersonal relationships.

Half of these questions for self-concepts and/or interpersonal relationships were formulated in a positive light and half were formulated in a negative light.

Tables 1 to 8 indicate the aspects considered in formulating questions for the questionnaire.

**TABLE 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of the physical self-concept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>grooming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stylish clothes/dress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beauty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neatness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>posture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hair style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attractiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clumsiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>femininity/masculinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unattractiveness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See section 2.5.2)
### TABLE 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of the cognitive self-concept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>limitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>differentiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>slow-wittedness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See section 2.5.3)

### TABLE 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of the moral-religious self-concept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>right/wrong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>religious commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-consistency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rebel/conformist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spiritual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behaviour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See section 2.5.4)
TABLE 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of the social self-concept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>social distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sensitivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disobedience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>criticism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See section 2.5.5)

TABLE 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of the emotional self-concept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hating/loving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anger/joy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vulnerability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>empathy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See section 2.5.6)
TABLE 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of the relationships with lecturers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>criticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>friendship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See section 3.3)

TABLE 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of the relationships with peers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reinforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appreciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conformity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opposite sex</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See section 3.2)
TABLE 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of the relationship with parents/family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>honesty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loneliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mutuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comfort</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See section 3.4)

The questionnaire appears in Appendix A.

4.9.3 Pilot study

The researcher undertook a pilot study to test the questionnaire. Ary et al (1990: 109) claims that pilot studies demonstrate the adequacy of the research procedures and the measures that have been selected for the variables.

The pilot questionnaire was administered to a small number of student teachers, similar to the target group. After the pilot group had completed the questionnaire, changes were made to a small number of questions.

4.10 SUMMARY

In this chapter the research problems and hypotheses were formulated and justified in the light of the literature review.
The research design and chosen statistical techniques were also explained. The questionnaire format and content were explained.

In chapter five, the results of the empirical research will be given and discussed. In each instance, the appropriate problem and hypothesis statements will be given.
Chapter 5

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the results of the empirical investigation on the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers at a college of education are presented, interpreted and analysed. The research problems as well as the hypotheses is stated again and a detailed discussion of results follows:

The sample of student teachers who took part in this study were as follows:

- males: 63
- females: 230
- first year students: 163
- second year students: 36
- third year students: 97

The results are presented in 28 tables. These quantitative results were based on the hypotheses which are also stated in this chapter. The analysis and the subsequent discussion of the findings are based on the tables, which show the relationships between the dependent variables such as the self-concept and interpersonal relationships. The results were obtained by using the following statistical techniques:

(1) The Pearson product moment correlation was used to determine the relationships between the following:

(i) overall self-concept and overall interpersonal relationships
(ii) each self-concept and each interpersonal relationship.

(2) This was followed by stepwise regression analysis to determine which of the variables contributed significantly towards the self-concept and interpersonal relationships.

(3) After this t-tests were done to determine whether significant differences existed between the overall self-concepts of males and females.

(4) Thereafter analysis of variance (F-tests) were used to determine significant differences (if any) between diverse aspects of the self-concept.

The analysis was done by the Computer Department of the University of South Africa (Unisa).

5.2 PROBLEM-STATEMENTS

Problem statement 1:
Is there a significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers?

Problem statement 2:
Is there a significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of the following groups of student teachers?
* males
* females
* different year groups?

Problem statement 3:
What is the relative contribution of each of the interpersonal relationships of the student teachers to the overall self-concepts of the following groups of student teachers:
Problem statement 4:

What is the relative contribution of each of the aspects of the self-concept of student teachers to the total of interpersonal relationships of the following groups of student teachers:

- the sample
- males
- females
- different year groups?

Problem statement 5:

Is there a significant difference between the self-concepts of males and females of the following groups:

- the sample
- different year groups?

Problem statement 6:

Is there a significant difference between the self-concepts of first-, second- and third-year students?

Problem statement 7:

Is there a significant difference between the interpersonal relationships of males and females of the following groups:

- the sample
- different year groups?
Problem statement 8:

Is there a significant difference in the interpersonal relationships of first-, second- and third-year students?

5.3 HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were formulated. The numbers of the hypotheses were chosen to correspond to numbers of the problem statements:

Hypothesis 1:

There is a significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers.

Null hypothesis 1:

There is no significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers.

Hypothesis 2:

There is a significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of the following groups of student teachers:

* males
* females
* different year groups.

Null hypothesis 2:

There is no significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of the following groups of student teachers:

* males
* females
* different year groups.
(No hypotheses 3 and 4 were formulated according to the problem statements 3 and 4.)

Hypothesis 5:
There is a significant difference between the self-concepts of males and females.

Null hypothesis 5:
There is no significant difference between the self-concepts of males and females.

Hypothesis 6:
There is a significant difference between the self-concepts of first-, second- and third-year students.

Null hypothesis 6:
There is no significant difference between the self-concepts of first-, second- and third-year students.

Hypothesis 7:
There is a significant difference between the interpersonal relationships of males and females.

Null hypothesis 7:
There is no significant difference between the interpersonal relationships of males and females.

Hypothesis 8:
There is a significant difference in the interpersonal relationships of first-, second-, and third-year students.

Null hypothesis 8:
There is no significant difference in the interpersonal relationships of first-, second- and third-year students.
5.4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

Problem statement 1:

*Is there a significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers?*

The *Pearson correlation coefficient* was calculated to determine the relationships between:

(i) overall self-concept and overall interpersonal relationships and
(ii) each self-concept and each interpersonal relationship.

The probability level of each of these correlations are given. Interpretation of the resulting correlations are based on Mulder (1989:73). The results of this correlational analysis are presented in tables 9 and 10.

**TABLE 9**

*Pearson correlation coefficient between the self-concept and interpersonal relationship of student teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Correlation between the self-concept and interpersonal relationships</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>303</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 9 there is a moderate correlation (of 0.53) between the overall self-concept and the overall interpersonal relationships of student teachers. This correlation is significant at the 1% level because the probability (p) is smaller than 0.01. This means that as the overall self-concept improves, so do interpersonal relationships, and vice versa.
**TABLE 10**

*Pearson correlation coefficients between various interpersonal relationships and various aspects of the self-concept*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relations with...</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Moral</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Emotional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probability</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probability</td>
<td>p&lt;0.05</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
<td>p&lt;0.05</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probability</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 indicates that the correlations between the diverse aspects of the self-concepts and the different interpersonal relationships are either very low or low, although they are all significant at the 5% level or the 1% level.

**Summary with regard to problem statement 1:**

An important finding from tables 9 and 10 is that the correlation between self-concept and interpersonal relationships is moderate and significant.

