

**Education for Peace: A Case Study of the African Leadership
Academy in Gauteng**

by

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submitted in accordance with the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the subject

SOCIO-EDUCATION

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

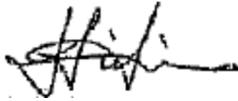
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APRIL 2016

DECLARATION

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I declare that **EDUCATION FOR PEACE: A CASE STUDY OF THE AFRICAN LEADERSHIP ACADEMY IN GAUTENG** is my own work and that all the sources I have quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



8th January 2016

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Signature

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Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to Professor J. S. Maseko, for giving me the opportunity to study under his supervision. His guidance, generosity and support have been invaluable.

I wish also to acknowledge the many friends who have encouraged me or supported me in one way or the other. Dr. Isaac Kowino, Dr. Odhiambo Ongunya and Dr. Michael Adeleye, just to mention a few. Thank you to Elmarie Williams, for her enthusiasm in editing the manuscript.

I am grateful to Mr. Chris Bradford, CEO and Founder of African Leadership Academy for granting me permission to carry out the study at the institution.

I thank my wife Grace, my son David and my daughter Mercy, for their patience, encouragement and understanding.

Also, I thank the Almighty God, for His faithfulness to me every day and every hour throughout the course of my study.

SUMMARY

The purpose of the study was to explore the extent to which peace principles were incorporated into the two-year programme at the African Leadership Academy – a Pan-African school in Gauteng, whose mission is to develop young leaders who would contribute to making Africa a peaceful and prosperous continent. The study included investigating whether the formal and informal structures of the school promoted a culture of peace. A literature study outlined the causes of violence and violent conflicts in South Africa and on the African continent, and it also analysed the theoretical frameworks of peace education as put forward by Paulo Freire, Hossain Danesh and Maria Montessori. A qualitative case study methodology employing document analysis, observations and interviews was used. The findings showed that the two-year programme is not specifically designed as a peace education programme, but the teaching of peace principles are non-deliberately and uniquely embedded in the curriculum in the form of the particular skills, attitudes and values that learners acquire at this institution in the two years. The classroom environment and the culture of the school community inculcated in learners the qualities of unity and critical thinking and equip them with conflict resolution skills. Based on the findings, recommendations were made to the school and to all stakeholders in education.

KEY TERMS

Peace, violence, conflicts, diversity, unity, values, Socratic method, critical thinking, a culture of peace, human-centred entrepreneurship, emotional intelligence, self-regulation.

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CHAPTER 1: GENERAL ORIENTATION

1.1 Introduction

In the recent past, a wave of violent conflicts swept across the North African countries in what was referred to as the Arab Spring (Anderson, 2011; Rosiny, 2012). The most affected countries were Tunisia, Libya and Egypt. The conflict in Tunisia seemed to have been relatively well managed. It can be said that the revolution was brief and relatively peaceful, since free and fair elections were conducted shortly after the then president, Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, was ousted in January 2011, which saw a moderate coalition government formed between the Islamist Ennahda Party along with the Congress for the Republic and Ettakatol (Ramdani, 2013). The conflict in Libya, on the other hand, was neither brief nor peaceful, because the revolution was met with brutal resistance by government forces, necessitating military intervention by Western countries (Toone, 2011). The conflict claimed the life of the man who had a vision of creating a "United States of Africa", the late Colonel Muammar Gaddafi (Adebajo, 2011). In Egypt, the conflict was also resolved when the long-serving president, Mubarak, was ousted (Kirkpatrick, 2011). The youth played a key role in the Arab Spring. The developments in North Africa clearly demonstrated that the youth have been empowered by information technology, to drive changes locally and globally (Stepanova, 2011:2).

Violent conflicts, however, are not limited to North Africa. Somalia has not known peace since the ousting of the then president, Mohammed Siad Barre, in 1991 (Dagne, 2010:24). Similarly, when Mobutu Sese Seko was ousted from power in 1997, it was thought that the Congo had started a new chapter that would lead to peace (Shekhawat, 2009:7), however, peace has remained elusive in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), despite the fact that the country is rich in mineral resources and agricultural potential (Shekhawat, 2009:12). The DRC remains unstable and, besides the hundreds of citizens getting killed or injured due to conflict, hundreds of thousands of women and girls have been raped (Shekhawat, 2009:11).

Other countries in Africa that have witnessed conflicts with serious implications include Rwanda, Liberia, Mozambique, Angola and Namibia, just to mention a few (Annan, 2004:18-19). Violent conflicts permeate through many societies in the form of interpersonal and intergroup or intrastate conflicts and this is not just a challenge for Africa, but it is, indeed, a global problem.

South Africa is no exception. The country has been characterised by a context of pervasive social violence with the root causes historically founded in the former apartheid system of governance (Maxwell, Enslin, & Maxwell, 2004:104). It is reportedly one of the most violent countries in the world, mainly due to the exceptionally high incidence of criminal and domestic violence (Maxwell et al, 2004:104). Violence in the communities and in schools continues to dominate the media reports in the country. Serrao (2008) reports on incidences of aggression as reflected in the games played by pupils in some South African schools. Some of the games that pupils engage in are called "hit me, hit me" and "rape me, rape me" (in which the pupils chase one another and pretend to hit or rape one another) (Serrao, 2008). Grossman and Premo (2012:1) elucidate that violence has made Johannesburg not only famous for the gold rush, its man-made forests and its climate, but also for its high rates of violence and murder.

The aim of the study was to explore the extent to which teaching of peace principles were integrated into the African Leadership Academy (ALA) programme and to investigate whether the formal and informal structures of the school promoted a culture of peace. Danesh (2006:57) points out that, "apart from the absence of a universally agreed upon approach to peace, one other main reason for the very high incidences of conflict and war in different societies is the nature of education we provide to our children". Abebe, Gbesso and Nyawalo (2006:17) reckon that there is a need for peace education to be adopted as a continental programme to respond to the transition period that most African countries are undergoing, as exemplified by the democratisation of social and political structures. Peace education is a field that needs to be thoroughly explored within the current South African context, which is characterised by extremely high levels of criminal and domestic violence (Maxwell et al, 2004:117).

Every educational system or programme may be considered to aim at promoting a culture of peace. Salomon (2002:3) argues that peace education has divergent meanings for different individuals in different places, while Danesh (2006:55) considers peace education to be an elusive concept. According to Johnson and Johnson (2005:280), a plan for peace education emphasises teaching students the competencies and values they would need to build and maintain peace on a consensus basis. The students learn about building and maintaining cooperative systems, about making decisions on challenging issues related to maintaining peace and resolving conflict among relevant parties in constructive ways.

Peace education was originally a study about the causes of war and its prevention (Ardizzone, 2002:16). The concept became more popular and gained support in the nineteen-twenties, after the First World War, with Europe and America's desire for peace, and due to influential thinkers such as John Dewey and Nicholas Murray Butler, who expressed concern over the devastating effects of modern warfare (Howlett, 1987:446). Ardizzone (2002:16) acknowledges that peace education has evolved into the study of violence in all its manifestations and has become focused on educating to counteract the war system for the creation of a peace system, and that the content and methodology of peace education are progressive; promoting egalitarian learning environments, open enquiry and significant learner participation.

Harris (2004:5) also acknowledges that peace education has become diversified and he identifies five different ways in which it is implemented at the beginning of the 21st century, that is, through "international education, human rights education, development education, environmental education and conflict resolution education". By promoting the development of critical thinking skills that lead toward media, scientific and political literacy, as well as incorporating learning on how to cooperate and resolve conflict non-violently, "peace education functions to foster the development of a planetary consciousness that will enable us to function as global citizens and to transform the present human conditions by changing societal structures" (Ardizzone, 2002:17). In this study, peace education may be considered to include the content and methodology that inculcates in learners the qualities of unity and critical thinking in an environment that promotes a culture of peace. Hence, the study explores the extent to which the qualities associated with unity

and critical thinking are incorporated into the ALA programme and whether the structures of the school promoted a culture of peace.

The study sought to acquire in-depth information through a qualitative case study. The sampling was purposeful. Interviews were held with information-rich participants such as the male and female chairs of the Student Government, members of the Honour Council of Students and educators in the subjects: Entrepreneurial Leadership and African Studies. Fifteen individual learners – 8 girls and 7 boys, aged 18 to 20 years – were interviewed. Eight educators – 5 males and 3 females, in the age range 25 to 57 years, including the headmaster of the school and heads of key departments such as Entrepreneurial Leadership and African Studies – were interviewed. The empirical evidence from the study would be useful in informing any decisions to improve the educational practices in the programme and in other institutions of learning. The next section gives a brief background on peace education, to help clarify what the study seeks to investigate.

1.2 Background to the study

As the former President of South Africa, a leadership icon, Nelson Mandela once said, “Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world” (Van Der Rheede, 2009). Scholars like Harris (2004:9) hold a similar opinion. Danesh (2006:56) points out that the concept of peace education has gained momentum and is gradually being accepted as an important and necessary dimension in the education systems of truly democratic and progressive societies. He (Danesh, 2006) believes that education has an enormous impact on the presence or absence of a proclivity to violence in every new generation. In what he considers to be a move towards integrative theory of peace education, Danesh (2006:57) puts forward the following four prerequisites for effective peace education, which he also believes are the main components of peace education:

- Peace education in the context of a unity-based worldview: education giving more attention to issues of coexistence, interdependence and cooperation.
- Peace education in the context of a culture of peace: education in an environment where human rights, tolerance, democracy, equality and freedom thrive, with no discrepancy between theory and practice.

- Peace education within the context of a culture of healing: education in a safe and positive atmosphere of trust and spirit of reconciliation.
- Peace education constituting the framework for all educational activities: education for creating a civilisation of peace, paying attention to the dynamics of love, unity and peace at individual, interpersonal, intergroup and universal levels.

Clark-Habibi (2005:35-56) carried out a review of current trends in peace education and presented a case study of a unique primary and secondary school programme called Education for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The unique model attempts to set in motion the exploration and application of peace in all aspects of the school environment and its surrounding community. This involved teachers integrating the principles of peace into the daily lessons of every subject area. In her research article, Clark-Habibi (2005:39) concurs with Danesh (2006:68), since she also challenges the common assumption that conflict constitutes an inherent feature of the human reality; indeed, the two scholars consider this notion to represent a conflict-oriented worldview, which seems to be firmly rooted as the norm in our societies, to the extent that they go unnoticed, even when they are interwoven into peace education programmes. Hence, they call for the rejection of the notion that conflict is inevitable and argue that peace education must aim to transform worldviews from a conflict orientation to a peace orientation; replacing conflict-based constructions of reality with unity-based perceptions and principles (Clark-Habibi, 2005; Danesh, 2006). Danesh (2006:66) posits that worldviews evolve in a similar way to the development of human consciousness. Just like human beings pass through phases of infancy, childhood, adolescence and adulthood, humanity, on a collective level, also evolves through similar stages in its historic journey towards collective maturity. The development of human consciousness brings along with it the development of more integrative and peace-oriented worldviews (Clark-Habibi, 2005:40).

According to Waldorf (2007:14), the above-mentioned developments would not be achieved without the presence and practice of justice. She gives an illustration using a classroom situation where students can only be unified, harmonious, integrated and cooperative, if all the individuals in that classroom are valued equally. Similarly, humanity will only achieve unity, if each individual is equally valued and well treated in society. Hence, the role of education in the awakening of

social consciousness through critical thinking, as put forward by the great Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire, becomes a crucial aspect of peace education.

According to Freire (1996:37), violence is constituted by any situation in which one person objectively exploits another or hinders his/her pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person. This is because the situation interferes with the person's ontological and historical vocation to be more fully human. Freire (1996:37) believed that education can be used as a tool for liberation and the creation of a culture of peace or, alternatively, it can be used to sustain a culture of violence. He observed that "banking education" only helped to sustain a culture of violence (Freire, 1996). In banking education, the classroom has the teacher as the depositor of information and the students as the depositories (Freire, 1996:53). The teacher perceives students as "empty" of knowledge and, hence, their role remains passive in the learning environment (Harber, 1996:159). This creates a teacher-student contradiction analogous to the oppressor-oppressed contradiction. According to Freire (1996:53), learners in this system are "filed away through lack of creativity, transformation and knowledge", even if they may be full of information. This approach "serves the interest of oppressors, who care neither to have the world revealed nor to see it transformed" (Freire, 1996:54).

The situation described above is typical of the approach to teaching in schools in Africa and is a legacy of the authoritarian-type of school organisation and curriculum institutionalised during colonialism and which is still regarded as normal (Harber, 1996:158-159). Arguably, for example, it may be said that the classroom situation in South Africa has not changed much since the end of the apartheid regime in 1994, as the approach to teaching still remains predominantly authoritarian (Maxwell, Enslin, & Maxwell, 2004:108). As Maxwell et al (2004:106) observe: "There exists complexity in placing the responsibility for educating children for peace with educators who have been and are themselves immersed in, and potentially damaged by, South Africa's historical and current violence." Banking education promotes a practice of domination and violence by implication.

Freire (1996:60-67) proposed that meaningful education for liberation and eventual peace should be problem-posing. In this approach to learning, the teacher has trust in the learners and their creative power and, therefore, the teacher engages learners in critical thinking, in a quest for mutual humanisation. It involves the teacher presenting material to the learners, for their consideration, and the teacher re-considering his or her standpoint as the learners express their own. Learners are increasingly posed with problems relating to themselves in the world and with the world. They feel increasingly obligated to respond to these challenges. This approach enhances emergence of critical consciousness (Freire, 1996:62). As Dovey (1996:134) points out, “the youth need to have opportunities to understand, question, and challenge how society operates and how they can influence peaceful change in a positive way”. Thus, problem-posing education promotes freedom and, by implication, peace.

Teaching approaches in South African schools, and elsewhere in Africa, have predominantly retained the banking education concept to teaching, this is clearly reflected in the “ethos and management systems [which are] dominated by extreme authoritarianism” (Maxwell et al, 2004:107). With such a foundation in the schools, it is not any wonder that many atrocities committed on the continent of Africa involves highly educated political elites.

This particular study seeks to explore the extent to which elements of peace education, including the qualities of unity and critical thinking, are integrated into the curriculum and teaching methods deployed in the educational programme at the African Leadership Academy. This is a Pan-African school situated on the outskirts of Johannesburg, in the Gauteng province of South Africa. The school first opened its doors to learners in September 2008. Since then, the school admits about 100 Grade 11-equivalent learners from 35 or more African countries every year. The mission of the school is to equip learners with skills and attitudes that would enable them to contribute to transforming Africa into a peaceful and prosperous continent. The school recruits youth, aged 16-20 years, from across the continent of Africa. The learners are drawn from diverse backgrounds and cultures. Some of the learners come from regions characterised by endemic conflict, such as Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Indeed, a few of them are recruited from refugee camps in countries such as Kenya and Uganda. Youth leaders, who have

demonstrated leadership potential by contributing some innovative idea or service to their communities, stand a better chance of being selected for the programme.

The programme activities are centred on five founding beliefs and six core values. The five founding beliefs are:

- Address underlying causes of problems – treat root causes, not symptoms, to create a lasting change
- The power of one – individuals catalyse the actions of large groups and transform societies
- The power of youth – young people can dream big, take action and change the world
- The need for Pan-African cooperation – collaboration will stimulate growth and development across the continent
- Entrepreneurship is key for growth – look beyond existing constraints and pursue opportunities to create value

The six core values of the school are:

- Integrity: We are people of our word with courage to do what is right.
- Curiosity: We challenge the status quo and take the initiative to pursue new ideas.
- Humility: We are thankful for our opportunities and are aware of our limitations.
- Compassion: We empathise with and care for those around us.
- Diversity: We respect all people and believe diversity should be celebrated.
- Excellence: We set high standards for our own achievements and celebrate the achievement of others.

Apart from regular subjects offered at high school level such Mathematics, English, Geography, and the pure sciences, the ALA programme also includes the subjects, Entrepreneurial Leadership and African Studies, which is offered through experiential learning. Some of the other activities that form an integral part of the school's academic programme are: Community Service; Student Enterprises; Seminal Readings – on a range of themes affecting the contemporary society; cultural

shows and a guest speaker series. The core subject in the ALA programme is Entrepreneurial Leadership. It entails experiential learning using a concept known as BUILD. BUILD is an acronym for, “Believe, Understand, Invent, Listen and Deliver”. This is a cross-curricular concept in the ALA programme.

This study seeks to explore the elements of peace education that have been incorporated into day-to-day activities of the ALA school programme. For the purpose of this study, the model of peace education adopted combines the theoretical frameworks provided by both Danesh (2006) and Freire (1996).

1.3 Problem statement

Violence and conflict remain a great hindrance to the progress and prosperity for many communities in South Africa, on the continent of Africa and globally. There is an argument that it is the work of education to establish lasting peace (Valerie, 1993:36). In order to address this phenomenon, this study regards problem-posing education, within the framework of a unity-based worldview, as a necessary tool in equipping learners with critical thinking skills. For problem-posing education to take place, educators must trust that learners come into the learning environment with some previous knowledge and that learners are interested in learning more about their relationship to the world. Through this kind of education, learners are able to become critical thinkers and actors within the world in which they live. The research question was: “To what extent are peace principles integrated into the formal and informal aspects of the two-year educational programme at the African Leadership Academy?” The study sought to address this question by exploring answers to the following sub-questions:

1.3.1. To what extent are the qualities of unity and critical thinking incorporated into the educational programme at ALA?

1.3.2. How do the programme activities impact on students’ views on conflict resolution?

1.3.3. Do the formal and informal structures of the school promote a culture of peace?

1.3.4. How are the learning experiences at ALA linked to education for peace?

1.4 Aims and research objectives

The main aim of this study was to establish whether the content and methodology of the ALA programme equipped learners with skills and attitudes that transformed the learners' worldviews and promoted a culture of peace among the participants.

The objectives of the study were to:

- 1.4.1 explore the extent to which qualities of unity and critical thinking were incorporated into the school programme
- 1.4.2 investigate whether the formal and informal structures of the school promoted a culture of peace
- 1.4.3 qualitatively explore the link between experiential learning of entrepreneurial leadership skills and peace education

1.5 Research design

1.5.1 Research approach

The study included a literature review with the aim of explaining the concepts of peace education and a culture of peace; to outline the causes of conflicts and violence in Africa and South Africa; and to explore the link between experiential acquisition of entrepreneurial leadership skills and peace education.

A qualitative case study was deployed to enable the researcher to explore the extent to which peace principles were integrated into the formal and informal structures of the school. This would enable the researcher to gather the information in the natural settings and to “focus on the participants' understanding, description and meanings” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:321). It also enabled the researcher to directly gather detailed descriptions, which would help to get an understanding of the experiences of the learners with regard to the acquisition of the appropriate skills and attitudes that would enhance a culture of peace. The emergent design, provided for in qualitative research, was necessary, as the findings continually informed further advancements in the research.