**Problem statement 2:**

*Is there a significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of the following groups of student teachers:*

* males
* females
* different year groups?
With regard to the genders, the results are presented in tables 11 to 13 and with regard to the year groups, the results are presented in tables 14 to 17.

**TABLE 11**

*Pearson correlation coefficients between overall interpersonal relationships and the self-concepts of males and females*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 11, there are moderate correlations (of 0.50 and 0.53) between the overall interpersonal relationships and the self-concepts of males and of females. Both these correlations are significant at the 1% level.

**TABLE 12**

*Correlation of various interpersonal relationships with the self-concepts of 63 males*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>p&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>p&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 indicates the correlations of various interpersonal relationships with the self-concepts of 63 males.
The relationship with lecturers and with peers show low correlations (of 0.26). However, both these correlations are significant at the 5% level.

The relationship with parents shows a moderate correlation (of 0.53). This correlation is significant on the 1% level.

**TABLE 13**

*Correlation of various interpersonal relationships with the self-concepts of 230 females*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13 shows the correlations of various interpersonal relationships with the self-concepts of 230 females.

The relationship with lecturers show a moderate correlation (of 0.47) with the self-concepts of females.

The relationship with peers and with parents show low correlations (of 0.33 and 0.36) with self-concepts.

All these correlations are significant at 1% level.
TABLE 14

*Pearson correlation coefficient between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers from different year groups*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Correlation between self-concept and interpersonal relationships</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First-year</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second-year</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-year</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 14, the **Pearson correlation coefficient** between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers from different year groups are as follows:

- There are moderate correlations (of 0.58 and 0.41) between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of 163 first-year students and 97 third-year students.

- There is a high correlation (0.65) between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of 36 second-year students.

- All these correlations are significant at the 1% level.
TABLE 15

*Correlation of various interpersonal relationships with the self-concepts of 163 first-year students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15 shows that both the relationship with lecturers and with parents show moderate correlations (of 0.46 and 0.45 respectively) with the self-concepts of 163 first-year students. The correlation between these students' relationship with peers and their self-concepts is low (0.39).

All the aforementioned correlations are significant at the 1% level.

TABLE 16

*Correlation of various interpersonal relationships with the self-concepts of 36 second-year students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to table 16, the correlations of various interpersonal relationships with the self-concepts of 36 second-year students are as follows:

All the correlations between the self-concept and relationships with lecturers, peers and parents are moderate (0.56, 0.43 and 0.53 respectively).

All the above-mentioned correlations are significant at 1% level.

**TABLE 17**

*Correlation of diverse interpersonal relationships with the self-concepts of 97 third-year students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>p&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>p&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 17, the correlations of the various interpersonal relationships with the self-concepts of the 97 third-year students are either low or very low. Of these, the correlation with peers is not significant as the probability is greater than 0.05.

Summary with regard to problem statement 2:

According to tables 11 to 17, the following can be stated:

- The correlation between the self-concept and interpersonal relationships of males and females were moderate and significant.
For males, the correlation between their self-concepts and their relationships with their parents was also moderate and significant. For females, the correlation between their self-concepts and their relationships with their lecturers was moderate and significant.

For first- and third-year students, the correlations between the self-concept and interpersonal relationships are moderate, whereas they are high for second-year students.

For first-year students, the correlations between their relationships with lecturers and parents and their self-concepts are moderate and significant.

For second-year students, the correlations between their relationships with lecturers, peers and parents and their self-concepts are moderate and significant.

Problem statement 3:

What is the relative contribution of each of the interpersonal relationships of the student teachers to the overall self-concept of the following groups of student teachers:

* the sample
* males
* females
* different year groups?

The results are indicated in tables 18 to 23.
TABLE 18

Summary of stepwise procedure for dependent variable self-concept of student teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Variable: Relations with...</th>
<th>Variance ($r^2$)</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>lecturers</td>
<td>0,20</td>
<td>73,5612</td>
<td>p&lt;0,01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>lecturers + parents</td>
<td>0,28</td>
<td>34,4481</td>
<td>p&lt;0,01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>lecturers + parents + peers</td>
<td>0,29</td>
<td>5,1259</td>
<td>p&lt;0,05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 18, three variables contribute significantly to the self-concepts of all the student teachers, as follows:

- 20% of the variance in the self-concept of student teachers can be explained by relationships with lecturers;
- 28% of the variance in the self-concept can be explained by relationships with both lecturers and parents. Eight percent of the variance can be explained by relationships with parents.

Both the aforementioned are significant at the 1% level.

- In the same way, 1% of the variance in self-concept can be explained by relationships with peers. This is significant at the 5% level.
TABLE 19

Summary of stepwise procedure for dependent variable self-concept of male student teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Variable: Relations with...</th>
<th>Variance ($r^2$)</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>parents</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>23.8445</td>
<td>$p&lt;0.01$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In table 19 it is indicated that one variable contributes significantly to the self-concepts of male student teachers as follows:

- 28% of the variance in the self-concepts of male student teachers can be explained by relationships with parents. This was significant at the 1% level.

TABLE 20

Summary of stepwise procedure for dependent variable self-concept of female teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Variable: Relations with...</th>
<th>Variance ($r^2$)</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>lecturers</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>64.4381</td>
<td>$p&lt;0.01$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>lecturers + parents</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>19.5024</td>
<td>$p&lt;0.01$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>lecturers + parents + peers</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>4.4050</td>
<td>$p&lt;0.05$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20 indicates that three variables contribute significantly to the self-concepts of female student teachers as follows:
22% of the variance in the self-concept of female student teachers can be explained by relationships with lecturers;

6% (28-22) of the variance in the self-concept can be explained by relationships with parents.

Both the above-mentioned are significant at the 1% level.

Similarly 2% (30-28) of the variance in self-concept can be explained by relationships with peers. This is significant at the 5% level.

**TABLE 21**

Summary of stepwise procedure for dependent variable self-concept of first-year students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Variable: Relations with...</th>
<th>Variance ($r^2$)</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>lecturers</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>43.0391</td>
<td>$p&lt;0.01$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>lecturers + parents</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>20.9885</td>
<td>$p&lt;0.01$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>lecturers + parents + peers</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>6.0664</td>
<td>$p&lt;0.05$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 21 shows that three variables contribute significantly to the self-concepts of first-year students as follows:

21% of the variance in the self-concept of first-year students can be explained by relationships with lecturers; and

9% (30-21) of the variance can be explained by relationships with parents.
Both the above-mentioned are significant at the 1% level.

- 3% (33-30) of the variance in the self-concept can be explained by relationships with peers. This is significant at the 5% level.

**TABLE 22**

*Summary of stepwise procedure for dependent variable self-concept of second-year students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Variable: Relations with...</th>
<th>Variance ($r^2$)</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>lecturers</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>15.2917</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>lecturers + parents</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>8.1043</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 22, two variables contribute significantly to the self-concepts of second-year student teachers as follows:

- 31% of the variance in the self-concept of second-year students can be explained by relationships with lecturers; and

- 14% (45-31) of the variance can be explained by relationships with parents.

Both are significant at the 1% level.
**TABLE 23**

*Summary of stepwise procedure for dependent variable self-concept of third-year students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Variable: Relations with...</th>
<th>Variance ($r^2$)</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>lecturers</td>
<td>0,15</td>
<td>16,0673</td>
<td>p&lt;0,01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>lecturers + parents</td>
<td>0,19</td>
<td>5,0378</td>
<td>p&lt;0,05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 23 indicates that two variables contribute significantly to the self-concepts of third-year student teachers as follows:

- 15% of the variance in the self-concept of third-year students can be explained by relationships with lecturers. This is significant at the 1% level; and

- 4% of the variance can be explained by relationships with parents. This is significant at the 5% level.

**Summary with regard to problem statement 3:**

The findings from tables 18 to 23 indicate the following:

- Relationships with *lecturers* contribute most towards the self-concepts of all the student teachers, although relationships with parents and peers also play a role.

- Relationships with *parents* contribute most towards the self-concepts of *males*; while relationships with *lecturers* and, to a lesser extent, with *parents*, contribute most towards the self-concepts of *females*. 
For first-, second- and third-year students, relationships with lecturers contribute most to their self-concepts, and thereafter, relationships with parents.

Problem statement 4:
What is the relative contribution of each of the aspects of the self-concept of student teachers to the total of interpersonal relationships of the following groups of student teachers:

* the sample
* males
* females
* different year groups?

**TABLE 24**

Summary of stepwise procedure for dependent variable interpersonal relationships of student teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Aspect of self-concept</th>
<th>Variance ($r^2$)</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>cognitive</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>69.9958</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>cognitive + social</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>37.2666</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>cognitive + social + moral</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>6.7368</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>cognitive + social + moral + emotional</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>4.6826</td>
<td>p&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 24 shows that four variables contribute significantly to interpersonal relationships of student teachers as follows:
19% of the variance in interpersonal relationships of student teachers can be attributed to their cognitive self-concepts;

9% (28-19) of the variance in interpersonal relationships can be attributed to the social self-concepts; and

1% of the variance can be attributed to the moral self-concepts of student teachers.

All the aforementioned are significant on the 1% level.

2% of the variance can be attributed to the emotional self-concepts of student teachers. This is significant at the 5% level.

TABLE 25

Summary of stepwise procedure for dependent variable interpersonal relationships of male student teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Aspect of self-concept</th>
<th>Variance ( (r^2) )</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>emotional</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>23.4250</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>emotional + moral</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>4.5728</td>
<td>p&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 25 indicates that two variables contribute significantly to the interpersonal relationships of male student teachers as follows:
28% of the variance in the interpersonal relationships of male student teachers can be attributed to their emotional self-concepts. This is significant at the 1% level.

5% (33-28) of the variance in the interpersonal relationships can be attributed to the moral self-concepts of male student teachers. This is significant at the 5% level.

**TABLE 26**

*Summary of stepwise procedure for dependent variable interpersonal relationships of female student teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Aspect of self-concept</th>
<th>Variance ($r^2$)</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>cognitive</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>53.4837</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>cognitive + social</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>28.5658</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>cognitive + social + moral</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>6.2195</td>
<td>p&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 26, three variables contribute significantly to the interpersonal relationships of female student teachers as follows:

- 19% of the variance in interpersonal relationships of female students can be explained by their cognitive self-concepts;
- 9% of the variance in interpersonal relationships can be explained by their social self-concepts.
Both the above-mentioned are significant at the 1% level.

- Consequently, 2% of the variance in interpersonal relationships of female students can be attributed to their moral self-concepts. This is significant at the 5% level.

**TABLE 27**

*Summary of stepwise procedure for dependent variable interpersonal relationships of first-year student teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Aspect of self-concept</th>
<th>Variance ($r^2$)</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>social</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>46.5266</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>social + cognitive</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>25.5216</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>social + cognitive + emotional</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>5.1727</td>
<td>p&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>social + cognitive + emotional + moral</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>5.0526</td>
<td>p&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 27 indicates that four variables contribute significantly to the interpersonal relationships of first-year student teachers as follows:

- 22% of the variance in interpersonal relationships of first-year students can be attributed to their social self-concepts; and

- 11% of the variance in interpersonal relationships can be explained by their cognitive self-concepts.
Both the aforementioned are significant at the 1% level.

- 2% of the variance in interpersonal relationships can be explained by their emotional self-concepts, and 2% by their moral self-concepts. Both the aforementioned are significant at the 5% level.

**TABLE 28**

*Summary of stepwise procedure for dependent variable interpersonal relationships of second-year student teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Aspect of self-concept</th>
<th>Variance ($r^2$)</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>social</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>12.0771</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>social + moral</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>4.48208</td>
<td>p&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>social + moral + cognitive</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>4.9763</td>
<td>p&lt;0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 28 indicates that three variables contribute significantly to the interpersonal relationships of second-year student teachers as follows:

- 26% of the variance in interpersonal relationships of second-year students can be attributed to their social self-concepts. This is significant at the 1% level.

- 9% (35-26) of the variance can be attributed to moral self-concepts; and

- 9% (44-35) of the variance can be attributed to the cognitive self-concepts of second-year student teachers.
Both the aforementioned are significant at the 5% level.

**TABLE 29**

*Summary of stepwise procedure for dependent variable interpersonal relationships of third-year student teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Aspect of self-concept</th>
<th>Variance ($r^2$)</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>cognitive</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>20.7142</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 29 shows that one variable contributes significantly to interpersonal relationships of third year student teachers as follows:

- 18% of the variance in interpersonal relationships can be attributed to the cognitive self-concepts of the students. This is significant at the 1% level.

Summary with regard to problem statement 4:

The findings from tables 24 to 29 indicate the following:

- The **cognitive** self-concept and, to a lesser degree, the **social** self-concept, contribute most towards the relationships of student teachers.

- For **males**, the **emotional** and then the **moral** self-concepts contribute significantly; while for **females**, the **cognitive** and then the **social** self-concepts contribute significantly towards their interpersonal relationships.

- For first-year students, the **social** and then the **cognitive** self-concepts contribute significantly; for second-year students, the **social** and then the **moral**; and for
third-year students, only the cognitive self-concepts contribute significantly towards interpersonal relationships.

Problem statement 5:
*Is there a significant difference between the self-concepts of males and females of the following groups:*
  * the whole sample
  * different year groups?