1.5.2 Site and participant selection

The school was purposely chosen for this study because of the uniqueness of the educational programme it offers. Some of the learners in the school come from war-torn areas in Africa or refugee camps and are themselves victims of violent conflicts. The student population at the school was about 200, with 100 learners in Grade 11 and 100 learners in Grade 12. Fifteen Grade 12 learners were used for in-depth unstructured and semi-structured interviews. The Grade 12 learners were chosen, because they would have had a full year's experience of the two-year ALA programme. The sample of 15 students included learners from some war-torn countries such as the DRC and learners from relatively peaceful countries such as Tanzania. The sampling was purposeful. Interviews were held with information-rich participants such as the male and female chairs of the Student Government, the members of the Honour Council of Students and educators in Entrepreneurial Leadership and African Studies. The learners – including 8 girls and 7 boys, aged 18-20 years – were interviewed. Eight educators – 5 males and 3 females, aged 25 to 57 years, including the CEO and Founder of the school, and heads of key departments such as Entrepreneurial Leadership and African Studies – were interviewed.

1.5.3 Data Collection

The data collection method will involve in-depth interviews, observation and analysis of documents. 15 learners and eight educators were interviewed. The interviews were audio-recorded. The research role included participant observation in the class rooms in the educators lounge or workroom and in the sports field. The participation of the researcher in the settings was crucial, as it helped establish confidence and trust with the participants. Syllabuses for core subjects, the school policy and other documents were and field notes taken. Reflex records were documented after each event or observation.

1.6 Data analysis

Qualitative analysis uses the inductive method as a process to move from specific data to establish patterns (Punch, 2011:172). Guided by the research questions and the emergent themes, the researcher deployed the technique of comparative analysis (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:369).

The data collected was organised into codes such as the structures or contexts, educators' perspectives, learners' perspectives, activities, objects (such as logos and mission statements) and relationships (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:371). Data on the audio recorders were transcribed into a format that could be analysed. Then the codes were categorised according to the emergent themes identified in the data. There was cross-validation among the different strategies deployed (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:379) as plausible patterns were identified from the categories. Discrepant data was also analysed.

1.7 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was enhanced through an effort to report the participants' experiences as literally as possible through the use of audio recorders for the interviews. Apart from in-depth interviews, two other strategies – observation and analysis of documents- were deployed for the purpose of triangulation (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:330-331). Attention was also given to the principles of credibility through checking the truth value of the findings and by means of field notes. Dependability was ensured by keeping the raw material, giving a full description of the research method and applying the same procedure throughout.

1.8 Ethical measures

Permission to conduct the study was sought from the CEO and Founder of the school, and also from the Dean (Principal). The researcher clearly explained the purpose of the research to the stakeholders and participants to give them an appreciation of the importance of the research. Consent to interview the learners was obtained from the Assistant Dean for Pastoral Care who is mandated by the parents, to act as the guardian. Assent was also obtained from the learners who agreed to participate in the interviews. The researcher gave assurance to the participants of the fact

that the information obtained would be treated as confidential (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:339). Participation in the interviews was voluntary.

1.9 Limitations of the study

The school offers a unique programme, with a population of students drawn from all over the continent of Africa. Therefore, the results of this study will not necessarily generalise to other schools in the region offering high school education. It must also be noted that the school programme under this study is not specifically tailored for peace education. However, the study provides a unique perspective, which could be valuable for generating future policy and for improving educational practice.

1.10 Clarification of concepts

The following terms are frequently used throughout this document and, to ensure clarity and uniform understanding, the definitions of these terms are provided.

Peace

This is a psychosocial and political as well as a moral and spiritual condition (Clark-Habibi, 2005:38). It may be defined as “the absence of direct violence or social injustice” (Galtung, 1969:183).

Critical consciousness

Reflective and participatory capacities of learners to apply knowledge to overcome problems and achieve possibilities (Ardizzone, 2002:17).

Worldview

A reflection of the way an individual or group perceives reality, human nature, the purpose of human life and the laws governing human relationships. Worldviews influence the way we think, feel and act (Clark-Habibi, 2005:39).

Entrepreneurial Leadership

The subject that forms the core of the ALA programme. Its aim, essentially, is to equip learners with both entrepreneurial and leadership skills and values. The term “entrepreneurial” is drawn from “entrepreneurship”, which is a dynamic and social process where individuals, alone or in collaboration, identify opportunities for innovation and act upon these by transforming ideas into practical and targeted activities, whether in a social, cultural or economic context (Naz, Munir, Khalid & Ahmed, 2011:278)

Unity

The state of being joined as a complex whole (*Oxford Dictionaries Online*).

BUILD

Believe, Understand, Invent, Listen and Deliver (BUILD) is the cross-curricular concept used to drive the experiential learning activities in the ALA programme, such as the student enterprises and community service programmes.

Conflicts

Conflicts are disagreements that lead to tensions between people. They are perceived differences of interests or beliefs that the current aspirations of the parties cannot be reached simultaneously (Anderson, Hinge & Messina, 2011:7).

1.11 Chapter division

Chapter 1 deals with the introduction, background and aims and objectives of the study. In this chapter, the problem statement, research design and the research plan is outlined. Also included are the limitations that the study might have.

Chapter 2 presents a literature study, outlining the causes of violence and conflicts in South Africa and on the continent of Africa. It looks into the notion of peace and the concept of peace education – its origin and its diversity. Also discussed in this chapter are the theoretical frameworks of peace

education as put forward by Paulo Freire, Hossain Danesh and Maria Montessori. These form the basis for the evaluation of the content and delivery of the educational programme at ALA.

Chapter 3 focuses on the methodological approach including design, methods of data collection and analysis. Also included in this chapter are the researcher's role, trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

Chapter four reports on, analyses and discusses the data obtained from the interviews, observations, objects and documents.

Based on the literature study, observations, analysis of documents and interviews, a summary of the findings of the study is provided in chapter 5. Conclusions are drawn and recommendations are also presented in this chapter.

1.12 Summary

The approach chosen for the study was qualitative research, because it enables a researcher to gather the information in a natural setting and helps the researcher to focus on the participants' understanding, descriptions and opinions. The researcher was able to directly gather detailed descriptions that would help in understanding the experiences of the learners with regard to the acquisition of the appropriate skills and attitudes that would enhance a culture of peace. The emergent design provided for in qualitative research was necessary, as the findings continually informed further advancements in the research.

The sampling was purposeful. Fifteen learners, in Grade 12, were used for the interviews. Seven educators were also interviewed. The data collect on the audio recorders were transcribed into a format that could be analysed. The data was organised into codes and analysed according to emergent themes (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:371).

Chapter 1 has outlined the problem, the main aim of the study and how the study was conducted. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature on the concept of peace education and its diversity. Causes of violence and violent conflicts and the theoretical frameworks for peace education, as put forward by Paulo Freire, Hossain Danesh and Maria Montessori, are also discussed in chapter 2.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW ON EDUCATION FOR PEACE

2.1 Introduction

The predominance of violence and conflict in South Africa, on the continental and globally remains a great concern to many. Violence and conflict contribute to a significant proportion of news items in both the print and electronic media, to the extent that news items not punctuated with reports of violence and conflict are regarded as unusual and, perhaps, even as boring. Unfortunately, by default or design, the media feature news stories that are so surreal that it seems like scenes that belong in a movie, to the real world. Peace educators hold the view that education hold the key to bringing peace to the local and global society. In this chapter, the notion of peace and violence, together with some causes of violence, are discussed. The origin and forms of peace education are also considered. Finally, three peace educators and their perspectives on peace education are discussed. These provide the theoretical background for the case study of the educational programme at African Leadership Academy, although the programme is not specifically designed for peace education.

2.2 The notion of peace and violence

When considering education for peace, there is need for one to shed some light on the meaning of the word “peace”. Western definitions of peace tend to emphasise the absence of violence (Harris, 2004:7). For example, peace is defined as “a state in which there is no war” (*Oxford Dictionaries Online*). The Eastern definitions tend to emphasise the presence of certain characteristics, for instance, “shanti” is a Hindu word for peace that reflects spiritual and mental calmness or tranquillity (Anderson, 2004:102). It is argued that the universal understanding of peace should include both the absence of such factors as violence and the presence of such factors as harmony. Anderson (2004:103) proposes the definition of peace as “a condition in which individuals, families, groups or communities experience low levels of violence and engage in mutually harmonious relations”. The definition indicates that peace has both violent and harmonic dimensions.

The above definition of peace brings to light the notion first articulated by Galtung (1969:183) and

now which embraced by many scholars, that is, that peace can be positive or negative (Reardon, 1988:11; Gawerc, 2006:438; Tidwell, 2004:105). Negative peace is viewed as the absence of direct violence (Gawerc, 2006:438; Galtung, 1969:191). Positive peace is essentially the presence of harmony in personal, cultural or global contexts; it is based on justice, equity and cooperation (Gawerc, 2006:439; Galtung, 1969:190)

Harris (2004:7) acknowledges that peace has different meanings within different cultures as well as different connotations for the spheres in which peaceful processes are applied. For the above definition to make sense, the meaning of violence needs to be clarified. Galtung (1969:168-183) expounded on the definition and dimensions of violence. He defined violence as the cause for the differences between the potential somatic and mental realizations and the actual realizations (Galtung 1969:168). In other words, violence increases the gap between potential realizations and the actual realizations, or it hinders the reduction of the gap. For example, the high infant mortality rate in the modern world, despite the advancements in medicine and services at health facilities, would be considered to be violent, while the same infant mortality rate would not have been conceived as violent in the seventeenth century. Violence is not considered to exist if it actually is unavoidable and vice versa. Violence exists in two forms: direct violence and structural violence. Direct violence exists when there is a subject-object relationship and this involves persons. Physical or lethal violence are examples of direct violence. Structural violence exists when there is an unequal balance of power, with its end result of unequal life chances. In this form of violence there is no person who acts or no subject. The condition of structural violence is also referred to as social injustice (Galtung, 1969:171).

With the realisation of the existence of the two forms of violence – direct or personal violence and structural violence or social injustice – Galtung (1969:183) proposed that the concept of peace should also be viewed as two sided. From the broad definition of peace, as the absence of violence, Galtung (1969:183) proposed that the absence of direct violence be seen as negative peace and the absence of structural violence be seen as positive peace. Positive peace is so called because it refers to the presence of a positively defined condition and that is social justice (Reardon, 1988:26). Similarly, from the earlier provided definition of peace by Anderson (2004:103), positive peace features as the presence of a positively defined state of affairs, in other words, mutually

harmonious relations.

With a clear understanding of the notion of peace and violence, we will look into the causes of violence and conflict from a psychosocial perspective.

2.3 The causes of violence: a socio-educative perspective

The causes of violence and conflict, both locally and globally, are multiple and diverse. However, the root causes may arguably be found to be few. It may help to cite a few examples of violent conflicts, apart from the Arab Spring and the DRC that have been mentioned in the previous chapter. Locally, structural violence is known to exist such areas as the mining industry, precipitating unrest and strikes. An example of both direct and indirect violence is the tragedy at the Lonmin Platinum Mine in which police killed 34 people by gunfire in their attempt to quell an alleged illegal strike by the workers (Human Rights Watch, 2013:159). The incident highlighted the grievances of workers in the mining industry.

Regionally, there are further examples of violence. In Zimbabwe, there is no peace because of, among others, political violence, impunity, human rights abuses and laws that do not protect the LGBT community (Human Rights Watch, 2013:185). Moving further north, Kenya's experiences of violence are associated with ethnicity, poverty and terrorism while Kenya's neighbouring country, Uganda, recently dominated the headlines because the government there introduced the Anti-homosexuality Bill (Human Rights Watch, 2013:183), which proposed the death penalty for consensual same sex activities. In South Sudan, women and girls have no rights to own and inherit property (Human Rights Watch, 2013:169) Furthermore, there are many human rights abuses in the law enforcement sector and in the administration of justice, because of a lack of capacity and adequate training of relevant personnel (Human Right Watch 2013:164).

The list of causes for violence, both direct and structural, is long and includes, among others, poverty, corruption, culture and traditions, ethnicity, impunity, economic violence, environmental degradation, violation of human rights and the quality and provision of education. In most cases, in reality, the causes of violence are usually intertwined and complex. In the following paragraphs we will highlight only a few causes of violence and conflict, so that the focus of the study is not

lost. We will highlight poverty, violations of human rights and schooling.

2.3.1 Poverty

When focusing on poverty, there is a need to make reference to the “needs theory”. Human beings have shared basic needs (Weinberg, 2011:16). These needs include security, positive identity, a positive connection to other people and the need for transcendence (Staub, 2003:2). Violence and conflict tend to arise from the conditions of unmet needs. For example, children who receive warmth and affection from adults and peers – and non-punitive guidance – tend to care for and help others. Such children are exposed to reasoning and critical thinking with regard to the rules and consequences of behaviour towards other people. They are exposed to practices that provide experiences that tend to meet their fundamental needs. On the other hand, children who are exposed to neglect, hostility, harsh treatment or abuse by parents and peers tend to be violent. The children are exposed to experiences that frustrate their fundamental needs. The needs theory does not apply to children only. Social conditions that frustrate individuals and communities and prevent them from meeting their fundamental needs such as poverty, rapid society or familial change, social disorganisation, intense conflict and threat or actual attack by other groups, are catalyse violence (Staub, 2003:2). Poverty has an adverse effect on the way parents treat and guide their children. Children of poor parents, due to circumstances, are more exposed to neglect and child abuse than children of rich parent. Thus, there exists a direct correlation between poverty and violence.

Indeed poverty, a common phenomenon in many African countries, is viewed as one of the harshest manifestation of structural violence (Harber, 1996:152). The reasons for the existence of poverty are multiple and diverse. These include poor governance, corruption and the debt burden that continuous to impact on the economies of many developing countries. These three causes also tend to be intertwined in a complex manner. To illustrate the impact of debt on states, imagine a developing country takes a loan from a Western country. The loan comes in the form of equipment and expatriates (e.g. skilled workers), in other words some of the money goes back in form of salaries paid to these expatriates. Alternatively, some of the money may end up in the pockets of the corrupt leaders, who, in turn, invest the in a European bank (regarded as more secure). There

is, therefore, limited growth and development that could occur in economy in order for that country to repay the debt. The debt repayment burden and interests keep accumulating every year and the country is obliged to honour repayment agreements leaving less in the national budget to invest in services and development. It is ordinary citizens who are on the receiving end of the resulting economic violence, experienced as poverty.

Harber (1996:154) attributes the above type of scenarios to the fact that many African countries inherited economic systems that had not evolved naturally, but which had been distorted by the needs of the colonial powers. In addition, with ever-increasing oil prices and changing technologies and market trends, some of the primary products exported by underdeveloped countries in order to earn foreign exchange, for example sisal, produced mainly in North Africa, became obsolete or unprofitable to produce because of changes in demand for the product. The result for a number of African countries was crippling debt repayment regimes and extreme gaps in wealth and poverty.

In South Africa where there are extreme gaps in wealth and poverty (Harber 2001:262), it is no wonder that crime is so prevalent. The situation activates the experiences of social injustices, as individuals and groups compare themselves with others, giving rise to anger and resentment and, ultimately, violence. This is an example of a society that holds a survival-based worldview, with the poor and the rich existing in a “them” and “us” situation and each group devaluing or discriminating against the other. In such a situation, the need for positive identity is frustrated (Staub, 2003:3). Perhaps the way forward lies in education, as it has the potential to transform the worldview of learners, equipping them with problem-solving and entrepreneurial skills. This will be education for socio-economic empowerment, among other things.

2.3.2 Violation of human rights

The continent of Africa has had a history of regimes that were guilty of human rights abuses such as that of Idi Amani of Uganda and Emperor Bokassa of the Central African Republic (Harber, 1996:154). In South Africa, the apartheid regime was also characterised by human rights abuses. In most African countries, human rights have been systematically abused or ignored, with only

very few exceptions, such as Botswana. Although the violation of human rights persists in countries such as South Sudan and Nigeria, many countries are now embracing democracy and the incidents of violent abuse of human rights and individual freedoms are decreasing. Education might possibly be the most effective way to catalyse this trend. The predominance of human rights violations persist in African societies because of biased or undemocratic cultural and religious traditions. In the traditional African kingdoms, people were supposed to follow the kings' instructions without any question. Similarly, family members were supposed to follow the instructions of the head of the family without question. Gender equality was a term that was non-existent. Conservative Islamic cultures reflected the notion that women should not have access to the same education available to men (Altbach, Reisberg & Rumbley, 2009:43). As such, although many countries and organisations have formulated policies and declarations that would enhance gender equality, for example, these efforts have had little or no impact on certain societies, because of certain cultural and religious traditions and practices that the countries are reluctant to discard (Altbach et al, 2009:43).

There has been little or no change in the mind-set or worldview of the people in many African societies. The implication is that policies and declarations that seek greater equality and fairness are at higher levels than the level of development of the society in which it applies and, if attention is not paid to the root causes of the problem of violence, it will not have any significant impact. People need to acquire appropriate skills and attitudes to embrace progressive policies and this can be implemented through education, at various levels of schooling. Education must be used to enhance social justice or democratic thinking; to create a society that holds a unity-based worldview. Education should be utilised to create systems that are free from social injustices. Hence, in the next paragraphs the focus will be on education and violence.

2.3.3 Schooling

Children and education have been adversely affected by violent conflicts that have plagued various regions on the African continent in recent times. Examples of such situations are Rwanda, Sierra Leone, the DRC and Liberia. In many countries, societal violence spills over into schools (Salmi, 2009:399). On the other hand, the level of access to education or a lack of access, is known to have

an effect on the presence or absence of violence and conflicts. One of the reasons why the Liberian civil war was so violent and indiscriminate was a lack of provision of education to the population through the public school system (Harber, 1996:163). Tidwell (2004:463) considers conflict, peace and education to be a tangled web. In this section, we explore how education may help to minimise violent conflicts, or increase the same, in the dual and contradictory nature of formal education. Formal schooling is potentially a powerful tool that could be used to provide education that is concerned with peaceful resolution of conflict through analysing the causes of violence and teaching values and skills that are congruent with peaceful behaviour. As Harber (1996:152) states: “Education is what will enable us to move from a culture of war, which we unhappily know only too well, to a culture of peace.” However, this positive potential of formal education is yet to be realised in the different levels of global society. Historically, formal schooling in many societies in Africa has arguably been a vehicle for the perpetration of violence, both in overt forms of physical violence and in terms of psychological and structural violence, as demonstrated in the dehumanising social relationships experienced by the learners in traditional school systems (Harber, 1996:152). This is the legacy of the authoritarian type of school organisation and of the curriculum institutionalised in the first part of the 20th century, which came to be regarded as “normal”, with the indigenous cultures adopting the same model post-independence (Harber, & Sakade, 2009:172). The situation is not limited to Africa only. Harber & Sakade (2009:172) claim that, in terms of schooling, the overwhelming evidence is that the dominant or hegemonic model globally, with some exceptions, is authoritarian rather than democratic. They argue that there is no emphasis on democracy, human rights and critical awareness in the majority of the schooling systems. The degree of the authoritarianism may vary from school to school or from context to context, but the common practice is that what is taught and learned, how it is taught, where it is taught and when it is taught is decided by government officials and head teachers, with hardly any input from the learners.