T-tests were done to determine whether significant differences exist between the overall self-concepts of males and females for the whole sample. No significant differences were identified. Thereafter it was decided to test for significant differences between the various aspects of the self-concept, namely the physical, cognitive, moral, social and emotional self-concepts. No significant differences were found between males and females except for the cognitive self-concept. These the results are as indicated in table 30:

**TABLE 30**

Average scores in cognitive self-concept and t-values for male and female students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3,909</td>
<td>0,419</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,0870</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>3,773</td>
<td>0,468</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When studying table 30, it is apparent that males have significant higher cognitive self-concepts than females (3,909 is higher than 3,773). This is significant at the 5% level. In other words, one can be 95% sure that this difference is not by chance.
T-tests were also done to see if significant differences exist between the overall self-concepts and the various aspects of the self-concept for the three year groups. The results are as follows:

For the first-year as well as the third-year groups, no significant differences exist between either the overall self-concepts or the various aspects of the self-concepts of males and females.

For the second-year group, significant differences were found to exist between the overall self-concepts of males and females as well as their social self-concepts. The results are as indicated in tables 31 and 32:

**TABLE 31**

*Average scores in overall self-concept and t-values for male and female second-year students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3,983</td>
<td>0,158</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3,694</td>
<td>0,229</td>
<td>2,4444</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>p&lt;0,05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 31 shows that males have significantly higher overall self-concepts than females (3.983 is higher than 3.694). This is significant at the 5% level. In other words, one can be 95% sure that this difference is not by chance.
**TABLE 32**

*Average scores in social self-concept and t-values for male and female second-year students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.231</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>p&lt;0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>3.701</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>2.8370</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 32 indicates that males have significantly higher social self-concepts than females (4.231 is higher than 3.701). This is significant at the 1% level.

Summary with regard to problem statement 5:

According to tables 30 to 32, the following can be stated:

- The male students have significantly higher **cognitive** self-concepts than the female students.

- The second-year **male** students have significantly higher overall and social self-concepts than the second-year female students.

Problem statement 6:

*Is there a significant difference between the self-concepts of first-, second- and third-year students for the following:*

  * overall self-concepts and
  * various aspects of the self-concept?
An analysis of variance was done to determine whether there are significant differences between the overall self-concepts of the three year groups. No significant differences were found.

The same procedure was followed to determine significant differences (if any) between the various aspects of the self-concept for the three year groups. Significant differences were found between the physical and the cognitive self-concepts of the three year groups as indicated by tables 33 and 34:

**TABLE 33**

*F-values for comparison of average physical self-concept of first-, second- and third-year students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Third-year</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>2,293</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-year</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second-year</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 34

F-values for comparison of average cognitive self-concept of first-, second- and third-year students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Third year</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>3,87</td>
<td>2,293</td>
<td>2,38</td>
<td>p &lt; 0,05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>3,77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second year</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3,69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables 33 and 34 demonstrate that significant differences exist between the physical self-concepts of third- and first-year student on the one hand, and second-year students on the other hand. In other words, 3,80 and 3,75 are significantly different from 3,65: the second-year students have a significant lower physical self-concept than the other year groups. This is significant at the 5% level. A similar result may be observed with regard to the cognitive self-concept. Table 34 indicates that the cognitive self-concepts of second-year students are significantly lower than the cognitive self-concepts of third- and first-year students. This is significant at the 5% level.

Summary with regard to problem statement 6:

- The physical and cognitive self-concepts of third- and first-year students are significantly higher than the physical and cognitive self-concepts of second-year students.

Problem statement 7:

Is there a significant difference between the interpersonal relationships of males and females for the following groups:

- the sample
T-tests were done to determine whether significant differences exist between the interpersonal relationships of males and females for the aforementioned groups.

The results show that no significant differences exist between the overall interpersonal relationships of males and females for the whole sample. However, when averages for males and females for the various relationships were compared, the results are as indicated in table 35.

**TABLE 35**

_Average scores of relationship with peers and t-values for male and female students_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3,693</td>
<td>0,349</td>
<td>2,3267</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>p&lt;0,05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>3,552</td>
<td>0,445</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 35 shows that males perceive themselves to have _better_ relationships with their peers than females do (3,693 is higher than 3,552). This is significant at the 5% level.

When the averages of the interpersonal relationships were compared for the three year groups separately, no significant differences were found. This was true for all the relationships as well as for various separate relationships.

Summary with regard to problem statement 7:

- The male students perceive themselves to have significantly better relationships with their peers than the female students do.
Problem statement 8:

*Is there a significant difference in the interpersonal relationships of first-, second-, and third-year students?*

An analysis of variance (F-tests) were done to determine any significant differences in this regard. No significant differences were found, except in one instance as indicated by table 36.

**TABLE 36**

*F-values for comparison of average relationships with peers for first-, second- and third-year students*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>F-value</th>
<th>Probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second year</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>2.293</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>p &lt; 0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First year</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third year</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown by table 36, first- and second-year students believe that they have significantly better interpersonal relationships than third-year students do. Thus is significant at the 5% level.

Summary with regard to problem statement 8:

The findings indicated that first- and second-year students believe their relationships with others are relatively good in comparison with the way in which third-year students perceive their relationships.
5.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter the problem and hypotheses were restated. The results were presented in table form, discussed and summarised.

In the next chapter the following will be discussed:

1. conclusions drawn from the literature study;
2. conclusions drawn from the empirical research;
3. conclusions drawn from both the literature study and the empirical research;
4. recommendations for lecturers;
5. limitations of the present study; and
6. recommendations for future research.
Chapter 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the sixth and final chapter of this research study conclusions are drawn from the literature study and include the following:

- Conclusions with regard to self-concepts (from the literature study)
- Conclusions with regard to interpersonal relationships (from the literature review)
- Conclusions with regard to the empirical research

Recommendations for lecturers are made. These are followed by the delineation of the limitations of the present study and recommendations for future research.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS WITH REGARD TO SELF-CONCEPTS

From the literature study, the following conclusions can be made:

1) The self-concept or the self is the means by which individuals are aware of and understand themselves as a corporate being with a past history and a probable or possible future.

Therefore, for this research, the self-concept can be seen as the total picture which the students have of themselves, how they see themselves, what their characteristics are, how they judge themselves in appearance, ability, talents, attitudes, feelings, motives, goals, ideals and values. These are based on the influences of other people as well as actual experiences. It is also influenced by what they would like to be, and by their gender, which is a salient element of the self-concept.
Adolescence is a time during which many young people formulate ideas and raise questions concerning their identity. With the acquisition of formal operational thought and a growing ability to think abstractly, many adolescents become involved in exploring who they are, what they value, and what they hope to become (see section 2.2.2).

It can also be concluded that the ideal self is the image that individuals create of themselves, and is the way they would like to be. The ideal self therefore serves as a guideline showing individuals what they should do to achieve the results they want. This is important for this study because if there is a great discrepancy between the perceived self and ideal self, this may negatively influence the self-concept. On the other hand, if the person sees the ideal self as within reach, it can motivate individuals and eventually influence the self-concept positively.

The self-concept can be seen as an attempt to explain ourselves to ourselves by building a scheme that organises our impressions, feelings and attitudes. However, this model or scheme is not permanent, unified or unchanging. In the words of Woolfolk, "our self-perceptions vary from situation to situation and from one phase of our lives to another" (see section 2.2.4). Therefore, it can be concluded that the self-concept can be changed and, most importantly, enhanced by minimising negative influences such as current or past social influences that inhibit the development of a positive self-concept.

The self-concept develops as a result of a person's interactions with the environment, including the environment at college. It grows or takes shape as students develop and interact with significant others. It also grows with maturation and learning. One could emphasise the fact that no one is born with a self-concept, but forms one as a result of experience within the environment. The self-concept also incorporates the values of others because self-conceptions are learned.
(5) The self-concept develops over many years. This means that the self-concept of the late adolescent continues to be influenced between the ages of 18 to 22. Although some authors see the self-concept of the adolescent as fairly stable, it may still change in interaction with the environment. A negative self-concept in some student teachers need not be fixed and may therefore be improved.

(6) The adolescent's overall self-concept can also be influenced by body-image. An adolescent who is healthy and attractive is more likely to have a positive self-concept. In addition, slenderness in females and masculinity in males would most likely enhance the physical self-concept. Stylish clothes add to the status of the adolescent and therefore also enhance the self-concept.

(7) Cognitive ability, especially the ability for abstract thought, plays a major role in the development of the overall self-concept.

(8) The moral-religious self-concept of the adolescent is as yet malleable. This implies that the moral-religious self-concept may be influenced positively.

(9) The social self-concept is influenced by the people in their various roles and contexts with whom adolescents have a relationship. For example, the self with parents may be open, depressed or sarcastic. With friends, the self may be caring, cheerful or rowdy. However, with a romantic partner, the self may be fun-loving, self-conscious or flirtatious.

(10) Warm, accepting and supportive family members enhance positive self-concepts in adolescents. Adolescents acquire a self-concept that is separate from the family of origin by becoming aligned with a peer group which can facilitate the transition from family self-concept to a full independent self-concept (see section 2.5.5.4). If adolescents are accepted and supported by a peer group, their self-concept is likely to be enhanced.
The affective self-concept of the adolescent girl is embedded within the family and is involved and concerned with relationships, while the adolescent boy values independence from others. Therefore, one can conclude that the self-concept is more likely to be defined in terms of relationships for adolescent girls. Thus the relational network impinges more strongly on the emotional self-concept.

Whatever exercises are used to attempt to enhance self-concepts of student teachers, the most important aspect of all the activities is the ethos within which they occur. The lecturer should create an environment of support and caring. Another important aspect is the safety and encouragement that students sense in the classroom. They should be able to express their feelings openly and without ridicule. They must also feel valued. Therefore, it can be concluded that without the critical environmental dimensions of trust, caring, openness and empathy, efforts to enhance students' self-concept will be seriously limited.

Finally, adolescents attempt to protect their self-concepts by viewing their positive attributes as central to self, whereas negative characteristics are relegated to the periphery.

6.3 CONCLUSIONS WITH REGARD TO INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Various facets of student teachers' interpersonal relationships with their peers influence the development of their self-concepts. Even though the peer group demands conformity, students' uniqueness is also accepted.

Close friendships are the most important interpersonal relationships that student teachers form with peers. The most positive interpersonal relationships arise where students and peers meet as equals, feel at home with one another and feel free to share their most intimate secrets, their most private thoughts and emotions.
(3) It is important for student teachers to build positive relationships with their lecturers and a diversity of peers in the multicultural setting of the college community. The cement of social life consists of casual conversations and relationships, such as small talk and the sharing of minor enthusiasms (see section 3.5.4). In this regard, the individual's self-concept would appear to play a major role. What individuals think of themselves do not form an encapsulated system having no relevance beyond the boundary of their own being. On the contrary, the self-concept reaches out to influence interpersonal relationships with others, and provides a unique perspective for viewing one's relationships with others.

(4) The interpersonal relationships between student teachers and lecturers should be characterised by unconditional acceptance, honesty, respect and tolerance. Most importantly, the lecturer should provide good instructions without moralising as well as the right climate for positive, interpersonal relationships. An affective atmosphere in which authentic information can be imparted should exist where student teachers feel free to discuss intimate problems without embarrassment to either party.

(5) Families should adjust to student teachers' increasing independence as they prepare to "leave home". There should be less conflict between student teachers and their families. Parenting styles and family dynamics should accommodate the concerns of student teachers. Families can best adapt to the student teacher if they can renegotiate roles and maintain cohesion, adaptability and good communication.

In developing autonomy, student teachers use rules, values and boundaries already absorbed from parents. Direct parental instruction and supervision, however, are less necessary now. Within their new-found emancipation, student teachers see their parents more realistically. They, too, obey accepted cultural norms and are not as "omnipotent" as they used to think them. Though they
miss their childhood home, student teachers are self-reliant enough to leave home temporarily or even permanently. They can form their own opinions on fundamental matters such as religion, even if these opinions conflict with those of their parents (see section 3.4.5).

It could also be concluded that the interpersonal relationships between student teachers and their parents are enhanced by the presence of love as the dominant feature. The student teachers who can rely on parental love and support feel freer to take risks to explore, try out their abilities, develop decision-making powers and openly compare alternatives, particularly with regard to their performance at college.

6.4 CONCLUSIONS FROM THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

(1) There is a moderate correlation between the overall self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers. This leads to a conclusion that as the overall self-concepts of student teachers improve, so do their interpersonal relationships (see table 9).

(2) The correlations between various aspects of the self-concept and the different interpersonal relationships are positive and significant but either low or very low. The highest correlation is between the cognitive self-concept and relationships with lecturers, indicating that lecturers may influence the cognitive self-concepts of students (see table 10).

(3) There are positive and moderate correlations between the overall interpersonal relationships and the self-concepts of both males and females. This leads to the conclusion that the self-concepts of males and females improve as their interpersonal relationships improve and vice versa.
(4) There is a positive moderate correlation between the self-concepts of male student teachers and their relationships with parents. This indicates that when relationships with parents improve their self-concepts also improve and vice versa.

(5) There is a positive moderate correlation between the self-concepts of female students and their relationships with lecturers. This indicates that as relationships with lecturers improve, so do their self-concepts and vice versa. (See table 13.)

(6) The results in table 14 concerning the correlation between self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers from different year groups lead to the following conclusions:

- The correlations for the first- and third-year students are positive and moderate, which leads to the conclusion that as self-concepts improve, so do interpersonal relationships. The opposite is also true.