In such situations, the learners are vulnerable to violence and they are exposed to potentially violent beliefs, since the dominant norms and values of the society are there to be shared, but not to be challenged (Harber & Sakade, 2009:173). The system of education then serves to entrench conformity. Hence, formal schooling has served to reproduce the existence of unequal socio-economic and political relationships in countries like Britain (Curtis 2007).

Harber and Sakade (2009:171) identify some of the overt forms of violence sustained in normal systems of schooling as racial and ethnic prejudice, bullying, gendered violence, the use of corporal punishment, physical and mental stress caused by over-testing and militarisation of schooling as part of the curriculum. The perpetuation of violence, as characterised by the schooling system, is attributed to the fact that historically, there has always been a conflict between education for control, in order to produce citizens and workers who were conformist, passive and politically docile, on the one hand, and those who advocated for education for critical consciousness, freedom and democracy, on the other hand, with the former dominating the real world of formal education (Harber & Sakade, 2009:173). Thus, the approach to curriculum planning can be described as rationalist, with knowledge seen as factual and objective, rather than subject to interpretation or change. Such a curriculum has been founded on an authoritarian culture, with the emphasis on certainty or knowledge as absolute and unchanging.

Harber and Sakade (2009) argue that the above factors contributed to the schooling system being regarded as one of the institutions of social control just like prisons, hospitals or factories. They are also emphatic that, even today, globally, school organisation and the curriculum still very much reflect the original historical purposes (Harber & Sakade, 2009:174). It is for this reason that education has not been able to catalyse the transformation of communities into more peaceful ones. As the consequentialist approach to education would suggest, what we teach and how we teach have an effect on shaping the sort of society we live in (Smith, 2004:4).

As mentioned earlier, the societal culture of violence has spilled over into schools (Salmi, 2009:399). Schools have become the medium for propagation of the same. For example, in societies with a highly individualistic and competitive worldview, schools emphasise the belief that everybody has the opportunity to pursue their own success (Staub, 2003:6). The school system, by default, also allows a culture of anxiety to prevail through its emphasis on tests and exams as an end in themselves. The purpose of each learning cycle is solely to prepare for the next cycle and the anxiety to pass tests replaces the pleasure of learning (Salmi, 2009:407). In countries like Kenya, because of the high stakes attached to examinations, students have to rely on private tutoring, outside of school hours, to complement their academic preparation. Consequently, students experience stressful schedules in their normal school life.

Education is meant to be a socialistic process and the activities in schools are supposed to support this process. If this was the case, schools would ideally be sanctuaries of peace and harmony. The reality in many South African and African schools, however, has been different (Maxwell et al, 2004:107). For example, although several constitutions out-law corporal punishment, it continues to be practiced in many schools, in many countries. That brings into question the integrity of the teachers involved. By using the cane on learners, who know that corporal punishment is prohibited, teachers are is not only teaching violence, they are is also teaching impunity. The violent contexts in such school environments do not help promote the teaching of skills and attitudes that would enhance peace in the society.

Every school needs to have in place, the ethos and policies that would allow proper channelling of grievances and solving of conflicts. Learners should feel like their voices would be heard whenever the need arises. Any rules should also be clearly explained. The school should always increase awareness of the prevailing worldviews by critically analysing such processes as discipline procedures, grouping patterns, evaluation techniques, teacher-student interactions and the very language used by professionals in describing the environment and students (Marshall, 2002:13). This is because significant differences between the worldviews of teachers and the students' worldviews lead to conflict-based classroom interactions that may be reflected in students' behaviour such as boredom, demotivation or a hostile or indifferent attitude to learning activities.

The curriculum content, which promotes the worldview of "us" and "them" on issues such as nationality, culture, ethnicity or race, also contributes to violence in society. Although education should be carried out with the local context in mind, the vision of a school system that is based on the democratic ideals of justice and equality should be reflected in all curricular content in all countries, in the post-modern world.

2.4 The origin and scope of peace education

Peace education is a contextual subject and, as such, its origin cannot be clearly traced to a specific time. As Harris (2008:1) points out, the earliest written records of guidelines that teach others about

how to achieve peace comes through the world's great religions such as Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. The irony it is that these religions have tended to contribute to both war and peace. This may be attributed to the "us" and "them" worldview that tends to exist and which causes conflict when people interpret and misinterpret written records such as the Bible and Koran. Although peace education started as the study of the causes of war and its prevention, it has evolved into studying violence in all its manifestations and a focus on educating to counteract the war system in order to create a peace system (Harris, 2004:5). In his article, entitled "Peace education theory," Harris (2004:5-20) traced the evolution of peace education theory from its roots in international concerns about the dangers of war to its manifestations in modern theories based on reducing threats of interpersonal and environmental violence. He reviewed ways in which peace education has become diversified and examined the assumptions behind the five different ways in which peace education was carried out at the beginning of the twenty-first century. These are: international education, human rights education, development education, environmental education and conflict resolution education (Harris, 2004:6). "Peace education", in this context, refers to education about peace: what it is, why it does not exist and how to achieve it.

According to Harris (2008:1), peace education has grown parallel to the growth in the number of peace movements, which began in the nineteenth century after the Napoleonic wars. During that time, progressivists and politicians formed groups to look into the threats of war and to advance arguments against the build-up of armaments. This led to the establishment of peace organisations in Great Britain, Belgium and France. During the period preceding the First World War, peace organisations were formed in many nations in Europe and in the United States (Harris, 2008:2). Alongside these, groups of teachers, students and university professors formed peace societies to educate the general public about the dangers of war (Harris, 2008:2). Stomfay-Fitz (2008:1) points out that in America, for example, the aspirations for a peaceful society, free of military dominance, came to be wedded into practical educational plans such as curriculum guides and text books that could be used to educate children for a peaceable society and for citizenship.

The beginning of the 20th century saw the peace movements lobbying their governments against the conflicts that eventually led to the First World War, as international congresses were held with a view to swaying public opinions against the military build ups that preceded the war (Stomfay-

Fitz, 2008:2). The likes of Maria Montessori crisscrossed Europe urging educators to move away from authoritarian teaching methods. Montessori's view was that peace could only be achieved through an education system that promoted love for others and which rejected conformity. She believed that, to achieve peaceful coexistence, schools should reflect the caring characteristics of a healthy family and, through education, society could help more and more children to grow up in a world that welcomes them (Thayer-Bacon, 2011:318). After the Second World War there emerged an interest in "education for global citizenship", which emphasised the interdependence of human beings and the development of skills in peace making and social justice (Stormfay-Fitz, 2008:3). Peace research or the "science of peace" also emerged to counter the science of war.

Then came the Cold War and the threat of a nuclear war, in the last quarter of the 20th century, and peace educators like Betty Reardon came up with the argument that the core values of schooling should be care, concern and commitment, while the key components of peace education should be planetary stewardship, global citizenship and human relationship (Reardon, 1988:75).

In the new millennium, there has been an emphasis on peace education in the context of conflict resolution (Clark-Habibi, 2005:35). In this regard, the emphasis is placed on interpersonal relations and systems that enable disputing parties to resolve their differences through the use of effective communication skills. The educators following this approach, teach human relations skills such as anger management, impulse control, emotional awareness, empathy, assertiveness and problem solving.

Having highlighted the evolving and contextual nature of peace education, we will now, in the next few paragraphs, look at some of the contexts in which peace education is carried out. The purpose is to provide some sense of the scope of peace education.

Since the first decades of this century, peace education programmes around the world have represented a range of focal themes, including anti-nuclearism international understanding, environmental responsibility, communication skills, nonviolence, conflict resolution techniques, democracy, human rights awareness and tolerance of diversity, coexistence and gender equality, among others (Clark-Habibi, 2005:34). According to Harris (2004:8), in the new millennium,

controversies surrounding the word “peace”, in conjunction with concerns about a number of different forms of violence, have resulted in five types of peace education. As mentioned earlier, these are: international education, human rights education, development education, environmental education and conflict resolution education. It is worth noting that the proposed five types of peace education basically represent “education about peace”. This is because the broad umbrella of peace education includes such fields as education for peace, critical peace education, disarmament education, multicultural education and futures education. We will briefly explore some of these types of peace education in the following paragraph.

2.4.1 Education for peace

This is one of the two main approaches to peace education. The other approach is education about peace. Education for peace is concerned with skills, attitudes and knowledge that students or people need to develop to enable the creation of peace. This approach is crucial in such fields as international education, multicultural education and environmental education, since the above-mentioned skills form the foundation of learning in these fields. As Wulf (2013:71) argues, education for peace has to be a central element in future-oriented education. Education about peace, on the other hand, is concerned with providing an understanding of the meaning of peace. It is education concerned with the development and practice of institutions and processes that make up a peaceful social order (Tidiwell, 2004:465). Education about peace is concerned with the knowledge and skills of peace-making (Reardon, 1988:12). It covers such areas as human rights education, nonviolence, disarmament and conflict resolution education. Notably, in any field of peace education, the two approaches tend to be intertwined. For example, teaching human rights from the legal perspective is education about peace. Teaching the same from the perspective of human dignity is education for peace, as it addresses the issue of attitudes and values. Danesh (2006:17) mentions, as an example of an education for peace programme, the programme adopted in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The programme had a curriculum designed to meet what he considers to be the four requisite conditions necessary for the successful implementation of any peace education programme, that is: development of a unity-based worldview; creating a culture of peace; creating a culture of healing and using peace education as the framework for all educational activities (Danesh, 2006:71).

2.4.2 International education

This type of education stemmed from the concerns about modern warfare. Educators in Europe and America saw the need to teach international relations so that students would not want to wage war against foreigners (Harris, 2004:9). It was understood that education had the potential to unlock the door to peace, by bringing about an understanding of others – their culture and shared values. There was a need to address the use of schools to indoctrinate the youth in nationalism. Education for world citizenship became more relevant (Ganihar, 2007:129). International education, currently, includes teaching about globalisation, as this has become an unstoppable phenomenon, and how it can best be utilised for the benefit of humanity and the natural environment as a whole (UNESCO, 2009:23). Harris (2004:10) acknowledges that international education is a diverse field, with some researchers looking towards the creation of a federal world system, with laws and courts, to adjudicate conflicts between nations and others looking into alternative ways to structure the global economy so that debt does not further impoverish developing nations, already struggling with difficult conditions of structural violence. It includes teaching about the use of global institutions to enhance collective security as part of their effort in this field.

2.4.3 Conflict resolution education

This field of peace education aims to equip students with the basic communication skills necessary for survival in a post-modern world. It calls for abandoning of authoritarianism in the classrooms. It advocates for a situation where students have some say in what they are studying. The educators in the field to teach students human relations skills such as anger management, impulse control, emotional awareness, empathy development, assertiveness and problem solving (Clark-Habibi, 2005:35). Also included is training in decision making, problem solving, peer negotiation, conflict management, valuing diversity, social resistance and active listening skills. This positively affects the school environment, resulting in better academic performance, a spirit of cooperation and a positive attitude towards school (Harris, 2004:15). The educators adopt teaching methods based on modelling peaceful democratic classroom practices. Through this kind of education, people develop certain thoughts and dispositions that lead to peaceful behaviour. The main aspects associated with these dispositions are kindness, critical thinking and cooperation.

2.4.4 Human rights education

This field of education is founded on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, which provides a statement of values to be pursued in order to achieve social, economic and political justice. The educators in this field enhance human rights awareness and put into perspective the existence of institutions that address civil, domestic, cultural and ethnic forms of violence (Clark-Habibi, 2005:35). This approach to peace education is known as peace through justice. The general idea is to minimise civil violence by offering recourse through legal systems, with checks and balances based upon courts, trials and jails. As Harris (2004:10) puts it, “abuse of rights and struggle to eliminate that abuse lie at the heart of many violent conflicts”. Human rights education may also take different forms depending on the context. For example, in places like China and Rwanda, it may help students to develop international perspectives on the problems of violence, to help protect the rights of people being oppressed by states and build community solidarity across various peace movements. The goal is to address violence and conflict that is identity-based and to promote multicultural understanding in order to reduce stereotypes and hostilities between groups. It also endeavours to address structural violence, reflected in inequitable economic development and destruction of the environment (Harris, 2004:12).

2.4.5 Development education

Peace educators in this field use development studies to provide their students with insights into various aspects of structural violence, as they focus on social institutions with their hierarchies and properties for dominance and oppression (Liddy, 2013:28). An awareness is created about the plight of the poor and students construct developmental strategies to address problems of structural violence. This kind of education aims to build peaceful communities by promoting an active democratic citizenry, with an interest in equitably sharing the world’s resources.

According to Harris (2004:12), the educators promote people’s involvement in the planning, implementation and management phases of development schemes, as opposed to top-down development strategies imposed by corporate elites, who see ordinary people as ignorant. The concern is equitable control of resources, rather than monopoly by elites. Hence, the emphasis is on the promotion of positive peace, as inequalities observed in the dominant patterns of

development in the West, are questioned. Peace educators decry the poverty and misery produced by an advanced capitalist economic order, where an elite minority benefits from the suffering of the vast majority of people, which has become more apparent since globalisation (Harris 2004:13).

2.4.6 Environmental education

Issues of environmental pollution, degradation, global warming and extinction of species have led to the emergence of this field to peace education. Peace educators came to the realisation that it is not enough to address issues of interpersonal, inter-group and inter-state violence and conflicts. There is also a need to deal with issues that threaten the ecological balance in natural processes. That is, addressing the issue of different forms of human violence against nature. As Harris (2004:13) puts it, scientific growth, based upon rational modes of problem solving, has created a damaged Earth that is losing many of its creatures to extinction. Educators in this field promote a culture of environmental conservation. They place more emphasis on ecologically sound practices rather than unlimited consumer cultures, which is based on the exploitation of natural resources (Harris, 2004:13). Environmental literacy, in this context, has little to do with being able to read about the environment. It is about holistic thinking on how humans relate to natural systems.

2.5 A culture of peace

In 1989, the International Congress on “Peace in the minds of Men” was held in Cote d’Ivoire. The concept of a “culture of peace” was formulated at the abovementioned conference (Jegede, Ememe, & Kolawalale, 2013:44; UNESCO, 2002:2). The theme of the congress was based on the preamble of the UNESCO Constitution of 1945. It was recommended, at the congress, that UNESCO should help in constructing a new vision of peace by developing a peace culture, based on the universal values of respect of life, liberty, justice, solidarity, tolerance, human rights and equality between men and women. The culture of peace is defined as “consisting of values, attitudes and behaviours that reject violence and endeavour to prevent conflicts by addressing their root causes with a view to solving problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations” (UNESCO, 2002:2).

In respect of the definition above, the United Nations Declaration and Program of Action on a

Culture of Peace called on everyone – governments, civil society, the media, parents, teachers, non-governmental organisations and the entire United Nations system – to assume responsibility (UNESCO, 2002:5). The following eight action areas for actors at different levels were identified as focus points (UNESCO 2002:5)

1. Fostering a culture of peace through education by promoting education for all, focusing especially on girls; revising curricula to promote qualitative values, attitudes and behaviour inherent in a culture of peace; training for conflict: prevention and resolution, dialogue, consensus building and active non-violence.
2. Promoting sustainable economic and social development by targeting the eradication of poverty; focusing on the special needs of children and women; working towards environmental sustainability; fostering national and international cooperation to reduce economic and social inequalities.
3. Promoting respect for all human rights by distributing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at all levels and fully implementing international instruments on human rights.
4. Ensuring equality between women and men by integrating a gender perspective and promoting equality in economic, social and political decision making; eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against women; supporting and aiding women in crisis situations resulting from war and all other forms of violence.
5. Fostering democratic participation by educating responsible citizens; reinforcing actions to promote democratic principles and practices; establishing and strengthening national institutions and processes that promote and sustain democracy.
6. Advancing understanding, tolerance and solidarity by promoting a dialogue among civilisations; actions in favour of vulnerable groups, migrants, refugees and displaced persons, indigenous people and traditional groups; respect for difference and cultural diversity ...
7. Supporting participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge by means of such actions as support for independent media in the promotion of a culture of peace; effective use of media and mass communications; measures to address the issue of violence in the media; knowledge and information sharing through new technologies ...
8. Promoting international peace and security through action such as the promotion of general and complete disarmament; greater involvement of women in prevention and resolution of

conflicts and in promoting a culture of peace in post-conflict situations; encouraging confidence-building measures and efforts for negotiating peaceful settlements.

Clearly, the eight action areas are mainly centred round education. Thus, it may be argued that education is a sure path to a culture of peace, that is, the right kind of education with regard to its content and methodology.

Following the UN launch of the International Year of a Culture of Peace, in the year of 2000, 2001-2010 were declared, by the United Nations General Assembly, held in September 2001, as the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the Children of the World (Jegade et al, 2013:44; United Nations, 2001:3). Emphasis was placed on the fact that, during this decade, member states should commit themselves to education for a culture of peace, with children at the centre of programme. Education was correctly viewed as the path all member states must follow to reach a culture of peace. Thus, education would be central to all the activities to mark the decade. Importantly, education was to be viewed in its broadest sense – formal education within and, outside of the schools, informal education and learning that takes place within family settings and through the media. Member states were expected to ensure that the practice of peace and non-violence was taught at all levels in their respective societies, including in educational institutions (UNESCO, 2002:6).

The actions for promoting a culture of peace and non-violence, in formal and non-formal education, would include training decision makers and educators in the skills needed to promote peace and non-violence; revision of curriculum materials, particularly history textbooks, to promote mutual understanding and remove bias or stereotypes; creating new curriculum materials to address peace, non-violence and human rights; producing and disseminating educational materials and textbooks on education for a culture of peace and human rights; promoting networking among institutions, non-governmental organisations and civic education specialists and developing new methods of non-violent conflict resolution that include traditional peaceful approaches (UNESCO, 2002:6).

Some of the attitudes and behaviours that constitute a culture of peace, such as demonstrating values of sharing and following the rules of fair play, would be taught by involving students in co-

curricular activities such as sports, dance, theatre and artistic activities. The proposed activities for informal aspects of education for a culture of peace would include: developing public awareness campaigns targeting children in the family and the local community; promoting multicultural and multi-ethnic events in arts and sports to enhance mutual understanding; providing support for parents, teachers and local associations with an aim to protect children from violence in the media; working with local authorities, governments and international organisations to adopt specific measures to monitor and regulate violence in the media and organising advocacy for a culture of peace that reaches the designers, producers and enterprises that are creating and selling media (UNESCO, 2002:6).

The ideas on the role of education in enhancing a culture of peace during the International Decade for a Culture of Peace, and beyond, were well articulated. One does, however, wonder why there was no significant impact at the end of the decade. Adams (2000:262) considers the transformation from a culture of war and violence to a culture of peace as probably more radical and far-reaching than any previous change in human history. This is because all aspects of social relations are open to change; including relations among nations, between nations and their citizens and between women and men. The irony of it is that, although the UN Charter of 1945 called for the abolition of war, it was not until the end of the last century that formulation and calls for the abolition of those values, attitudes and behaviours of societies that encourage the culture of war were made, these include: the call for the abolition of the concept of power as a force; the image of an enemy that does not have the same rights as you; authoritarian social structures; secrecy and armaments (Adams, 2000:262).