- The correlations for the second-year students are high and positive, which leads to the same conclusion; namely, as self-concepts improve, so do interpersonal relationships, and vice versa.

(7) The results in table 15 indicate that there is a moderate but positive correlation between the self-concepts of first-year students and their relationships with lecturers and parents. For first-year students peers are apparently less important than parents and lecturers. Hence, as the relationships of first-year students with parents and lecturers improve, so do their self-concepts. The same trend is noticed for second- and third-year students (see tables 16 and 17).

(8) The following conclusions can be formulated from tables 18 to 23:
Relationships with lecturers contribute most towards the self-concepts of all the student teachers, although relationships with parents and peers also play a role.

Relationships with parents contribute most towards the self-concepts of males; and relationships with lecturers and thereafter with parents contribute most towards the self-concepts of females.

For first-, second- and third-year students, relationships with lecturers contribute most to their self-concepts. This is followed by relationships with parents.

The results indicated in tables 24 to 29 lead to the following conclusions:

The cognitive self-concept and thereafter the social self-concept contribute most towards the relationships of student teachers.

For males, the emotional and then the moral self-concepts contribute significantly; for females, the cognitive and then the social self-concepts contribute significantly towards their interpersonal relationships.

For first-year students, the social and then the cognitive self-concepts contribute significantly; for second-year students, the social and then the moral; and for third-year students, only the cognitive self-concepts contribute significantly towards interpersonal relationships.

The following essential conclusions can be formulated based on the results presented in tables 30 to 32:

The male students have significantly higher cognitive self-concepts than the female students.
The second-year male students have significantly higher overall and social self-concepts than the second-year female students.

(11) According to tables 33 and 34, the physical and cognitive self-concepts of third- and first-year students are significantly higher than the physical and cognitive self-concepts of second-year students.

(12) The results in table 35 indicate that the male students perceive themselves to have significantly better relationships with their peers than the female students do.

(13) Table 36 indicates that first- and second-year students believe that their relationships with others are relatively good in comparison with the way third-year students perceive their relationships.

6.5 CONCLUSIONS FROM BOTH THE LITERATURE STUDY AND THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The conclusions that follow in this section are drawn from both the literature study and the empirical research.

(1) Problem statement 1: Is there a significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers?

There is a significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of students as shown by the findings from the empirical research. These findings are supported by the literature study where it is believed that self-concepts develop as a result of a person's interactions with the environment, including the environment at college. The self-concept grows or takes shape as an individual develops and interacts with significant others such as lecturers, peers and parents.
The self-concept also grows with maturation and learning. One forms a self-concept as a result of experience within the environment, incorporating the values of others because self-conceptions are learned and moulded by direct communication with others. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant correlation between self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of students may be rejected. If self-concepts improve, so do interpersonal relationships; if interpersonal relationships improve, so do self-concepts.

(2) Problem statement 2: *Is there a significant correlation between the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of the following groups of students:*

* males
* females
* different year groups?

The findings from the empirical research indicate that the correlation between self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of males and females were positive, moderate and significant. This means that the null hypothesis may be rejected. The self-concepts for both genders increase as interpersonal relationships are improved.

The literature review indicates that the overall self-concept is influenced by body image. An adolescent who is healthy and attractive is more likely to have many friends or relationships that lead to the development of a positive self-concept. The literature points out that slenderness in females and masculinity in males are likeable attributes that make them attractive to others and hence enhance their physical self-concepts.

For males, the correlation between their self-concepts and their relationships with their parents is moderate and significant. For females, the correlation between their self-concepts and their relationships with their lecturers is moderate and significant.
Interpersonal relationships with parents that are warm, accepting and supportive are likely to enhance positive self-concepts in student teachers regardless of their gender. When student teachers align themselves with peer groups which facilitate the transition from family self-concept to an independent self-concept, relationships become very strong. The significant correlation in this case is supported; the view that acceptance and support by peers significantly enhances the self-concept.

According to the empirical research, the correlations between the self-concept of second-year students and their relationships with lecturers, peers and parents are moderate and significant. The literature also shows that various facets of student teachers' relationships with others are important for their self-concept development. Consequently, it is important for student teachers from all three year groups to build positive relationships with their lecturers and peers in the multicultural setting of the college community.

(3) Problem statement 3: What is the relative contribution of each of the interpersonal relationships of the student teachers to the overall self-concepts of the following groups of student teachers:

* the sample
* males
* females
* different year groups?

The empirical findings show that interpersonal relationships with lecturers contribute significantly to the self-concepts of students, although relationships with both peers and parents also play a role. The literature study shows that close friendship is an important interpersonal relationship. Such friendships avert the loneliness that can be experienced even in a group. Most importantly, these relationships help enhance the overall self-concepts of student teachers.
Significant contributions to the overall self-concepts of males are brought about by the interpersonal relationships with their parents. For females, significant contributions to their overall self-concepts are rather due to interpersonal relationships with significant others such as parents and especially lecturers.

For the different year groups, significant contributions to self-concepts are brought about mainly by the interpersonal relationships with lecturers and thereafter with parents. Therefore, one can conclude that the interpersonal relationships with lecturers are very important in the development of the self-concepts of the students.

(4) Problem statement 4: What is the relative contribution of each of the aspects of the self-concept of the student teachers to the total of interpersonal relationships of the following groups of student teachers:

- the sample
- males
- females
- different year groups?

In this regard, the findings from the research show significant contributions from different aspects of the self-concept to interpersonal relationships of student teachers. The cognitive self-concept and thereafter the social self-concept contribute the most towards the relationships of student teachers. This is in accordance with the literature study, which indicates that cognitive ability, especially the ability for abstract thought, plays a major role in the development of the self-concept. At this stage, adolescents are able to take part in arguments with significant others, debate logically and sensibly, are confident to voice their opinions and speak out at social gatherings thus enhancing their interpersonal relationships.
For males, the emotional and then the moral self-concepts contribute significantly towards their interpersonal relationships. For females, the cognitive and then the social self-concepts contribute significantly towards their interpersonal relationships.

For first-year students, the social and then the cognitive self-concepts contribute significantly towards their interpersonal relationships.

For second-year students, the social and then the moral self-concepts contribute significantly towards their interpersonal relationships.

For third-year students, significant contributions are made by the cognitive self-concepts.

In summary, then, the cognitive, social and moral self-concepts all contribute significantly towards the interpersonal relationships of student teachers.

(5) Problem statement 5: Is there a significant difference between the self-concepts of males and females of the following groups:
- the whole sample
- different year groups?

In this regard the findings show that the null hypothesis may be rejected. Male students have significantly higher cognitive self-concepts than female students, while second-year male students have significantly higher overall and social self-concepts than second-year female students.

Adolescents derive many of the aspects of the self-concept in terms of gender roles and gender values from reference groups. Reference groups consist of individuals who are close to adolescents and whom they see everyday. Sometimes these groups may be broader social groups with whom they share
attitudes, interests, ideals and philosophies of a religious, ethnic or nationalistic nature.

The affective self-concepts of females are embedded more within the family and show more involvement and concern with relationships, whilst males are more independent from others.

(6) Problem statement 6: Is there a significant difference between the self-concepts of first-, second- and third-year students for the following:
  * overall self-concepts and
  * various aspects of the self-concept?

The findings indicate that there are no significant differences in overall self-concepts. The null hypothesis can therefore not be rejected. However, significant differences were found concerning the various aspects of the self-concepts as follows:

The physical and cognitive self-concepts of third- and first-year students are significantly higher than the physical and cognitive self-concepts of second-year students. In these instances the null hypothesis may be rejected.

The literature study supports the above statement in stating that adolescence is a time during which many young people formulate ideas and raise questions concerning their identity. Around the second year of college, adolescents begin to form ideal self-concepts. These ideal self-concepts serve as guidelines, showing individuals what they should do to achieve their aims. As a result, they often perceive themselves as inadequate - especially with regard to their physical self and their cognitive abilities.

(7) Problem statement 7: Is there a significant difference between the interpersonal relationships of males and females for the following groups:
In this regard, the findings indicate that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected - no significant differences exist for either the sample or different year groups. However, male students perceive themselves to have significantly better relationships with their peers than the female students do. This seems to indicate that males are more inclined than females to meet their peers as equals. They feel at home with one another and they feel free to share the most intimate secrets and the most private thoughts and emotions.

(8) Problem statement 8: *Is there a significant difference in the interpersonal relationships of first-, second- and third-year students?*

According to the results, first- and second-year students believe that their relationships with others are relatively good in comparison with the third-year students.

6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LECTURERS

The following recommendations are important for lecturers with regard to the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers. They are as follows:

(1) Lecturers can and are expected to play a significant role in influencing positive self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers. In this regard lecturers should keep in mind that they serve as role models for students, particularly for female students. This implies that they should be examples for maintaining positive relationships with others. They should be friendly, helpful and dependable.
Lecturers are the "significant others" whom students look up to for support, and even constructive criticism, positive interpersonal relationships and the enhancement of self-concepts. This implies that lecturers should give positive feedback when possible and avoid negative labelling of students.

It is also important for lecturers to realise that student teachers see them as important people who have the ability to reduce or intensify their insecurity, and to increase or decrease students' anxiety. Therefore, in order to improve interpersonal relationships between lecturers and male and female students, lecturers must promote a sense of worth in students by an attitude of positive regard. Examples of how positive regard for students can be shown include learning and using students' names, trying to learn more about their family backgrounds and their study programmes. Lecturers should convey that they care unconditionally for students, that students are good and that they make a difference. Most importantly, lecturers should value the individual identities of student teachers, conveying confidence in the students and being true mentors and friends.

Lecturers should remember that while their willingness or unwillingness to act as a significant other may improve or impair their performance in that capacity, the role is always conferred, never assumed. This role thus depends entirely on students. Evidence for this lies in the positive interpersonal relationships between lecturers and female student teachers and "low" interpersonal relationships between male students and lecturers. The results indicate that the relationships between lecturers and male students are not as positive as those between lecturers and female students. It is therefore recommended that lecturers consciously try to improve relationships with male students. This could involve assistance in times of need and relating to them through sports and other extramural activities.
(5) If lecturers show positive regard for students, the latter's self-concepts can be positively enhanced. Lecturers can reinforce this positive regard by pointing out the good and valuable things that students have done. Student teachers are thus made to feel competent and worthy in the eyes of their lecturers.

(6) However, lecturers should guard against making students entirely dependent on them. They should encourage students to become independent thinkers who can engage in independent cognitive or academic endeavours, encouraging students to be resourceful and strive for excellence in their work. Lecturers should keep in mind that female students have lower cognitive self-concepts than male students. These cognitive self-concepts need to be improved.

(7) Lecturers should be able to spread their attention equally between all students, and be able to empathise with all students. They should make time for personal contact with all students, as this is important for emotional self-concept development. Lecturers should remember that a particular bond with individual students is appropriate and professional.

(8) Conclusions made from the literature study and the empirical research lead to the recommendation that skills needed by lecturers include the use of methods that develop effective encounters between students and themselves. For example, the attributes of friendliness and considerateness towards females and males are highly recommended, especially with regard to first- and second-year groups, which, according to the results, need particular attention.

(9) Equally important are qualities such as fairness and impartiality in lecturers' interpersonal relationships with students. Lecturers should be aware that students only find them to be effective if they are "human" in their attitudes towards them, and if they are fair, empathetic and democratic. Another factor in this regard is the ability to relate to all students on a one to one basis or even on a group basis. Democratic teaching implies that lecturers do not see themselves
as the only possessors of knowledge. Lecturers should acknowledge that contributions made by students in the classroom are equally as important as theirs. Lecturers should make explicit comments which reflect a transition from statements such as "my classroom" to "our classroom". Lecturers should display unconditional acceptance and respect towards student teachers and display positive attitudes in their relationships with students.

(10) Equally important is lecturers' ability, confidence and competence in handling subject that they teach. They should be familiar with the subject in order to win the confidence of students. An authoritative attitude should be avoided, in light of the fact that lecturers learn together with students. Such an attitude would in turn strengthen interpersonal relationships and also enhance self-concepts of students. This means if lecturers have a good mastery of their subject, it becomes easier for students to understand and grasp easily. In this way, students gain confidence in themselves. Thus, the way in which lecturers make contact with students via the subject matter is important. Therefore, it is imperative that intensified efforts be made to raise essential teaching qualifications. Lecturers should study further to improve their knowledge on all fronts. Finally, lecturers who have established closer relationships with students do not need an autocratic approach. Such lecturers are friendly and respect their students, listen to their problems and know their subject. Such lecturers will have fewer problems in establishing cordial interpersonal relationships and even fewer in lecturing in general.

6.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

In this study, males were represented in a smaller proportion to females. More representation by males might have yielded different results.

Another limitation of the present study was with regard to information available on the self-concept. Although it is often stated that adolescence is a time of major change in
self-conceptions, neither these changes nor the processes through which they occur have
been well documented in the literature. Generally, these studies have not focused on
the enhancement of the self-concept.

A methodological limitation of this study was that both interpersonal relationships and
students' self-concepts were measured by means of a questionnaire. This instrument is
limited in that it is a self-report measure which lends itself to bias. Although it was
assumed that students could accurately assess their own self-concepts and interpersonal
relationships, it is possible that their subjective self-appraisals might have been too
biased. Perhaps it would be useful in future research to obtain additional information
on interpersonal relationships from parents by sending questionnaires to them as well.
Direct observations and interviews with lecturers may also prove valuable.