According to Wintersteiner (2013:138), the three major challenges that peace education has to face are: recognition at a political level, a deeper connection with the discourses of the academic world and integration of a global peace movement. The implication of recognition at a political level is that peace education has to be recognised as part and parcel of any education system, at all levels, that it has to be integrated into the formal school system and that funds are provided for academic peace education research and teacher training. It also implies that peace education has to be recognised as a tool to overcome war and other forms of group violence and as an important resource for a lasting peace (Wintersteiner, 2013:138). This would imply that peace education

approaches have to be integrated into the discourses of peace research, on the one hand, and educational research, on the other, and vice versa. This is in appreciation of the fact that peace education must always be seen to be more than peace activism; it must have well-developed professional and academic standards.

2.6 Education for peace: theoretical perspectives

Education theorists such as John Dewey, Betty Reardon, Maria Montessori, Ian Harris, Johan Galtung, Paulo Freire and Hosea Danesh have all made their contributions to the field of peace education in one way or another. Their varied theoretical perspectives have shaped the development of peace education in its diversity as it is today. In the next few paragraphs of this chapter, I will look at the theoretical perspectives of Paulo Freire, Hosea Danesh and Maria Montessori. These theorists were chosen because of the relevance their philosophies to education for peace, which is geared towards enhancing critical thinking, the quality of unity and creation of a culture of peace, respectively. In other words, I explore the relevance of their perspectives to the theme of our study.

2.6.1 Paulo Freire (1921-1997)

Paulo Freire was a Brazilian educator. He grew up among poor rural families and labourers in the North-East of Brazil (Bentley, 1999). As such, he had a deep understanding of the lives of those experiencing poverty as a result of structural violence. He also understood how this form of violence affected education. In his interactions with the workers and their families, Freire realised that the type of education that was offered to the people was disconnect with the real lives of the working class (Bentley, 1999). He became one of the leading advocates for critical pedagogy. He developed ideas which concentrated on the criticism of the traditional methods of teaching. He coined the term “banking education” to refer to this kind of education (Freire, 1996: 53).

2.6.1.1 Banking education

The “banking” part of the concept “banking education” refers to educational pedagogy, which is similar to banking. It means a process in which knowledge is directly transferred to learners, with

the teacher being the depositor of knowledge and the student the passive receiver of the same. In such a situation, knowledge is perceived as a finite entity to be stored in those who don't have it, by those who do. It is consumed without criticism and the students experience cultural alienation and become defenceless against cultural imperialism (Durakoglu, 2013:102). This knowledge can be withdrawn and used later in life. Freire saw the traditional educational methods, or banking education, as an instrument of social control, as it created a contradiction between the teacher and the student, similar to that observed between the oppressor and the oppressed (Freire, 1996:54). The students in this system of education are likened to empty containers, to be filled by the teachers. The teacher sends out communiques, which the students are supposed to memorise through rote learning. The scope of the action that students are allowed, only extends as far as receiving, filing and storing the deposits of knowledge (Harber, 1996:159). The educator speaks and the students listen. This approach considers humans as beings to be influenced (Durakoglu, 2013:103). The students are kept busy storing materials loaded on them, with the result that their critical consciousness become more passive.

Banking education serves the purpose of making the oppressed to become obedient and alienated. It ignores life and makes it more difficult for one to be conscious of oneself. It does not assist students to understand themselves, but only serves to change the individual according to alien purposes (Durakoglu, 2013:103). Banking education has a hidden agenda, which serves the purpose of the oppressors, as it causes dehumanisation (Freire, 1996:58). The oppressed are taught to exist in a system with a tendency to sustain the existing social structure. The content and ethical orders of the system of education reflects the ideology of the ruling class or the elite (Durakoglu, 2013:103). Freire saw banking education as one of the tools greatly hindering the humanisation process of the person. It makes the individual an object on which work is done and learning is the tool for accomplishing that purpose. Schooling, therefore, serves the purpose of laundering cultural advantages and transforming them into currency of qualifications to perpetuate the socially rooted inequalities which shape it (Edwards, 2011:100).

On the other hand, Freire held the opinion that education should be modelled to help develop social awareness and critical thinking skills of people. In advocating for a move from banking education, or traditional educational methods, he proposed problem-posing education as the alternative

approach that would serve the correct purpose (Freire, 1996:61).

2.6.1.2 Problem-posing education

In Freire's notion of problem posing education, he expounds on the role of education as a transformative process, where students develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves (Freire, 1996:70). In problem-posing education, the learning situation is such that "a cognizable object intermediates the cognitive actors who are the teacher on one hand and the student on the other" (Freire, 1996:60). It calls for the resolution of the teacher-student contradictions with a view to embracing dialogical relations. There is no dichotomy in the way students or teachers simultaneously reflect on themselves and the world and the action that is embarked upon. Problem-posing education puts an emphasis on the importance of liberty, which is understood to be thought and action by the people in order to transform the world in which they live. According to Shor and Freire (1987:109), education is a process of illumination in which both the teacher and the student are equally involved, and the teacher should not take the position of the illuminator.

Problem-posing education enhances the students' critical thinking skills or the ability to contemplate on the object of knowledge. It enhances curiosity as a value. Students are enabled to acquire knowledge through epistemological curiosity (Durakoglu, 2013:104). Freire advocated for the implementation of problem-posing education, as it helps to remove the belief that educators hold absolute knowledge and students have none. The teacher is considered not as a person that transfers knowledge, but as a person that perceives together with the students. Students carry out critical research, together with the teacher, rather than being regarded as amenable listeners. The world is perceived not as a stable reality, but as a reality in the process of transformation. Hence, the people think of the world and themselves, without separating the act of thinking from action. In this model, people are defined as beings that are in the process of being completed (Durakoglu, 2013:104). People become aware of the fact that they are not completely competent. This awareness makes it compulsory for education to be a continuous activity unique to humans, involve thinking and acting.

The fundamental concept in Freire's epistemology is praxis, which mean conscious action. In other

words, the people subjected to domination must fight for their emancipation. He therefore argues that problem-posing education enables teachers and students to become subjects of the educational process by overcoming authoritarianism and an alienating intellectualism. Furthermore, it enables people to overcome a false perception of reality (Freire, 1996: 67). In other words, the educator must act in a way that enables “action” and “thinking” to interact with each other, as the two terms constitute simultaneous unity in the praxis concept. In such a model, communication is embodied. Shor and Freire (1987:45) propose dialogue, as they consider this to be illuminating and complementary to human nature.

2.6.1.3 Dialogue

Freire (1996:61) acknowledges that problem-posing education, which breaks the vertical patterns characteristics of banking education, can only fulfil its function as the practice of freedom if it can overcome teacher-student contradiction and enable dialogical relations to thrive in the learning environment. He sees dialogue as the basic item in the knowledge structure and supports the need for classrooms to become the meeting places where information is researched. He calls for dialogue as an encounter of people with each other and an existential reality, as it is to be applied in pedagogy. To put it in Freire’s (1996:61) own words, “Dialogue is only effective in an environment where human characteristics of love, humility, faith, hope and courage are in display.” In the dialogic classroom, the role of the educator is to help the development of a process in which the educators and the students can learn together. They are engaged in a process of illuminating reality together (Shor & Freire, 1987:49).

Le Grange (2011:186) notes that feminists criticise Freire for failing to take into account the radical difference between forms of oppression, for the sexism in his language and for the patriarchal notion of revolution and subject-hood. It is also argued that Freire’s pedagogy might not be relevant to today’s context of competition for access to higher education. However, the main criticism of Freire’s work has to do with whether it is relevant in a rapidly changing world of super-complexity and global interconnectivity, where power relations are a great deal more complex (Le Grange, 2011:186).

In response to that, it can be argued that Freire’s ideas on education are still very much relevant to

the world of today and especially in the South African and African context. This is so because most African countries inherited educational systems from the colonial powers and they did little to reform the different education systems they inherited to meet the changing needs of their particular societies. As such, to a large extent, the school systems and policies have not made any significant effort to move away from the banking concept of education. Freire description of banking education very much fit the situation in schools in many parts of Africa. South Africa, arguably, has good educational policies. For example, in the *White Paper No 6*, the Department of Education (2001:11) outlines how the education and training system must transform itself to contribute to establishing a caring and humane society. However, the implementation of such policies against the historical background of apartheid, and in the context of prevalent social violence, remains a challenge (Maxwell et al, 2004:106).

An appeal for an education system, in which the content and organisational structure is aligned to promoting peace, as captured in Freire's concept of problem-posing education, with an emphasis on dialogue, cannot be disregarded locally or in 21st century Africa as a whole. What is important is that ideas are synthesised and applied with due regard of the local context. Education, in general, or peace education must always be tailored to the context of the society in which it is carried out.

2.6.2 Hossain B Danesh

Dr Hossain B. Danesh may not be a widely known personality, but his contribution to the field of peace education and research in the 21st century deserves recognition. He is a retired professor of conflict resolution, peace studies and psychiatry, who has worked in such institutions as the European Peace University (Austria), the World Peace Academy, Basil University (Switzerland) and Landegg International (Danesh, 2008:70; Danesh, [s.a]).

Dr Danesh has published several books and articles, which are informed by his research, fieldwork and life experience with themes ranging from issues of personal, interpersonal, and social peace, to psychological and spiritual human development (Danesh, [s.a]). He is the founder and president of International Education for Peace Institute (Canada); the founder of the Education for Peace Program in Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH) and the main author of its integrative curriculum. The

project has proven to be particularly effective in the post-conflict school communities of multi-ethnic Bosnia and Herzegovina (Higgins, 2007:141).

In his contribution to the field of peace, education and research, Dr Danesh brings a fairly new perspective, as he proposes “integrative theory of peace education”. The theory is based on the concept that peace is a psychological, social, political, ethical and spiritual state with its expressions in intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, international and global areas of human life (Danesh, 2006:63). He posits that peace, as a human state of being, is shaped by our worldview. He identifies the four prerequisite conditions for effective peace education: a unity-based worldview, a culture of peace, a culture of healing and a peace-oriented curriculum. The efficacy of the practical application of Danesh’s integrative theory for peace education was proven by the success of the implementation of Education for Peace Program in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was based on the same. The implementation of the programme started with the introduction of a pilot programme – with only 3 secondary schools and 3 primary schools – and grew to a total of 112 schools in Bosnia and Herzegovina, within a period of 7 years (Higgins, 2007:141).

2.6.2.1 Unity, worldview and education

Danesh maintains that the nature of the education we provide to our own children and students is one of the main reasons for the high incidences of conflict and war in different societies (Danesh, 2006:56). Danesh’s theory on peace education calls for a critical re-examination of the basic postulates on which current peace education programmes have been based. He claims that the current practice is that most programmes of peace education adopt conflict as the normative basis for their theoretical frameworks and pedagogical methodologies (Clark-Habibi, 2005:38).

Danesh (2006:68) argues that many concepts and strategies in the field of peace education are formulated according to the notion that conflict is an intrinsic and inevitable aspect of human reality and life. He brings in a fairly new perspective, as he calls for some reflection on this notion, which he considers to be a conflict-based view of reality (Danesh & Danesh, 2002:66). He asserts that unity – not conflict – has an independent reality and that once unity is established, conflicts are often prevented or easily resolved (Danesh, 2008:159). The argument, which they shares with Clark-Habibi (2005:339), is that if peace education is intended to result in qualitative

transformation in the perceptions, feelings, attitudes and behaviours of both individuals and the society, such that they voluntarily choose peace-based behaviours, goals and policies over conflict-based ones, then the adoption of conflict as the normative platform for such education represents a conceptual contradiction.

Danesh's integrative theory of peace education and the related Education for Peace (EFP) curriculum are founded on the premise that unity – not conflict – is the primary force in treating and shaping human life at biological, psychological, social, moral and spiritual level. Unity is defined as “a conscious and purposeful condition of convergence of two or more unique entities in a state of harmony, integration and cooperation to create a new evolving entity or entities, usually, of same or a higher nature” (Danesh, 2008:159). Danesh (2008) observes that unity is demonstrated at a biological level, as a purposeful process encoded in the genetic properties of the organism. It is exemplified in the dynamics of procreation, the harmonious operations of bodily organs and the functioning of hormonal processes in living organisms. He notes that in human species, the operation of the law of unity includes psychological, social, moral and spiritual dimensions. These forms of unity are expressed in diverse ways, both simple and complex; attributes which relate to the fact that unity and diversity are two sides of the same condition (Danesh, 2008:159). The concept of unity emphasises the fact that at the centre of our humanness, we are all the same and, indeed, one in reality. The concept of unity recognises that when people create conditions of unity in diversity in order to exist, they are able to create peaceful environments. It envisages unity as a deliberate and purposeful phenomenon and, when it is created, conditions conducive to life are created. Danesh and Danesh (2002:66) view conflict as the absence of unity and disunity as the cause of conflict and violence. It is for this reason that he identifies the unity-based worldview as one of the prerequisite conditions for effective peace education.

The concept of a worldview is the framework through which we understand reality, human nature, the purpose of life and the laws of relationships (Danesh, 2008:160). Individual and collective worldviews shape our thoughts, feelings and actions and they reflect the nature and the process of development of our consciousness. As Danesh (2008:160) notes, worldviews are formed on the basis of our personal life stories and collective histories in the context of the prevailing influences

of religion, science, ideologies and environmental conditions. The factors that influence the development of our worldviews include where we are born, the type of family we are born into, the type of education we receive, the kind of environment we interact with and the particular life experiences we encounter. Danesh (2006) identifies three categories of worldviews that are present in all human individuals and societies and which reflect the particular characteristics of three distinct aspects and phases in the development of every individual and society. These are survival-based, identity-based and unity-based worldviews (Danesh, 2006:66).

A survival-based worldview is characteristic of infancy and childhood and corresponds to pre-industrial periods of societal development (Danesh, 2006:66). The challenges of life revolve around issues of survival and insecurity such as hunger, disease, injustice, anarchy and natural threats. In such conditions, there's a tendency to struggle for power and defence, the result of which is mistrust, conflict and violence in a kind of vicious cycle (Danesh, 2008:160). The context of unity in diversity is foreign to this worldview, as the system tends to keep order through authoritarianism.

An identity-based worldview is a characteristic of adolescence and early adulthood. This phase is characterised by development of new ideas, intensity of passions and attitudes, extremes of competitions and rivalry. It resembles the periods when societies emerged from authoritarianism towards democracy (Danesh, 2006:67). In this worldview, individualism and adversarial group identities thrive. This explains why noble ideas in science and technology and even religion end up being abused in the name of humanity.

Danesh (2006:67), postulates that a new level of consciousness is emerging, as humanity enters a new phase in its progress towards the creation of a civilisation of peace. He believes that humanity is gradually becoming aware of its fundamental oneness. This is the emergence of a unity-based worldview. In this worldview, society operates according to the principle of unity in diversity and holds, as its ultimate objective, the creation of a civilisation of peace (Danesh, 2006:68). In this worldview, all forms of prejudice and segregation are rejected as basic human needs and rights are met within the rule of law and ethical principles. As Danesh (2006:68) posits, a consultative, cooperative power structure characterises the unity-based worldview and creates conditions in

which the legitimate exercise of power and facilitation of empowerment take place within the framework of unified and caring interpersonal and group relationships.

According to Danesh (2006:64), one of the main functions of education is its considerable contribution to the formulation of people's worldview, which, in turn, provides the necessary framework for the life processes – thoughts, feelings, choices and actions. He (Danesh 2006) believes that worldview construction is an inherent aspect of the development of human consciousness and, hence, a crucial aspect of the development of individuals and societies. People's worldviews are shaped by their religious beliefs, environmental characteristics and particular life experiences, among other factors.

Human development involves engagement in the formulation of worldviews through life experiences and lessons learnt from parents, teachers and classmates as well as from ideas we develop due to our exposure to various scientific theories and historical accounts, belief systems, ideologies and the media. Danesh (2008:162) argues that although worldview transformation is very difficult, it can be both accelerated and facilitated when we consider the nature and dynamics of human individuals. Therefore, apart from the need of peace education to take place in the context of a unity-based worldview, Danesh (2008:59-61) proposes that three other contexts must exist. These are: peace education taking place in the context of a culture of peace (as previously mentioned in this chapter); peace education within the context of a culture of healing – in the cases where the peace education programme is to be implemented in post-conflict areas or areas involved in intractable conflicts and wars; and peace education constituting the framework for all educational activities (Danesh, 2008:59-61). Danesh (2006:62) proposes the notion of a peace-based curriculum, which calls for a reorientation and transformation of the traditional educational approach, in terms of content and methodology. The ultimate aim would be to create a civilisation of peace. The curriculum should be integrated and equal attention should be paid to all aspects of peace, including: social, economic and political aspects; moral and ethical dimensions and transcendent spiritual foundations (Danesh, 2006:62). The main idea is that teachers should integrate peace principles into the themes and activities of their subject areas throughout the school year. Danesh (2006) combined his theories with practice through the implementation of the Education for Peace Integrative Curriculum in what was, reportedly, a successful project in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

2.6.2.2 Education for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina

As Danesh (2006:70) reports, the project was introduced in Bosnia in September 1999, during a workshop on the topic of “Conflict-free Conflict Resolution”. The participants included BiH government officials, members of the international community and nongovernmental organisations based in the communities. A good number of the participants were from the three main BiH ethnic groups that had, previously, been involved in ethnic wars in opposition to each other. The success of the workshop led the Minister of Education for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to extend an invitation to Danesh to bring his programme to the schools in BiH (Danesh 2006). In May 2000, following the invitation and a grant from the government of Luxemburg, the Education for Peace (EFP) programme was introduced in three primary schools and three secondary schools as a pilot project. The schools were located in three different towns that represented all the segments of society of the war-torn country. Each town had a primary school and a secondary school. Ever since its introduction in 2000, the EFP project has been expanding. Danesh (2008:169) posits that it has become one of the longest, largest and most comprehensive programmes of peace education ever undertaken. It has been successfully implemented in 112 primary and secondary schools in BiH, with 80000 students and 5000 teachers and staff being involved (Danesh 2008:170).

Higgins (2007:141) attributes the success of the programme to the fact that it is all inclusive, as the total programme requires the participation of all students, parents and staff – teachers and administrators – within the locality of the schools. In describing the success of the programme, Higgins (2007:141) uses the following words: “And in what seems as a miracle to the local residents, Bosnian Serb and Croat teachers enjoy getting together in each other’s neighbourhoods for coffee and to share ideas on their mutual projects.”