6.8 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

One of the most important recommendations for future research is that an investigation
be made concerning the assumptions that govern the way an individual's self-concept
and interpersonal relationships function interdependently. Future research addressing this
and other implications of the present study could contribute to what remains a promising
but incomplete understanding of the relationships between self-concepts and
interpersonal relationships.

It would also be of much interest to investigate possible differences in student teachers'
self-concepts as a function of their different year groups or subjects chosen. The present
study investigated the three different year groups without regard for the courses they do.

It may also be fruitful and interesting for future research to focus on ways to promote
or enhance self-concepts and interpersonal relationships in students rather than focusing
on gender and year group differences, as was the case with the present study.
The findings of the present study suggest that future research should examine college contexts in relation to various sets of influences on the self-concepts and interpersonal relationships of student teachers. These influences include those qualities that are not provided in families and which are known to be associated with school-related outcomes. Another set of influences that needs to be identified to maximise student teachers' self-concepts and interpersonal relationships are those which are specific to college and classroom settings.

Future research needs to investigate what makes lecturers effective and the ways in which lecturers facilitate students' learning that results in enhanced self-concepts and positive interpersonal relationships. Therefore, researchers need to study lecturers' and students' thinking in the classroom. This is done in order to establish whether lecturers' and students' cognitive self-concepts, for example, act as mediators of teaching and learning effectiveness which result in an improvement in interpersonal relationships and self-concepts. Only after such research has been undertaken will we enhance our knowledge and understanding of the relationships between student teachers' learning contexts and the ways that they affect self-concepts and interpersonal relationships.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Hi there! This is not a test, but a questionnaire. There are no right or wrong answers. Your answer is the correct answer.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. You needn't write down your name.

2. Do not write anything under the headings subject and response number. This is for office use only.

3. Under the heading page number, in the right hand upper corner of the page, are two vertical columns. In the first column, indicate your gender as follows:

   If you are male, write down a 1 in the square and indicate a [1] in your response.

   If you are female, write a 2 in the square and indicate a [2] in the column.

4. Indicate your year of study in the same way in the second column (under page number) as follows:

   1 for first year, a 2 for second year and a 3 for third year students.

5. Please note that there are eight alternatives in the rest of the answer sheet. However, you need to use only five alternatives in response to statements. They are as follows:

   Strongly agree - (5)
   Agree - (4)
   Undecided - (3)
   Disagree - (2)
   Strongly disagree - (1)

6. Make sure that you indicate your answer (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) in the space next to the same number as that of the question.

7. Please do not write on the questionnaire. Write only on the answer sheet in pencil as explained on the response page.
I dress neatly.

People seldom admire my posture.

I enjoy wearing stylish clothes.

Most of the time my hair is untidy.

It is important to me to exercise.

I am less attractive than most of my friends.

When it comes to beauty I regard myself as a plain person.

I very seldom feel clumsy.

I am a healthy person.

I am seldom completely well.

I am happy with my own femininity/masculinity.

I feel positive about my appearance.

I consider myself as unattractive.

I am clever.

In comparison with my peers I am an immature person.

I usually understand my work easily.

With regard to my studies, I find it difficult to differentiate what is important from what is not.

I can think independently.

I am aware of problems in my environment.

I enjoy taking part in debates.

I lack confidence in my opinions.

In general I find my studies difficult.
<table>
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<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23 I enjoy solving difficult problems.
24 I am a slow learner.
25 I am more slow-witted than my peers.
26 I have difficulty to understand the work.
27 I can distinguish right from wrong.
28 I have no problem with free sex.
29 I am committed to my religion.
30 I try to observe prescribed rules of conduct.
31 I do not understand why some things are considered wrong.
32 There are only a few injustices in life.
33 I like to use swear words.
34 I am a chain smoker.
35 I conform to the norms of society.
36 I always look for approval from people I respect.
37 I have no strong spiritual beliefs.
38 I always strive to be morally good.
39 I always try to behave well.
40 I prefer social distance between myself and others.

(START SECOND COLUMN ON ANSWER SHEET)

41 I do not enjoy mixing with unfamiliar people.
42 I reject other people easily.
43 I do not communicate well with other people.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>I would like to be popular with family members.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>In general I disobey my parents.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>I want to be accepted by my family.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Socially, I am a competent person.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I have a strong sense of worth.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Interacting with most of my peers is a waste of time.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>I treasure my autonomy from my parents.</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>I find criticism by others worthwhile.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>I am a loving person.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I reject other people easily.</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Most of the time I am angry,</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>I often feel too depressed to work hard.</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>I have a strong sense of joy.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>I seldom unhappy.</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>I often feel empty inside.</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>I do not have strong feelings for others.</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>I am a happy person.</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Generally I am in a positive mood.</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>I seldom feel guilty.</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>I often feel vulnerable.</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Situations often cause me to feel anxious.</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Lecturers do not care for me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

67 I trust my lecturers.
68 As a student I accept the lecturers' authority.
69 I know most of the lecturers will support me when I need it.
70 In general lecturers are unsensitive to my needs.
71 I will not accept authority from a lecturer.
72 In general the lecturers acknowledge my intellect.
73 I communicate easily with most of my lecturers.
74 In general I learn a lot from my lecturers.
75 My lecturers don't understand me.
76 My lecturers are interested in me.
77 My lecturers don't respect me.
78 In general my lecturers are undemocratic.
79 I welcome constructive criticism from my lecturers.
80 My lecturers are unfriendly.

(START THIRD COLUMN ON ANSWER SHEET)

81 My peers support me.
82 I have not learnt any social skills from my peers.
83 I have many friends.
84 My friends influence me to behave well.
85 My friends and I are equal partners.
86 I seldom cooperate with my peers.
87 I hate it when my friends compete with me.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

88 Some of my peers reject me.
89 My peers appreciate me.
90 My peers are only interested in themselves.
91 My friends understand me.
92 I feel close to some of my peers.
93 I easily conform to peer group pressure, even when I do not agree with them.
94 I usually cooperate with my peers.
95 I am unpopular with the opposite sex.
96 I always feel secure with the members of my family.
97 My family and I have a close relationship.
98 I find it difficult to be honest with my parents.
99 I do not enjoy my parents' company.
100 I enjoy sharing my feelings with the members of my family.
101 My parents trust me.
102 My family doesn't give me enough freedom.
103 My parents and I have different values.
104 My family respects my opinion an matters.
105 My family regards me as mature.
106 I miss my family when I am away from them.
107 My parents think I reject them.
108 My parents and I easily fight.
109 My family and I have difficulty to communicate.
110 I am comfortable with my family.