2.6.3 Maria Montessori (1870-1952)

Maria Montessori is associated with the field of peace education because of her contribution to the promotion of a learner-centred pedagogy, diversity and global citizenship. She wrote her own

history as she was the first female in Italy to graduate from the University of Rome in 1896 and the first to become a licensed medical doctor (Thayer-Bacon, 2011:308). In so doing, she lived beyond the rules of what was regarded as tradition in Italy, at that time, which was that women were not equal to men.

While working as a volunteer assistant-doctor at the University of Rome, she joined research efforts conducted by other doctors to try to educate “feeble minded” children (Thayer-Bacon, 2011:309). As she provided medical care and worked closely with the children, she began to realise that their problem of mental deficiency was more of a pedagogical problem than a medical one. This was the beginning of her work in education and related research. She is considered a scientist who came into the field of education through the backdoor of science (Thayer-Bacon, 2011:309).

As a co-director of the Orthophrenic School, she developed a teacher training programme for the education of “feeble-minded” children. With the school also functioning as a teaching hospital, they were able to design teaching materials that were specifically geared to meet the needs of the school. The education programme that Montessori developed became very successful, as several mentally challenged children learnt how to read and write and they passed the state examination with above average scores (Thayer-Bacon, 2011, 310).

Extending her interest to the education of normal children in Italy, she hypothesised that her “methods would help normal children learn better as well”. It can be argued that the idea of the Montessori method was born at this point in time. She went back to school to study psychology and educational philosophy.

Later, Montessori had the opportunity to test her pedagogical theory with “normal” children, when she was appointed to direct the supervision of children in a low-income housing project, while the parents were out at work (Thayer-Bacon, 2012:7). She opened the first Montessori school, Casa dei Bambini, in 1907 (Thayer-Bacon, 2011:310).

Montessori’s fame grew worldwide, as the one who “discovered” the world within the child (Thayer-Bacon, 2011:311). According to Thayer-Bacon (2012:8), Montessori’s first book, *The*

Montessori Method, written in Italian in 1909, appeared in English in 1912 and the first edition of 5000 copies was sold out in four days. Today, there are thousands of Montessori schools worldwide.

2.6.3.1 The Montessori Method

The key to the Montessori Method is a carefully prepared and maintained classroom, which is referred to as a “prepared environment” (Gettman, 1987:13). The prepared materials, including books and hands-on curricular resources, are arranged on the shelves in an orderly manner, to enable children to navigate around easily and in a way that elicits the enthusiasm of the child. The beautifully prepared environment is furnished with materials for the child’s academic development and, at the same time, to nurture the child’s “spirit” with warmth, beauty and joy (Gettman, 1987:14). In other words, it nurtures both the intellect and the soul of the child.

The setting is such that the child works free of adult control. The teacher only serves as a caretaker, observer and a guide, but not as the child’s teacher in the traditional sense (Gettman, 1987:17). The classroom has children of varying ages, for example, six to nine years old. This provides the opportunity for the younger children to learn from the older ones, who act as role models. They stay with the same teacher in the same classroom for three years, as a sense of cooperation is established, enabling them to build strong relationships and a sense of community (Thayer Bacon, 2011; 317). Work is viewed as an activity that is freely chosen and in which an effort is made, with the result that new things are learnt. The sessions run for about three hours and work and play are blended to make learning “fun”, enabling deep focus for that length of time (Thayer Bacon, 2011; 317).

2.6.3.2 Montessori’s philosophy

Maria Montessori believed that for the evolution of humanity (to a higher level) and the creation of a more just and peaceful world to happen, we have to change how we understand and educate the child (Haskins, 2010:6). The theoretical framework of the Montessori Method was that human potential lies hidden within the child and the role of education is to nurture and support the unfolding of that potential. Children should be raised and educated in freedom and liberty, bonded by self-discipline and social responsibility (Haskins, 2010:7). The features of imagination and a habit of critical, independent thought, nurtured in the Montessori method, would help to develop

students who would contribute to building a more just and peaceful world.

The premise was that students growing up in such a unique, inclusive environment would developed an inner peace or self-fulfilment. They would grow up to be self-actualised or peaceful persons (Gettman, 1987:34). As Weinberg (2011:16) declares, education for the “whole child” translates to education for the “whole adult”. Essentially, the more “whole” children and adults we have on earth the more of a culture of peace” we will have.

Maria Montessori’s perspective certainly adds value to peace education efforts around the world. The only glaring challenge it would face in the African context, is the provision of both human and material resources. How functional would the schools be, particularly in impoverished rural societies? Notwithstanding, perhaps education ministries in African countries could look into borrowing some ideas from this model, especially with the aim of improving pre-primary and primary school education.

2.7 Summary

Violence, both direct and structural, exists locally and worldwide at worrying levels because of such factors as poverty, the violation of human rights and the schooling system. The general notion in literature is that the solution lies in providing the right kind of education in context, content and methodology. This has been the perspective of many peace educators including Maria Montessori, Paulo Freire and Hossain Danesh. Montessori promoted the achievement of peace through education for development of innovative self-fulfilled or self-actualised persons; Freire emphasised the pursuit of peace through education for the development of critical consciousness and Danesh believes in the achievement of peace through education that brings transformation towards a unity-based worldview. On closer inspection, the philosophies of these educators reveal a common thread, which is the promotion of pedagogies that enhanced innovation, critical thinking and unity in diversity. The other common thread across the perspectives of these three is the notion of holistic peace, which requires both an inner and outer peace which are interconnected and interdependent.

In chapter 3 of this dissertation, the research design to investigate issues of critical thinking,

qualities of unity and a culture of peace within the educational programme at ALA will be discussed. Furthermore, the details of methods of data collection are explained.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter of this study involved the review of literature with the aim of explaining the concepts of peace education and a culture of peace; provided an outline of the causes of conflicts and violence in Africa and South Africa and explored the theories of three peace education philosophers – Paulo Freire, Hossain Danesh and Maria Montessori. In this particular chapter, the details of the research design for the case study, including the sampling techniques, data collection strategies and approach to data analysis are provided.

The purpose of the study was to explore the peace principles incorporated in the formal and informal settings of the educational programme at ALA; hence, a qualitative case study was deployed. Qualitative research was deemed most suitable for this study because it would address the quest for understanding and for in-depth enquiry. Whereas quantitative research designs are fairly uniform in structure, qualitative research designs may vary significantly, depending on the theoretical framework, philosophy, assumptions about the nature of knowledge and field of study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:320).

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:321) discuss, in detail, the nine characteristics of qualitative research, which are summarised below:

- Natural settings – behaviour is studied as it occurs naturally
- Context sensitivity – a consideration is made of the situational factors
- Direct data collection – the researcher collects data directly from the source
- Rich narrative description – detailed narratives are given, which provide in-depth understanding of behaviour
- Process orientation – the focus is on why and how behaviour occurs
- Inductive data analysis – generalisations are induced from synthesising gathered information

- Participant perspectives – the focus is on participant understanding, descriptions, labels and meanings
- Emergent design – the design evolves and changes as the study takes place
- Complexity of understanding and explanation – understandings and explanations are complex, with multiple perspectives

The above characteristics of qualitative research design informed the choice of the research design and methodology for this study. Qualitative research design enabled the researcher to gather the information in the natural settings and to “focus on the participants’ understanding, description and meanings” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:321). It also enabled the researcher to directly gather detailed descriptions that would help to gain an understanding of the experiences of the learners with regard to acquisition of the appropriate skills and attitudes in relation to qualities of unity, critical thinking, conflict resolution and a culture of peace. The emergent design provided for in qualitative research was necessary, as the findings continually informed further advancements in the research.

A case study is an in-depth investigation or exploration of a single entity, or a bounded system (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:344). A bounded system is a system which is unique in one way or another. The ALA programme may be considered a bounded system, since it is designed to serve a unique mission and some of the courses offered are specifically designed in alignment with the mission. Therefore, the investigation may qualify as an intrinsic case study. An intrinsic case study investigates unusual or unique individuals, groups or events (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:345).

3.2 Site and Participant Selection

As mentioned above, the school was purposely chosen for this study because of the uniqueness of the educational programme it offers. Some of the learners in the school come from war-torn areas of Africa or refugee camps and are themselves victims of violent conflicts. The student population at the school stands at about 200, with about 100 learners in Grade 11 and a similar number in

Grade 12. Fifteen Grade 12 learners were selected for interviews. Permission to conduct research at the school was obtained from the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of African Leadership Academy. This was followed by permission from the Dean (Principal) of the school. Consent for the participation of the learners in the study was obtained from the Assistant Dean for Pastoral Care who, by contract with the parents, assumes the role of guardian for all the learners. The interviews with the learner participants were conducted over a period of about two weeks, towards the end of their two-year course of study. The Grade 12 learners were intentionally chosen for this study, because they would have had a full years' experience of the ALA programme. The sample of 15 learners included learners from some war-torn countries such as the DRC and relatively peaceful countries such as Tanzania. Given the diversity of the backgrounds of the learners at the school, the sample had to be representative of the student population, thus, the 15 learner interviewees were drawn from 15 different countries. The countries represented in the sample were: Lesotho, Somaliland, Rwanda, Zambia, Burundi, Ethiopia, Tanzania, DRC, Senegal, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Ghana, South Africa, Morocco and Nigeria, The sampling was purposeful.

The criterion for sample selection was “information-rich participants” (MacMillan, & Schumacher, 2010:351). Eight out of the 15 learner interviewees had served in the either the Students Honour Council or the Student Government. The learners elect members to these two organs through a secret ballot voting system. The Honour Council is empowered by the student body, to ensure that all members of the student body hold each other accountable, in line with the school's code of conduct. The Student Government is concerned with the day-to-day welfare of the student body and it serves as a channel through which the student body can raise issues of concern and bring it to the attention of the school administration. The eight learners had served in a range of capacities on these representative organs, among others, entertainment representative, Chair of Honour Council, Chair of Student Government, academic representative, clubs and societies' representative and House Captain. The learners interviewed included 7 girls and 8 boys, aged 18-20 years. An effort was made to ensure that there is a gender balance in the sample. However, the age range was not considered in the sample selection.

Eight educators – 6 males and 2 females – in the age range 25 to 57 years were selected for interviews on the criterion of “information-rich”. These included the headmaster of the school and heads of departments in the following subjects: Entrepreneurial Leadership, African Studies, Mathematics, English and Science. Two more educators – one from the Entrepreneurial Department and the other from African Studies – were interviewed. This was because the two subject areas were considered to be more information-rich in the context of this study, since they offered internally designed courses which were unique to the programme. Apart from the Head of Science, who had been in the school for only one year, the other educators interviewed had been in the school for more than two years (a complete cycle of the ALA programme). The educators also come from diverse backgrounds, as the countries represented in the sample of eight educators were Ethiopia, Nigeria, Ghana, France and the United States of America.

3.3 Researcher role

Researchers collecting data in the field have to develop a research role. This establishes the position of the investigator and his or her relationships with others in the situation (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:248). The research role developed may range from that of a full observer or complete outsider, on the one extreme, to observer-participant or partial participant, to full participant or complete insider on the other extreme. The roles denote the level of participation of the researcher, from being totally detached and acting as a spectator, to being completely immersed and belonging to the group as a participant (Guthrie, 2010:109).

In between the two extremes, the observer-participant role is one in which the researcher interacts with the participants in a friendly casual manner, but the researcher does not become significantly involved in all the activities of the setting. As the observer-participant, the researcher aims at establishing meaningful relationships with the participants, with the purpose of gaining an insider perspective. As MacMillan and Schumacher (2010:348) put it, some level of researcher participation is good to help establish rapport with the participants, as such rapport helps participants to continue their natural behaviour and helps to establish trust. It is possible for a

qualitative researcher to shift the role if the situation demands this. Resources and available time could also be a factor.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher chose the role of observer-participant. He had worked in the school as a Science educator for six years. Hence, he had opportunities to interact with both learners and educators in both formal and informal settings of the schools. The researcher had presumably established some rapport with the participants, to help them continue with their natural behaviour and to establish trust during the interviews. Valid data results are obtained when the events unfold naturally and the participants act in typical fashion in the researcher's presence (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:349). The research role as observer-participant provided the necessary flexibility in data collection. He was able to participate, to some extent in the structures, rather than just sitting in on the side-lines; though he was not always a full participant. The participation of the researcher in the structures helped the researcher to gather information on participants' perception of events and processes in their actions, teachings, thoughts and beliefs. He was able to unobtrusively and systematically obtain data, while interacting socially with the informants.

Although the main strategy for data collection was in-depth interviews of some educators and learners, other strategies were used including observations and analysis of documents.

3.4 Data Collection

The data collection method involved in-depth interviews, observation and analysis of syllabuses for core subjects, the school policy and other documents.

3.4.1 Interviews

In-depth interviews use open response questions to obtain data on participants' meanings – how individuals conceive their world and how they make sense of the important events in their lives (Henn, Weinstein, & Foard, 2009:186). Interview guides were prepared for this qualitative case study. Since both educators and learners were interviewed, two sets of interview guides were prepared.

The interview questions in both interview guides were designed with due consideration of the research questions below:

- To what extent are the qualities of unity and critical thinking incorporated into the educational programme at ALA?
- How do the programme activities impact on students' view of conflict resolution?
- Does the formal and informal setting of the school promote a culture of peace?
- How are the learning experiences at ALA linked to education for peace?

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:356) argue that adopting questions from prior research will probably not produce valid interview data, but the examination of different alternatives is essential in interview script construction. The interview questions were open-ended, providing probes and pauses and eliciting opinions, feelings, knowledge and descriptions of experiences, behaviours and activities. The researcher did administer a pilot interview with a colleague for the purpose of an interview script critique. The interview guides had questions grouped into four sections: quality of unity and critical thinking, conflict resolution, a culture of peace and education for peace. Probing, open-ended questions were asked to elicit responses from the participants and to keep the interview on track. This provided flexibility in that when a topic was exhausted, a new line of questioning or a new topic would be introduced.

The interview strategy applied for the educators was “key informant interviews”. Key informant interviews are in-depth interviews of individuals, who have special knowledge, status or communication skills that they are willing to share with the researcher (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:355). The individuals are chosen because they have access to information useful to the researcher (Kothari, 2011:98). In this case, the educators interviewed were mostly heads of departments and a few others, who were considered information rich for the study. First, the researcher introduced the research to the educators, who were prospective interviewees, and asked them to consider being participants. All the educator participants received formal requests in writing. The letters provided the details of the involvement of the participants in the research. The purpose and the importance of the study was also explained. The participants were assured that

any information obtained in connection with the study would be confidential. There would be no identifying of names on the interview transcripts, as the interview data would be coded. Furthermore, they were assured that names would not be revealed in any publication of the results of the study. The researcher requested permission from the participants to use a digital audio recorder, assuring the participants that the recordings would be coded and securely stored in a password protected laptop computer and that this will be deleted after the completion of the study. The participating educators were requested to complete an informed consent form. The interview data was transcribed and given back to the participants, for them to review the content for accuracy. There were follow-up interviews with six out of the eight educator participants.

The interview strategy applied for the learners was “phenomenological interviews”. A phenomenological interview is an in-depth interview used to study the meanings or essence of a lived experience among selected participants (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:356). In this case, the purpose was to investigate the learning experiences of the learners and the meanings that the participants assigned to the experiences. Permission to interview the learners was obtained from the Associate Dean for Pastoral Care who, contractually, serves as the legal guardian for all the learners while they are at the school, since the learners are recruited from countries across the continent. As was the case with the educators, the researcher introduced the research to the learners who were considered to be prospective interviewees and asked them to consider participating. All the learners approached were willing to participate and appointments for interviews were made.

Most of the interviews were carried out in an office space where there was no interruption, as a notice was placed on the door to indicate that an interview was in progress. At the beginning of the interview, the researcher would thank the participant for voluntarily accepting to participate in the interview for the study and encouraged them to ask any clarifying questions. The purpose and the importance of the study was explained. The participant was assured that any information obtained in connection with the study would be confidential. There would be no identifying of names on the interview transcripts as the interview data would be coded. Furthermore, they were assured that names would not be revealed in any publication of the results of the study. The researcher requested permission from the participant to use a digital audio recorder, assuring the

participants that the recordings would be deleted after the completion of the study. Henn et al (2009:249) assert that participants should be thoroughly briefed as to why the recording of the interview is important and issues of confidentiality and anonymity have to be dealt with in full.

All the learner participants signed consent forms before the start of the interview. Permission to interview the learners had been obtained from the Assistant Dean for Pastoral Care, who assumes the role of guardian for all the learners, although the learners interviewed were in the age range of 18-20 years.

The primary data that is gained through a qualitative interview are verbatim accounts of what transpires in the interview session (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:360). A digital audio recorder was used to capture the verbatim accounts, ensuring completeness of the verbal interaction and providing material for reliability checks. Following the interviews, the researcher transcribed the audio recordings and made interviewer notations and comments. The interview transcripts were availed to the learner participants to give them the opportunity to review the content for accuracy. The educator participants were also given a chance to review their transcripts and follow-up interviews were held with six out of the eight educators interviewed.

3.4.2 Observation

Observation is a way for the researcher to see and hear what is occurring naturally in the research site (Kothari, 2011:96). As the researcher makes prolonged observations of what is naturally occurring, he gains a rich understanding of what is being studied. An observation that is characterised by an openness to whatever is significant, enables a deep understanding of the context and participant's behaviour and allows for collection of data that truly reflects the context. Observations play a crucial role in site selection, mapping the field, data collection and recording of data as field notes. In this particular study, salient field observations were made. MacMillan and Schumacher (2010:352) remark that, because the interactive social scene is too complex and too subtle to observe or record everything, researchers do not seek to capture everything that happens. Rather, they rely on the prolonged field residences to develop skills in deciding what should be included and what can be excluded. Hence, "the researchers observe and record the phenomenon

salient to the foreshadowed problems, their broader conceptual frameworks and the contextual features of the interactions” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010:352). The researcher made salient field observations and recorded relevant descriptive details of the *who, what, where, how* and *why* dimensions when an activity or social scene occurred.

Some classroom observations were made in the Entrepreneurial Leadership and African Studies classes and the researcher also recorded some field notes. As Guthrie (2010:112) observes, “field notes are useful for naturalistic observations because a pen and a notebook are easy to carry and use, and participants soon become used to them”. The researcher was also a participant in the Seminal Reading sessions. Other areas of observation included the school assemblies, cultural exchange activities and other co-curricular activities like sports.

3.4.3 Documents

Document or artefact collection is a non-interactive strategy for obtaining qualitative data with little or no reciprocity between the researcher and the participant, although it may require imaginative fieldwork to locate the relevant data (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:360). Artefacts are tangible manifestations that describe people’s experience, knowledge, actions and values (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:361). For an educational institution, artefacts may take the form of personal documents, official documents or objects. The documents and objects obtained for this study included the school logo, the mission statement, values and founding beliefs, syllabuses and some lesson materials used in subjects such as Entrepreneurial Studies and African Studies, the student handbook, faculty handbook and bulletin boards. Most of the documents were obtained from the relevant educators. The documents were stored in soft copies, print outs, photocopies and photographs. The idea was that the interpretation of document and artefact meaning would be corroborated through the data obtained from observations and through interviews.

3.5 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns and relationships among the categories (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:367). Whereas in quantitative research analysis is done after data collection, in qualitative research analysis is ongoing, since it is done during data collection as well as when data collection has been completed. “Data collection and analysis are interwoven, influencing one another,” according to MacMillan and Schumacher (2010:367).

For this study, derived sets of codes and categories were applied to the data, although the classifications were frequently revised during the analysis. The codes and categories were derived from the interview guide and the data. Data was searched for parts that illustrate categories of meaning and memos were written during the process. The data analysis process consisted of data preparation, data coding, forming categories and discovering patterns.

3.5.1 Data preparation

Data was organised into a few working units to facilitate coding and forming of categories with a view to making sense of it. The interview guide was helpful in coming up with such general and broad categories as the participants' perspectives, activities or events, instructional strategies and social structure. Data preparation included transcription, as a process of taking notes obtained during observation and interviewing; audio-recorded interviews and any other information and converting them into a format that can be analysed (Henn et al, 2009: 249).

3.5.2 Data coding

Data segments were identified. A data segment is a text that is comprehensible by itself and contains an idea, episode or piece of relevant information (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:370). The segments were analysed to come up with codes. A code is a name or a phrase that is used to provide meaning to a segment, such as activities, participant perspectives, relationships, setting and context, events, processes or ideas. The process involved the following: getting a sense of the

whole by reading through a few datasets with a view to identifying segments, the generating of codes from the data, comparing codes for duplication, trying out provisional coding and continuing to refine the coding system.

3.5.3 Forming categories or themes

Categories or themes represent major ideas that are used to describe the meaning of similarly coded data and they represent the first level of induction by the researcher (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:377). Similar codes were put together to form the category, which was then labelled to give the essence of the codes. The process was recursive as there was constant comparison, involving continuous search for both supporting and contrary evidence about the meaning of the category.

3.5.4 Seeking patterns

A pattern is a relationship among categories or themes. In searching for patterns, researchers try to understand the complex links among various aspects of people's situations, mental processes, beliefs and actions (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:378). Patterns were sought through a thorough search through the data, looking for negative evidences and alternative explanations. Applying a deductive mode of thinking, the researcher moved back and forth among the codes, categories or themes and tentative patterns for confirmation. An assessment was made of the solicited versus unsolicited data, specific versus vague statements and the accuracy of sources, to gauge the trustworthiness of the data. Gauging the trustworthiness of data also involved "an awareness of the researcher's assumptions, predispositions, and influence on the social situation". Using triangulation, the researcher compared different sources, situations and methods to see whether the same pattern recurred. Hence, data from observations, documents and interviews were compared for convergence of findings. Negative evidence was sought and analysed as well. Themes or categories were then ordered to make empirical and logical sense.

3.6 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was enhanced through an effort to report the participants' experiences as literally as possible. Use of audio recorders for the interviews helped towards achieving this goal. Although the main strategy was in-depth interviews, other strategies were also deployed. These included participant observations and studying documents such as subject syllabi, for the purpose of triangulation (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:330-331). Any findings that appeared to be anomalous to the emerging pattern of observation were also analysed, with due attention, since the design was emergent.

Due attention was also given to the principles of credibility and data was recorded carefully (Guthrie, 2010:110). This was done by checking the truth value of the findings and by means of field notes. There was comparison of sufficient descriptive data as well as dense description of the data. Dependability was ensured by keeping the raw material, giving a full description of the research method and applying the same procedure right through.

3.7 Ethical measures

Permission to conduct the study was sought from the founder and CEO of the school, which is a non-profit organisation. Then permission was also obtained from the dean (principal) of the school. The researcher clearly explained the purpose of the research to the stakeholders and participants to give them an appreciation of the importance of the research. Consent for involvement of the learners in the research was obtained from the Associate Dean for Pastoral Care who, contractually, acts on behalf of the parents on such matters, since the learners are recruited from countries across the continent. The researcher gave assurance to the participants that the information obtained in the research process, would be treated with the utmost confidentiality (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:339). Participation was voluntary. Henn et al (2009:210), emphasise the fact that a researcher must take whatever steps necessary to ensure ethical conventions are not broken, respecting both those who participate in the study as well as new generations of researchers whose task may be made all the more arduous if earlier researchers have damaged relationships in the field through insensitive and ethically unsound practice.

3.8 Summary

In this chapter, data collection which included interviews, participant observation and analysis of documents has been explained. The approach to data analysis, including data preparation, data coding, forming categories and themes, and seeking patterns is also explained. Issues trustworthiness and ethical measures are discussed, too. In chapter four, the findings are presented and discussed in details.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focused on methodological approach including design, methods of data collection and analysis. The researcher's role, as well as validity and reliability issues, and ethical considerations were also discussed. This chapter presents, in narrative form, the analysis of the data collected through observations, document analysis and interviews. The scope of the findings reflects the perceptions and opinions of the participants who were interviewed and the insights from observations and analysis of documents. That is, the interpretation of document meaning was corroborated by the observation and interview data. Qualitative data analysis is an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns and relationships among the categories (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2010:367). Whereas in quantitative research analysis is done after data collection, in qualitative research analysis is ongoing, since it is done during data collection as well as when data collection has been completed. "Data collection and analysis are interwoven, influencing one another," according to MacMillan and Schumacher (2010:367).

As detailed in chapter 3, 15 Grade 12 learners - 7 girls and 8 boys- were involved in the interviews. Their ages ranged from 18 to 20 years. The learners were from different countries in Africa. The interviews with the learner participants were conducted over a period of about two weeks, towards the end of their two-year course, although the overall data collection lasted 12 months. Eight educators – 6 males and 2 females – were also interviewed. The age range of the educators was 25 to 57 years.

The African Leadership Academy is located in an industrial suburb, called Honeydew, on the outskirts of Johannesburg. The four corners of the school are surrounded by small industries and warehouses, some of which are still under construction. This implies that the school has hardly any interaction with a neighbouring community. At the gate of the school, is a large signboard with the school logo and the following writing: “African Leadership Academy – Developing the next Generation of African Leaders”.

The main buildings of the school are situated around a quadrangle, which is an open space with trees and grass. The buildings around the quad include the administration block, which also faces the main gate; the science block; the library and classrooms; the auditorium; the dormitories and dining hall. Other parts of the school are mainly occupied with sports facilities. An electrical fence surrounds the school compound. The school’s values and founding beliefs are displayed in the classrooms and meeting rooms around the school.

4.2 Observations and document analysis

4.2.1 Policy documents

The two policy documents analysed were the *Faculty and Staff Handbook* and *Handbook for Students and Parents*. The contents of the two documents include the school logo, the school's mission statement as well as the school values and the founding beliefs. The school logo contains the map of Africa – symbolic of the continent, which is the focus of the ALA mission; the baobab tree – symbolic of an African meeting place; and a ladder, which is symbolic of the leadership journey. On top of the ladder are the stars, which represent the five founding beliefs of the school, and an academic hood, which symbolises the ALA – an educational institution.

The mission statement reads: “To transform Africa into a peaceful and prosperous continent by developing and supporting its future leaders.”

4.2.1.1 The Staff and Faculty Handbook

This document contains information about a number of issues and policies including the code of conduct and ethics and guidelines with regard to interactions with learners and adults in the ALA community. In the introductory part, the three steps in the ALA leadership development model are highlighted. These are:

1. seeking out young Africans with the potential for leadership
2. embedding them in practice for leadership
3. enabling them to access networks and opportunities

The introductory statement to the section on "Code of Conduct and Ethics" reads as follows:

ALA is a mission driven and values-based organization. This means that our mission to develop the next generation of African leaders guides and informs our every action, over and above all other factors.

The section on interacting with learners reads, in part, as follows:

As our young leaders are at the centre of everything that we do here at ALA, it is important that we institute policies and guidelines to ensure that their welfare is protected. The Academy is committed to supporting and respecting children's rights to be protected from violence and abuse and has a zero tolerance approach to child abuse and exploitation.

Other aspects contained in the handbook include information on the institution's leave policy, professional development, employee relations, processes when leaving ALA, the school's child protection policy and general policies.

4.2.1.2 Handbook for Students and Parents

The main topics covered in this document are as follows:

Welcome to ALA: Issues of communication, visitor policies, and what to bring are highlighted, among other things.

Student Life: Elaborates on personal and community expectations, the school routine, the Student Government, student support teams, security, safety and emergency procedures, among other things. For example, learner support teams such as the advisory programme and self-leadership coaching (SLC) are highlighted. According to the document, the self-leadership coaches meet with all first-year learners for an introductory meeting in the first term of school. The role of the coaches is to help learners by offering them one-to-one coaching on goal setting, emotional intelligence skills, time and stress management, academic confidence and adapting to the ALA environment. It is viewed as a confidential resource and an alternative support to the regular support from faculty, advisors or mentors.

Academics at ALA: Provides a catalogue of the courses offered at the institution, the classroom environment and academic support learners can access. Regarding the classroom environment, for example, the document states:

At African Leadership Academy, all students are exposed to innovative teaching methods that help them develop the skills to question, analyse, create and take action throughout their lives. As much as possible, courses at the academy are taught following a discussion based approach. Classroom tables are typically arranged in a circular fashion to allow students to see each other and converse – rather than the traditional classroom format with rows of tables facing an instructor. Our teachers often assume the role of guides, rather than lecturers in the learning process, and they seek to draw out the varying perspectives of the young leaders they coach. This approach to learning gives each student the opportunity to hear and understand varying perspectives on challenging issues. The student will be expected to actively engage in the discussion based learning process.

Discipline: Behavioural expectations are articulated and the role of the Disciplinary Council (DC) as well as the Honour Council (HC), among other things, are clarified. Depending on the gravity of the disciplinary issue, the matters may be handled by the individual teachers, the HC or the DC. The HC was created with a view to promoting a culture of peer accountability, as it is expected of fellow learners to hold each other accountable when it comes to upholding the academy's values

and regulations. The HC is made up of about five members, who are elected by the student body. The DC is charged with the responsibility of handling offences that require major disciplinary actions. The DC comprises educators and learners, representative of a range of school structures and viewpoints, to ensure fair and objective decisions. At the DC hearing, the learners are allowed to be accompanied by their advisers as they present their case. After deciding on an appropriate sanction, the DC makes recommendations to the dean, who then makes the final decision on the case.

Residential life: This section informs learners about the residential behaviour policy, residential procedures and the facilities available and the role of the student leadership in the residences are explained, among other things

4.2.2 Curriculum documents

The course documents for Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL), African Studies and Seminal Readings were analysed. The aim was to find out if the documents contained some elements of education for peace.

4.2.2.1 Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL)

The main document that was analysed is called the EL White Paper, which captured the overall scope of the EL curriculum content and delivery. It is an unpublished document prepared by one of the members of the EL department. It explains, in detail, the pillars and spokes that guide the ALA's leadership educational programme. The six pillars or themes are:

- **Self:** Realise the power within – includes teaching of life-long values, self-awareness, self-regulation, proactivity and resilience.

Self-awareness: Learners are exposed to experiential activities that enable them to spend time looking within, with a view to understanding who they are and who they wish to become. This is aimed at giving them the foundation to pursue their dreams in a way that they would inspire others.

Self-regulation: Learners are taken through experiential lessons to enable them to effectively manage their behaviour, emotions, energy and time for sustained impact. The Original Idea for Development (OID) process is particularly helpful in this, as it includes a great deal of self-exploration, periodic self-reflection and feedback sessions with the EL teachers, as well as through other structures and services available at ALA life, such as college counselling and external opportunities.

- **Others:** Engage others – includes teaching empathy, common ground, diversity, teamwork and networking
- **Africa:** Explains the mission to achieve collaboration for shared prosperity – includes creating awareness of Africa as a continent that is filled with opportunities, Pan-African cooperation, accountability, personal sustainability and creating a lasting impact
- **Communicate for impact:** Involves teaching communication skills, ideas as images, championing ideas and interacting interdependently
- **BUILD process:** This is a systematic interactive approach to develop and encourage innovative ideas and approaches to deal with the root causes of problems or challenges. It is meant to be a simple tool to enable the users to sift through the irrelevant and distracting issues around a challenge or a problem and to hone in on the most salient of the issues. The process incorporates the human-centred entrepreneurship (HCE) approach, which places the user at its core, so that the entrepreneurial leader is enabled to make lives better.

The five steps involved in BUILD process are as follows:

Believe: During this phase the entrepreneurial leader dreams or imagines a changed situations that is better because of his or her involvement. It also involves team building.

Understand: In this phase, the HCE approach is used to fully understand the users. Through observation and interviews and a needs identification analysis is done of both the user and root causes of the problems or challenges and the needs are filtered.

Invent: Now that the issues at hand is understood, and having determined the root cause/s, the leader thinks of possible solutions. This may include building a prototype through innovative and iterative processes.

Listen: In this phase the entrepreneurial leader shares the possible solutions with the users with a view to obtaining feedback.

(As part for listening, the leader may ask probing questions. After getting the feedback, the leader goes back to the invention stage to generate better ideas and then comes back to listen again. The process is repeated in between the two phases (invent and listen) until the users are satisfied and is willing to see it delivered.)

Deliver: In this phase, systems of implementation of the solutions are considered and if possible, solutions are finalised and an assessment of the impact of the intervention is made.

- **Habits of practice:** Teaching skills of finding focus, sustaining effort, seeking feedback, adjusting actions and continuous iteration as habits of deliberate practice.

The documents also provide information on the pedagogical approaches that may be used in the classroom, which includes experiential learning, project-based learning, discussion-based learning, peer learning, and the teacher as a coach. Other aspects included in the document are the scope of the curriculum and the sequence in which it should be covered, the anticipated outcomes after the completion of the two-year programme and leadership beyond ALA

4.2.2.2 African Studies

The African Studies department offers a course in Political Science, which is an internally designed course and considered to be a core subject and, therefore, mandatory for all students. This department also offers subjects like History, Economics and Geography, which are externally examined by Cambridge International Examinations (CIE). The overall aim of the core course in African Studies is to enable learners to develop an understanding of the roots of the present day challenges and opportunities on the continent. The content and delivery is geared towards deepening learners' commitment to the continent, to inspire a passion for Africa and to analyse the contemporary challenges on the continent. The units covered in the first year include: Ideas and Image, African Civilisations, Jared Diamond's *Guns, Germs and Steel*, the Trans-Atlantic Slave

Trade, Colonisation, Nationalism, and Independence Movements. In the second year of study the following units are covered: African Philosophy, Development, Evidence in Policy Design, Politics and Governance, and Social Justice Movements.

4.2.2.3 Seminal Readings

The Seminal Readings booklets were analysed. These are the documents which contain a collection of reading texts and the lesson guides for the facilitators of the Seminal Readings sessions. The tables on the next two pages outline the Seminal Reading themes and some of the objectives to be met through the reading and discussion of texts.

The following tables show the themes and learning objectives of the Seminal Readings for every term:

First-year Seminal Readings	
Theme	Learning objectives
ALA founding beliefs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be inspired by Mandela’s embodiment of the power of one. • Analyse the challenges faced by Africa and the role of the African Union in solving them. • Recognise and understand key issues in Africa’s society, including the environment, women and society. • Analyse and understand the value of identifying root causes in problem solving. • Analyse the role of entrepreneurs in society. • Recognise and understand the role of education in society, and consider the variations of education and their implications in society. • Understand the ideal of working as a collective towards a common goal.
Overcoming preconceptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how perspective shapes our preconceptions and understanding of others. • Understand how preconceptions can be made quickly, with long-term effects. • Recognise the preconceptions within society that oppress women by depriving them of their rights. • Weigh the importance of personal conviction, outward actions and uniformity.
Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think critically about race as a social construct. • Evaluate the extent to which aspects of their African identity are “invented”. • Show an understanding of the contrasting views of national identity and discuss which one you find most plausible and practical.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider how identity is formed by your “world” and how it changes when exposed to other “worlds”. • Explore different responses to exposures to new experiences and how to react to them to make you a better leader.
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Second-year Seminal Readings	
Resistance and oppression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare the nature of oppression and the methods of resistance. • Consider the role of a leader in resistance movements. • Consider whether non-violence, love and respect are adequate forms of resistance. • Discuss the power of public conscience in resisting oppression. • Analyse the role of custom, culture and religion in oppression. • Consider international morality as the end to oppression and injustice. •
The good society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the role of memory in shaping our decisions and our outlook on the world. • Examine the balance between freedom (diversity) and harmony in forming a good society. • Consider and analyse the role of religion in society. • Interrogate the relationship between faith, truth and good society. • Understand and analyse the Christian moral code and its influence in society. •
Power, people & choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise the importance of pursuing your own dreams and choices, and the sacrifices that you may have to make along the way. • Question your assumptions about reality and systems around us.

- | | |
|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider how knowledge is related to power and responsibility. |
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4.2.3 Classroom observations

The following observations were made during some lessons in Entrepreneurial Leadership, African Studies and Seminal Readings and co-curricular activities

4.2.3.1 Entrepreneurial Leadership

Observations took place in the EL classroom when the topic of ALA values was taught. The lessons were delivered through seminars rather than a normal teaching lesson. For example, when the topic of excellence was presented, the learners were engaged in group tasks or activities where they discussed issues around a particular value or collaborated to solve a certain problem or puzzle. Typically they would be given a topic such as: “A grant of R2 million is given to ALA for a Centre of Excellence. Create a test for excellence for students. Describe how/what the test will look like.”

The group would work out the solution and, after about 15 minutes, one group member would give a presentation of how the test would work and may even suggest a two-year longitudinal survey. During such discussions the educator would pose questions such as: What does excellence look like in daily life? What are the hall marks of excellence? Is there a difference between personal and professional excellence? Is an excellent person excellent in all things? These are questions or activities that elicit critical thinking and enhance both critical thinking and problems solving skills.

Similarly, in yet another seminar, on excellence, the discussion centred on questions such as: “Is excellence efficient? How do we define excellence? Is it dangerous to focus on only one area of excellence? Is excellence for you or for others?” The sessions included some personal reflection time, which could be writing exercise. On the topic of excellence, for example, learners would be given a writing prompt such as: “Think about a time when you think you embodied excellence. What happened? How did you feel? What were the results?”

During these activities, the educator plays the role of facilitator and the learners are guided towards further exploring the topic through pertinent questions and activities.

In a seminar on “Integrity” learners were given articles on integrity which they had to read. The value statement of integrity reads: “We are a people of our words, with courage to do what is right.” During this lesson, learners were given a chance to grapple with questions such as: “What is right? Is courage always required to display integrity?” The Ideas as Image approach was used to visualise integrity as a concept. For example, learners viewed a truth-lie map and discussed the meaning of the terms used in the map. They were then asked to come up with an integrity map, based on their own personal experiences and orientations. The integrity map had to include a reflection on an occasion when they have failed and a time when they have succeeded. The learners were then given a chance to share their feelings on the concept of integrity.

When the topic of courage was discussed, learners had to share with the group a time they acted with courage and an occasion when they were supposed to act with courage, but did not. The educator led learners into a discussion on “high core values” – such as character; “middle core” values – such as collaboration and diversity; and “low core values” – such as self-interest, fear and revenge. The learners were also introduced to the “river of fear”, which was identified as experiences of getting hurt, losing a friendship, feeling a sense of powerless, cultural norms, being in your comfort zone and embarrassment. To reflect on this topic, learners were given a writing exercise with the prompt: “Write about the river of fear you are facing right now. What is this river?”

4.2.3.2 African Studies

In the Politics class of African Studies, students were engaged in question-answer discussions facilitated by the teacher, on issues which were current or contemporary in nature. In one class, for instance, the teacher raised the issue of the United States’ federal government shutdown in 2013, which was the result of the dispute about “Obamacare” between the Republican-controlled House of Representatives and the Senate, dominated by the Democrats. In that lesson, there were also discussions on governance and authoritarianism. Authoritarianism was discussed by drawing a comparison between a benevolent dictatorship, which seemed to have been successful in

Singapore, and dictatorships in some African countries, for example, Gaddafi's reign in Libya. The pros and cons of benevolent dictatorship were discussed and pertinent questions were raised, such as: "What is benevolent dictatorship? Where is the line between benevolent dictatorship and democracy? Where should the emphasis be: on economic growth or personal freedom?"

In a lesson on civil-military relations in Africa, learners were given articles to read. A discussions followed on a variety of models of governance, such the civil supremacy model (as is the case in Botswana), where the civilians are at the top and the military is subservient; the watch dog model, where the military oversees governance, as an intervention; and the balance wheel model, where the military controls everything, with only limited civilian involvement. Other models discussed included direct rule, where the military is fully in charge, and the social transformational model, which is regarded as a revolutionary model of governance.

The justification for military involvement in governance was also discussed, particularly in relation to outcomes such as greater legitimacy, efficiency, stability, development and better unification, depending on the case at hand. A group work activity followed, which involved a discussion of the question: "Are coups catalysts for political development?"

In a lesson on nationalism, learners watched a documentary on the unusual story of Sandra Laing, a girl who was born to white parents, but who had been classified as a black. This occurred during the years of apartheid. Because she had been classified as black, she was expelled from the whites only school. With this case in mind, learners had to critically discuss the South African Population Registration Act 30 of 1950. The discussions generated questions such as: "What does it mean to be black? Or white? Or coloured? Who defines race?" The injustices perpetrated at the time and the arbitrary nature of apartheid were also discussed. Sandra is said to have identified herself as a non-person. She changed her identity to gain acceptance in the community she lived in, as she eloped with a black man.

In a lesson on oppression and resistance, video clips were shown to highlight the methods that were used in the struggle against apartheid, such as sabotage and the bombing of railways lines. The role of music as an inspirational tool during the resistance was also discussed.

4.2.3.3 Seminal Readings

Every term, there is a week that is set aside for Seminal Readings. For the purpose of the Seminal Readings sessions, two advisory families are grouped together to form a class. During the Seminal Readings week, the official school day would normally be divided into four blocks of two hours each – two reading sessions and two discussion sessions. The first session would normally be a discussion of the text that was read the previous night during prep time. The second session is a reading session of a text that will be discussed in the afternoon session. The final session, in the evening, is a reading of the text which will be discussed the next day. Each year group, therefore, tackles three themes in one academic year. The themes for the first-year learners are: founding beliefs (in the first term), overcoming preconceptions (in the second term) and identity (in the third term).

In a reading session of two hours, the learners and the advisors are expected to read the texts carefully. Active reading, which includes highlighting some important points and looking for meaning of new words, is encouraged.

In a discussion session, the advisors act as facilitators. They are provided with some questions, which is used to guide the discussions, but they are not bound to follow this approach. They have the freedom to decide how best they would explore the text in the discussion, as guided by the theme. During the discussion, meanings are sought, critical questions are generated, divergent views are aired and some reflections are made on certain stereotypes and preconceptions.

4.2.4 Observations of co-curricular activities

4.2.4.1 Sports and inter-house competitions

The following observations were made with regard to sports. The main sports available at ALA are: soccer, basketball, lawn tennis, frisbee and volleyball. In most of these sports, the school teams

would compete with other schools in inter-schools tournaments. Within the school itself, sports and various other competitions are organised through inter-house activities. There are six houses in total. Each student and staff has to belong to a particular house. The “houses” do not actually refer to the residence halls and neither are learners allocated to a house because they stay in a particular residence. Learners in a residence would belong to different houses. There are eight residence halls. There are a variety of inter-house activities, which include athletics and fun competitions, which are normally held to mark ALA founders’ day. Fun competitions include games such as the battle of the axe for boys and the battle of the mask for girls. In this case, learners are grouped according to the residence hall they stay in. The battles are essentially a test of physical strength and resilience in a variety of activities. One such activity is to see which group is able to push a car for a certain distance within the shortest time, another would be to see who wins a tug of war. Other competitions include debates, eating, table tennis and “Fifa” Soccer World Cup competition.

4.2.4.2 Cultural exchange

The researcher also observed the cultural exchange activities that take place at the school. These are annual festivities where learners from a certain region in Africa come together and prepare food, present dance routines and perform dramas that would portray the cultures of the people in that region. The dances and drama may depict a variety of themes such as love, marriage, religion or even the culture in schools or cities. The regional blocks for these festivities are West Africa, East and Central Africa, Southern Africa and Northern Africa. The regions would showcase their presentations at different times of the academic calendar

4.3 Interviews

Fifteen Grade 12 students – 7 girls and 8 boys – were involved in the interviews. Eight educators – 6 males and 2 females – were also interviewed. The interview guides were designed with due consideration of the research questions. The interview guides contained questions in the following broad categories: qualities of unity, critical thinking skills, conflict resolution, culture of peace and

their perceptions of ALA with regard to education for peace. This would enable the application of a template analysis style, in which initial codes or categories may be derived from the research questions, interview guides or the data, and the initial set may or may not be retained in the final analysis (McMillan & Schumacher, 2007:368)

4.3.1 Qualities of unity

4.3.1.1 Diversity

The African leadership Academy recruits learners from countries across the continent of Africa and a few from other continents. At any particular time, well over 30 nationalities are represented at the ALA campus. This brings together a diversity of cultures. When participants were asked what experiences they had at ALA that they thought enhanced qualities of unity in the ALA community, diversity was a term that was frequently uttered. The participants felt that the diversity of cultures, diversity of ideas or opinions were encouraged. In this regard, one learner interviewee had this to say:

One thing that I can pinpoint to is the amount of diversity that is present at ALA. Some of us come from schools or countries or communities that we have not been exposed to a lot of diversity. You know we come from the same region or the same country, so coming to ALA where we are like forty nationalities, you get to learn how to interact with those people and I feel like that is the one important thing that enhances qualities of unity at ALA.

An educator opined:

I mean the mere fact that we value diversity, right? We emphasise in everything, embracing diversity and creation of unity among this highly diverse environment.”

The participants narrated their experiences of the cultural exchange activities, which is a part of the school’s co-curricular programme and is presented at regular times throughout the academic year. One participant explained:

So, usually we have people from the same region grouped together and yet in that region they could be anything between 6-10 countries. And these are people that have experiences in as much as they share some similar things in their different regions, but somehow we always manage to come together and agree on something that we want to present. It was a connection of all these different cultures and practices from different countries across southern Africa. But yet when we brought the story together and feted these different cultures we were able to produce something that was so unique that people did not know which country was which. It was actually a combination of stories based around this young woman, who was born in one of the southern African countries I can't remember where, but it talks about how she grew up and experienced very important things in each one of the southern African countries. So something that shows unity and has helped me to experience unity in ALA is cultural exchange.

Another learner participant expressed a similar sentiment in the words below:

But something I can highlight, is our classroom experience, like being in a class of EL. And another one is cultural exchanges that bring lots of diverse cultures together and they are united and they give the community something amazing to show unity of cultures and to show that diversity is not a bad thing and we should not be afraid of each other. So the group unites to give a show, the community unites to come and witness, something like that.

The participants felt that cultural exchange activities brought home the realisation that different cultures actually have more in common than there are differences. A learner participant was of the opinion that these cultural exchange activities helped her realise that, “nationality and where you come from is only one part of who you are, and not necessarily what you should be defined with” and to her, that realisation “brought a sense of unity”.

Through the cultural exchange activities and in the context of how diversity is celebrated at ALA, as an important value, members of the ALA community have come appreciate their similarities rather than their differences and, in this way, preconceptions and stereotypes are overcome.

Another learner participant felt that the topics covered in African Studies, among these, learning about the old civilisations, helped to transform her thinking. She said:

I don't know if it was deliberate, but it had an impact on me. I mean, when we were doing African studies, the old civilisations; they all come from, they have one background.

4.3.1.2 Unity of purpose

Despite their diverse backgrounds, members of the ALA community do have unity of purpose. Most activities in the programme are centred on Africa as a theme. One educator had this to say:

I think that the mission of ALA gears all of its constituents towards unity of purpose, as defined this comes through discussions around changing Africa for the better. I think activities that enhance unity are the activities that remind us of the mission of ALA; activities like 'Africa Day', 'Africa, land of opportunities' day and even just the introduction of new students at the beginning of the year. The great feeling of celebration of diversity really helps.

Many participants viewed the ALA vision of developing leaders, who will contribute to making Africa a peaceful and prosperous continent, as a unifying factor as the emphasis is on collaboration to deal with the problems that Africa face and on creating lasting network structures. In the words of one interviewee,

The other thing again that I can allude to from my previous statement was the whole idea of collaboration. So, if you think of your neighbour, not necessarily as a competitor, but as someone whom you can work hand-in-hand together with to achieve a greater good, it helps a lot. I think that is a very crucial lesson that we learn at ALA and I think it is going to help us, the younger aspiring leaders. We are able to collaborate for the greater good in the future and actually unified in that sense.

4.3.1.3 The whole school assembly

The participants, both the learners and educators, considered their experiences at the school assembly as an activity that enhanced unity in the ALA community. As one student interviewee states: “So, also whenever there is assembly, I always feel that there is a sense of unity in the ALA environment, like this time I feel that ALA is a family and not just people coming from different parts of Africa and living along.” And an educator reports, “And even when you look at ALA assembly, for instance, listening to my story, we hear people share their background, they share their stories about the way they have grown up, or things that have happened to them.”

The whole school assembly is a weekly activity that lasts for around one hour. The assembly is attended by all members of the school community – learners, teachers and non-teaching staff. There are various activities arranged for the assembly. Some of the activities include: the Dean’s address; a presentation in the African language of the week; highlights of news report from media around Africa; - an activity referred to as, “This week in Africa”; a member of the ALA community sharing a story about himself or herself – an activity commonly referred to as “My story”; recognition of the independence days of the African countries represented at ALA and some announcements.

Although most of the activities at the whole school assembly support a unifying African theme, the participants particularly described the “My story” segment as an activity that is illustrative of the unity of the ALA family. Any member of ALA family is free to let the organiser of the school assembly know if they wished to share any aspect of their life story with members of the ALA community and only one person would be chosen to presents his or her story at that week’s assembly. Many people have shared very personal experiences in the “My story” segment. These include loss of their loved one, the social and academic challenges they have faced and so on. These stories enhance the sense of unity at the school, as people have the opportunity to learn more about the individual and the person’s background, which leads to better understanding and feelings of empathy and encourages them to befriend the person. One participant felt that qualities of unity

are displayed in the “My story” segment, since people feel safe to share their stories, without fear that others would respond violently or by discriminating against them. In his own words:

So, coming to ALA and getting a chance to interact with one of them who was here during my first year and getting to know him as a person and getting to know that he is a normal person just like me and any other person, you know, and also having to walk into a class and having all those different discussions around LGBT rights, listening to X and Y tell their stories and touch upon their experiences with regard to LGBT rights, that really helped shape my perception of what the LGBT community is all about and I think is primarily about acceptance, about other people and yah and I do feel strongly that, that one experience and several others. ALA has helped me learn how to appreciate other people for who they are, thereby enabling me to embrace that unity mind-set.

4.3.1.4 Advisory families

The participants identified the “advisory families” as another source of unity at ALA. One participant said: “I like the way that there are advisors’ offices. You have someone who can be there for you all the way.”

Apart from the broader ALA family, which consists of both teaching and non-teaching staff, as well as current students and alumni, there is also the “advisory family”. When learners join ALA, they are placed in small groups called “advisory families”. An advisory family consists of, on average, six learners and two adults, who serve as the advisors for the students. The advisory families meet for lunch once a week. During the get-together, the family has informal chats about matters that concern them. They also engage in a range of discussions, team building activities and games. Members of the advisory family share their experiences and challenges and they support each other accordingly. The advisors plays the “parental” role to the students. The bonding within advisory families may vary from one family to another, depending on the level of commitment of the advisors and the individual differences. The families will occasionally visit the homes of

advisors, where they would cook, visit shopping malls, celebrate birthdays and so forth. On the whole, the advisor is involved in the social and academic life of the advisee in one way or another.

This advisory family unit is a crucial foundation that supports the broader ALA family or community. It is a pillar that provides a sense of unity to ALA learners and adults, who come from diverse backgrounds and are integrated into a “family” of about eight members.

4.3.1.5 Unity-based worldview

Apart from the advisory families, the ALA curriculum lays emphasis on activities that encourage team work, collaboration and networking. Learners work together in projects such as the Students Enterprise Programmes (SEPs), Community Service Programmes (CSPs) and group work projects and assignments. A participant said the following regarding networking:

Generally, we need to be able to bring out people who will be able to work together. So networking is very important in this concept. I mean in the ALA ecosystem. And so students from different background are networking, they are able to know each other, they are making friends amongst each other and now we have seen situations where we have people visiting other countries, working with people from different backgrounds and so we have that cohesion.

The participants felt that their experiences placed them on the path of the transformation to a unity-based worldview. The experiences include non-formal learning opportunities like visiting other countries to attend conferences, workshops or symposia such as the Harvard Model United Nations (MUN) or Winchester International Symposium. A learner, who attended such an external learning opportunity at Babson College in the US, narrated her experiences as follows:

It is quite interesting because I was always a person who would notice things like class; I have noticed that I don't explicitly see it here. But I would tell myself as somebody who has not met a lot of people. So, I always think to myself that I probably would not get along with that person; we probably have nothing in common to speak about. But last year, when I went to Babson, where there were

students from different countries, different parts of the world, I realised that there is always that thing that we could relate to, I mean, I would have, my lunch table would be comprised of an Indian boy, an Indian American boy, a Chinese boy from China, a Chinese American, and may be somebody else from Turkey or something like that. It just made me realise that had if I had not come to ALA and gotten over my mental models about the kind of people that are out there, then it makes it hard for me to go out there and be part of some of their programmes. So, I think it also develops over time because when you want to go to conferences with different people and those conferences might be about passing a resolution and getting involved with different countries and you have to co-ordinate the other people. I think after getting the view of people of sort of equal level, now I have more confidence speaking with a person from a different country with less prejudice, less stereotype and less pre-conceptions.

A senior educator believed that the fact that students at ALA have to put on uniforms also played a part in bringing unity among students. In his words,

Uniforms are important for unity. I also think they are important for good leadership habits. When we get into the fundamental discipline of putting on proper uniform daily, it supports our mental discipline. As you enter the classroom, it also promotes a sense of unity between students of different backgrounds. And the flipside is, in a school where people bring their clothes from home, these can draw visible lines between the haves, the have-not and those in the middle.

4.3.1.6 Perceived hindrances to qualities of unity

Although, evidently, the way of life in the ALA community enhance the qualities of unity, there are some activities that some participants felt could be a hindrance to the development of qualities of unity and could be viewed to be potentially violent. Inter-house activities, language barriers, nationalities and ideological differences were cited.

Inter-house activities: Inter-house competitions, including the competitions between the residential halls, were mentioned. Participants were of the view that it created a sense of “us” against “them”. Learners and staff are divided into six houses named after the great rivers of Africa – Niger, Nile, Zambezi, Congo, Volta and Tana. The houses are involved in a range of competitions all year round, including athletics, soccer, drama, singing and many others. Points are awarded for each competition and the best house is recognised at the end of the academic year. During the activities, team work spirit is enhanced within the houses, on one hand, and there are also inter-house rivalries, on the other. Hence, there is an aspect of “cheers and jeers”. Some participants argued that these do not support the unity of the broader ALA community.

Language issues: The other aspect that some participants considered a hindrance to unity of the ALA community is the language barrier. ALA brings together English, French, Portuguese and Arabic speakers. The integration of these nationalities is slowed down by the language barrier. A learner puts it this way:

I could talk about language barrier and for me especially French and Arabic. But at least French, Arabic is bad, like already as it is when they come here, North Africans mostly they do not consider themselves like Africans and they usually sit together and speak Arabic and even if you try to socialize it is very difficult because I cannot understand Arabic. So, I don't know I would think language can be a hindrance but I think it is something that can be overcome.

The language of instruction is English, yet some students come on board with very little or no knowledge of the language. This makes them feel like outsiders, as they struggle to settle in academically, with a language they are struggling to learn. This leads to frustration, as they lose confidence because of the resulting poor performance in class. The situation is made worse by the vigorous preparations that students have to undertake for the Standard Aptitude Tests (SATs) and Cambridge examinations.

Nationalities: Some participants also observed that, learners from countries which are represented in relatively larger numbers, sometimes tend to pull together. A learner interviewee observed:

And also, like the fact that sometimes there are more Nigerians than other nationalities or more Kenyans than other nationalities. That also pushes these people to stay together. But is understandable that you tend to turn to, or stay with the people from your nationality because there are some common jokes or a common background.

In this regard, some underlying division between learners from Northern Africa and those from sub-Saharan Africa tend to come to the surface, especially when they are participating in competitions, and these groupings come to support their teams in a soccer match involving two countries from the two regions. An aspect of polarisation is evident in such circumstances. Another learner, with a similar observation put it this way:

Sometimes what can hinder this idea of unity is like when people of the same region get together and stay together without connecting with people from other countries. For example, when you see the North-Africans together or the Nigerians together, so, maybe that hinders the idea of unity that ALA tries to enhance.

Ideological differences: Some students also narrated ideological differences in discussion on such issues as sexuality. The students felt that although freedom of expression is encouraged at ALA, a rift often emerges between what they referred to as “liberalists”, on one hand, and the conservatives on the other. From the perspective of the participants, the “liberalists” tend to be more vocal in the ALA setting, as their ideas are propagated in an activist approach, with the result that the conservatives “don’t feel comfortable to air their views”, since they fear that they may be mistakenly labelled as, for example, a homophobic. One of the learner said:

But as far as issues go, I don’t know how, but I feel that more could be done to ensure that conservative ideas are accommodated within the ALA community because very often, that if I come from my conservative background and I feel that something is very wrong, there are always very liberal people around to shut me up and you know, not allow me to be honest about what I feel and what I think. And that inevitably leads to conflict because you know just that feeling of being secluded and that feeling of not being heard is painful and it’s not something that

I think I would want to. I would rather, some measures be put in place so that even people who feel very strongly about certain issues feel very comfortable airing their views as opposed to those blocking those feelings and because they think someone will judge them for the way they think.

Two participants that were interviewed referred to one particular case where, in a classroom discussion, a learner honestly articulated his standpoint on the issue of homosexuality, making reference to Bible verses to support his argument. However, his views, in the words of another student, “were trampled on relentlessly” by the liberalists in the class.

Yet another learner participant was of the view that sometimes there arises some underlying conflict of values between the “progressivists” and the learners from conservative backgrounds. She had this to say:

So, I think at ALA the hindrance sort of, of my complete transformation might be the fact that values could have come in between when I see campaigns, I mean people promoting homosexuality. So, I feel like this is a bit more of my value thing, it is less like ALA environment, but more of a value thing and the environment just makes me realise that my values are in conflict with what others are having?

4.3.1.7 Discussion

An analysis of the data brings out several aspects of the ALA programme that reflect or enhance qualities of unity. Unity in diversity is evident as learners from different parts of the continent are brought together and they are integrated into an academic community that is functional. The participants perceive an environment where diversity is emphasised and, as it is a core value of the school, it is celebrated in activities such as cultural exchange activities. There is also a perception of a strong family spirit in activities such as the whole school assembly, where both the learners and the other members of the ALA community felt that the environment was safe to share both the

positive and the negative experiences they have gone through in life. The same applies to the impact that the advisory families have on relationships in the school. There is an overall sense of unity of purpose, as members of the ALA community share a common vision to transform Africa for the better, and this has also helped to enhance qualities of unity in the school environment. The concept of unity recognises that when people create conditions of unity in diversity, they are able to create life engendering, peaceful environments (Danesh, 2008:159). One can conclude that this is an academic community that is making progress towards a unity-based worldview, as members of the community become aware of the fundamental oneness of humanity (Danesh, 2006: 68). Most aspects of the school life, at ALA, are free of the extremes of competition and rivalry that characterises an identity-based worldview (Danesh, 2006:67).

One of the main functions of education, is its considerable contribution to the formulation of people's worldview, which, in turn, provides the necessary framework for life processes – thoughts, feelings, choices and actions (Danesh, 2006:64). Opportunities exist in the school programme for the transformation of worldviews. Such opportunities include non-formal programmes like participation in external events, where learners are given the opportunity to attend various global events. Most learners interviewed were of the opinion that their experiences at ALA have been transformative.

However, according to the participants, there are, arguably, aspects of the school programme that encourage competition and rivalry, which entrenches an identity-based worldview, namely the inter-house activities, language barriers, national loyalties and ideological differences. The view of some participants is that the inter-house activities tend to promote an identity-based worldview, where members of a house develop a strong notion of "us" and "them" and this would inherently lead to conflict situations. The flip side of this view is that, through such activities, learners develop the virtues of self-control and even emotional intelligence in a practical manner. They learn to appreciate the common concept of healthy competition. National loyalties also lead to an inclination towards an identity-based worldview, although identity in terms of nationality may not be harmful. Ideological differences, however, is an area which may test unity, depending on whether people are educated enough to appreciate diversity of opinions.

4.3.2 Critical thinking skills

The interviewees narrated learning opportunities they have had at ALA that enhanced their critical thinking skills. The areas mentioned by most participants were: the Seminal Readings; discussion-based teaching – as applied across the subjects; and the activities they are engaged in, in subjects such as EL, African Studies, Writing and Rhetoric and the sciences.

4.3.2.1 Seminal Readings

Each term, at ALA, there is a week dedicated to Seminal Readings. Advisors act as facilitators during these discussions. They are provided with some questions to guide the discussions, but they are not compelled to follow this approach. They have the freedom to decide how best they would explore the text under discussion, as guided by the theme. During the discussion, meanings are sought, critical questions are generated, divergent views are aired and some reflections are made on certain stereotypes and preconceptions.

Most participants perceived the Seminal Readings sessions as an area for enhancement of critical thinking skills. A learner participant expressed her feelings about Seminal Readings in this way:

I think Seminal Readings, it is probably my favourite time of the year, because I just get a chance to dig deep into people's minds and thoughts, opinions and very often their thoughts have been contrary to my thoughts. And sometimes I could have just taken something from face value and really not thought about what are the implications of it and somebody else would understand it differently and I think that having seminal readings has helped me to be a critical thinker because I continuously re-visit my opinions and engage with other peoples' works and research and knowledge.

Another learner, when asked what opportunities for enhancement of critical thinking skills he had at ALA, expressed similar sentiments as above, stating:

So, I think the first thing that comes to mind is the giver and I think Seminal Readings. So, we read the giver and we battle with the idea of whether or not, you want the perfect society by removing trivial people. So, it was kind of questioning to what extent are we...do we want to take the lives of people for the sake of the larger society?

Yet another student said:

One thing that every ALA student would know about is the Seminal Readings which are very much a combination of texts that are mind boggling as well as educational and some are very controversial as well. So I think when you get to spent a week in every term doing nothing else but sitting about discussing the different issues that are coming up from the different themes that do come up in the text and we get to really...I think for me I have experienced that tremendous growth over time of how I see things, of how broad my perspective of looking at things has become and so on.

4.3.2.2 The Socratic approach to teaching

Besides the Seminal Readings, the discussion-based or Socratic method of teaching is commonly practiced in the ALA classroom. In this approach, questions are asked and students are given opportunities to think and give answers. As indicated in one of the EL curriculum documents,

ALA believes that leadership cannot be taught through didactic or rote methods. To arrive at leadership learning, then, the key is not in force-fed answers, but in thought-provoking questions. By asking deep, meaningful questions that challenge students' assumptions and mental models.

The Socratic approach to teaching is, to some extent, similar to problem-posing education, which was discussed in chapter 2. In a typical ALA classroom setting, the desks are arranged in the form of rectangular pattern so that no learner sits behind another, as is usually the case in traditional classroom settings. The purpose of the arrangement is to encourage discussion among peers, with the teacher as the facilitator. An educator had this to say:

With critical thinking, I think our approach even to teach it itself, is a way of promoting that, in that we use the Socratic approach, which is asking questions and so, (by) asking questions, we expect that the students themselves will be able to think about issues and come up with answers to that.

A learner with similar sentiments regarding classroom discussions affirms:

And I think that for me it has been very great way to improve my critical thinking skills. also the way in which the teachers in ALA do engage us in classrooms; it is not always about you looking at the teacher and waiting for the answer, but it is also about you meeting half-way and doing your part in which includes thinking critically about various things, even if it is a Chemistry question or History event and so on and so on.

A senior administrator, noted the following with regard to opportunities for learners to enhance their critical thinking skills:

What I find interesting is helping people to forge an enquiry based approach to learning, and developing arguments supported by evidence. Giving them space to come and ask questions about school policy. And hopefully, that has promoted critical thinking across the community.

4.3.2.3 The BUILD process in EL

As indicated above, various subjects incorporate activities that enhance critical thinking skills to varied levels and in various contexts. The BUILD process or concept in Entrepreneurial Leadership is an example of such activity (see section 4.2.2.1). Areas of experiential application of the BUILD process include community service projects (CSPs). For example, one of the participants narrated how, in a group, they used the BUILD process in their CSP. They visited a crèche in a low income settlement area and spent some time with the young people and the adults at this establishment. The aim was to understand the needs of the crèche through interaction. They exercised their knowledge of the BUILD process as they made observations and conducted interviews in the setting. They identified the need for fundraising for the crèche. After the process of identifying the needs, they moved to the invention stage by exploring and testing possible

solutions. The learner then presented three possible solutions to the stakeholders and listened to their feedback. They listened to the comments and criticisms from the stakeholders and they also asked some probing questions. In the end, they proposed that a Facebook page be created to generate publicity for the crèche. The aim would be to create an awareness of the need of the crèche for financial support. After receiving feedback and the approval of the stakeholders, the learners implemented the solution.

4.3.2.4 African Studies

Lessons in Africa Studies include a range of activities that help to develop and enhance critical thought. In the Politics class, which is a module of study, learners discuss such topics as the pros and cons of various types of leaderships and types of governments. They would also discuss topics like: “Democracy, is it always good?” One learner, when asked what opportunities she had at ALA that had enhanced her critical thinking skills, shared her experiences as follows:

I really love the school because at my old school, it is very rare to be in a class and be asked for your opinion, be asked to really think about a situation, you know, have your peers contribute unlike the phenomenon here. In African Studies class, and especially my politics class, it has been my favourite class though, for my entire two years. But when we spoke about things like democracies and how visible they are in Africa, we have big questions that we need the world to answer us. For example, when do you think a government is efficient enough to do what it is supposed to do? Are we supposed to be satisfied with peace when you have an authoritarian government, if everything is fine and there is stability, yet there is no democracy? So, we started by asking a lot of very key questions and I think it is really an awesome quest to be just in a classroom and your teachers just do not show you videos, nor just give you articles, but they give you a lot of questions and we write a lot of research papers that get you thinking from academic perspective, which will get stuck in your mind for a long time.

The learning activities in African Studies also include reading, writing and discussions, which is aimed at honing learners' skills so that they are able to recognise bias. This may include reading and analysing of articles that contain obvious biases and comparing it to those without. Another module presented in African Studies is Propaganda. An African Studies educator, when asked what activities in the subject area helped learners develop critical thinking, had this to say:

In year one course, we earlier on teach learners how to how to recognise bias in a source and that is a big skill linked to critical thinking. If they read newspaper articles; for instance, if you show them a newspaper, for example a state newspaper, and show them where there could be incidences or propaganda and then show them another newspaper on the same topic with a very different lens or less subtle bias, just showing them these two options makes them to start to realise the importance of critical thinking.

4.3.2.5 The scientific method

As earlier mentioned, apart from internally designed courses, ALA also offers some Cambridge Advanced subsidiary (AS) and advanced level (AL) syllabuses in subjects such as Mathematics and the sciences. When a science educator was asked what activities helped to enhance critical thinking skills in his subject area or in ALA programme, he had this to say:

I think our subject area, Science, is one in which critical thinking can be very directly addressed. In other words, in laboratory work, the type of skills that have critical thinking skills are in terms of proposing the hypotheses and trying to make sense of data; those really help in critical thinking.

He went on to say:

We give them responsibilities which put them into real life situations in which they have to solve problems and if there is one thing that really sticks out for me about ALA students, it is that they can probably solve problems very fast and so we give them a tremendous amount of opportunities where they can develop critical thinking skills even more so outside the classroom than within the classroom.

Apart from the discussion-based learning activities to enhance knowledge and understanding, the learners also hone their skills through cooperative learning activities, such as group work, to undertake research assignments, presentations and hands on laboratory work. Their critical thinking skills are honed as they learn to analyse and evaluate information so as to identify patterns, report trends and draw inferences. In scientific investigations, they analyse and interpret data to reach conclusions. They also learn to evaluate methods and the quality of data and to suggest improvements. Some learners enrol for the Scientific Research class with a view to deepening their skills in research. The course includes lessons on scientific methods, methods of citation and referencing and development of skills in analysing scientific journal articles. The learners are taken through a series of scaffolding assignments that enable them to read through a series of research articles, identifying their topic of interest and related research question, completing an interactive review and producing their own research report, which is published in the annual *ALA Scientific Research Symposium*. Learners who feel an affinity for the humanities, can enrol for the Humanities Research class, which runs concurrently with the Scientific Research class, in the same format. Similarly, those who feel strongly about the Arts, can enrol for the Creativity Research course.

4.3.2.6 Writing and Rhetoric

In Writing and Rhetoric, learners are exposed to different voices, verbally and in writing. Learners also learn to use their voices creatively, verbally and in writing. An educator of Writing and Rhetoric, who believes that “writing is thinking”, shared an example of how classroom activities empowered learners to share their voices:

The students shared the song ‘one love’ and a majority of students felt strongly positive about the message of what this presumably popular culture song is doing to further a message of unity and of human rights. Yet there were probably three students, I remember, who disagreed and they were not amused with this message of unity, because of their own personal beliefs and that was a space of tension, but I think that tension was healthy. Sometimes you need to create those moments of discomfort and tension, as I think, those students, maybe their thinking didn’t

change, but they were challenged to, maybe, think about their values, in a new way.’

According to the educator, in a module called “Protest”, there were discussions around forms and expressions of protest. The discussions focused on violent protests and what a healthy protest would look like.

4.3.2.7 Co-curricular activities

Some opportunities for enhancement of critical thinking skills also arise in other activities such as in the school clubs and societies. According to a learner, who was a representative for the clubs and societies in the Student Government, during the discussions in some clubs, “one is exposed to divergent views that challenge your own”. These discussions enhance critical thought. Two participants made reference to discussions in the club they are member of, known as Youth for Christ (YFC), in which members raised topics that challenged their thought processes. The members had sessions in which they “thought around religion to answer difficult questions”. One member of YFC contended:

First of all, in YFC, which is Youth for Christ, we do a lot of thinking around religion and the church and answering difficult questions about our faith and that is the most challenging spaces. Even before you have to say something in front of people, you have to think and re-think and make sure you place them in the correct words; otherwise it might offend somebody and that has helped me with critical thinking in a strategic manner.

Yet another member of YFC had this to say:

One of the things that I found very interesting was once when we had a youth sensitisation in the Youth for Christ sessions, then we invited Muslims to come over because the topic was, ‘What would Jesus do if he had a Muslim roommate?’ It was quite interesting that, you know, you can come to a place where as much as we all have unique entities about other things, we learn from each other. That is probably most important because when I go to church, I see some Muslim students

there, just not because they were converted or anything, but because they want to learn and some students go to the mosque just because they want to learn.

4.3.2.8 Discussion

The narratives of the participants show that several opportunities exist to enable learners to develop their critical thinking skills in the ALA setting. The Seminal Readings were cited by most participants, as one of the areas where such opportunities is readily available. These sessions promote dialogical relations between learners and educators and among the learners (Saul & Silva, 2011:44). This encourages discussions in which meanings are sought, critical questions are generated, divergent views are given and some reflections are made, for instance, on certain stereotypes and preconceptions. According to Durakoglu (2013:104), such a learning environment equips learners to acquire knowledge through epistemological curiosity. In other words, the critical consciousness of the learners are kept active. By extension, the discussion-based approach to teaching, as applied across the subjects to different degrees, support growth in the same context. Discussion-based teaching of content about such topics as “Forms of governance” and “Recognising bias”, exposure to different voices, or application of scientific method, are also relevant to the development of critical thinking skills or the sharpening of critical consciousness. The classroom environment should become an enabling environment in which critical consciousness is fostered outside of the social environment in which the learner finds him/herself (Edwards, 2011:101). Hence, the content and methodology in the above-mentioned areas align with Freire's (1996:61) emphasis on peace through education for the development of critical consciousness. Learning becomes rooted in experiences and relationships and involves an active element of asking questions, thinking critically, challenging assumptions and unlocking the imagination. According to Harber and Sakade (2009:173), there has always been a conflict between education for control – in order to produce citizens and workers who are conformist, passive and politically docile – and those who advocated for education for critical consciousness, freedom and democracy, with the former dominating the real world of formal education.

The BUILD process in EL is a typical example of areas in which the ALA programme provide problem-posing education, as much as it also provides opportunities for development of critical thinking skills. Equipping learners with the skills and attitudes of identifying the needs or problems

of people in a community, seeking to understand the root causes of the problem, inventing a solution, iterating on the same and finally sharing the solution with the stakeholders, is in line with the principles of problem-posing education. Similar skills are developed through the discussion-based approach or Socratic method of teaching. Cooperative learning skills are also developed when learners are put into groups to brainstorm and come up with some problem-solving ideas, as is the case in the BUILD process. In this process, first-hand knowledge and an experience rooted in a social environment allow learners to form their own views, thoughts and feelings about the world around them. Participation of the youth in social thinking, dreaming and planning, while they are still feeling free to draw on their own experiential knowledge of the world, will help to make the adult social order more malleable and more open to new and more humane developments (Stephenson, 2012:122).

4.3.3 Conflict resolution

When participants were asked about their experiences with regard to opportunities to develop conflict resolution skills, most of the student interviewees pointed to their experiences in EL and particularly the experiential lessons on emotional awareness and self-regulation. Feedback systems and self-leadership coaching were also identified.

4.3.3.1 Emotional Intelligence

The interviewees were quick to make references to their lessons on emotional intelligence; which included self-awareness and self-regulation. One of the participants narrated his experiences thus:

I think first of all, I have to admit that I came to ALA with very bad anger management skills. I had no control over emotions before coming to ALA, because of my previous experiences. But then, one of the first lessons we learnt in leadership class was emotional intelligence. One of them is self-awareness and emotional control. So, all those things, just remind you and make you self-aware. Anytime you are about to lose your anger, there is just that reminder that comes in, that you are about to lose control. And to me, that has helped me a lot. So, the EL curriculum actually places a lot of emphasis on conflict resolution. And in my

SEP, I have worked with people from different countries – South Africa, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Senegal and Ghana – with different upbringing, different socio-economic status and different thinking. Before we even started a team, we were taught about the brainstorming stage where we would have stormy issues to discuss. So, when conflicts arose we reminded ourselves that we were aware this would come before we started working together, so let us find a way of resolving it. So, I think having the awareness and knowing that such things are there and they can be controlled might be very helpful.

Yet another student said:

One of the first things that we did in EL was emotional intelligence. So, it had the components of, if I can remember, self-awareness, self-regulation, I think empathy, I have forgotten but all had to do with how you are able to manage, not necessarily suppress, the emotions you have. And I think even in Self-leadership Coaching (SLC), we do things like understanding your hot buttons; those things that make you angry all the time and just being able to be self-aware, when a person is pushing you to a limit and knowing how to react to that.

Asked what opportunities were available for students at ALA to develop conflict resolution skills in his subject area or in the ALA programme as a whole, an EL educator responded as below:

We basically have all these things, conflict things, they are the things we talk about from the first day of EL, emotional intelligence, so we don't tackle them as conflict resolution per se, but what we do teach them. We also teach a lesson on conflict. So, especially when they are in their groups they learn them quickly. So we have dedicated towards their lessons on more where we talk about different approaches to conflicts, how to diffuse it, how to navigate and so, I would not say that our students are experts, but they are actually killing it ... but they are better than every teenager at seeing conflict as a valuable step to a cooperation or teamwork and then we also teach team development, which includes the stages. One of the stages is the stormy stage which is effectively conflict and the fact that they can see, you

know, you can ask anyone of our students, I would say about the teams that they run and to talk about the time when they were storming and they will tell you about conflict and how they moved past it and I think that is really impressive compared to the other teenagers.

Another educator said:

I think in general, there is a lot of group work in ALA, a lot of curricular activities include group work projects and those group projects require conflict resolution from the students in order to get a good grade, because if a group doesn't get along to resolve the conflict often, they will get a low grade, we also put in place few assessments which is quite significant where the students are expected to grade their peers on how they work in groups at the end, it certainly leads them to offer themselves remarkably.

These narratives point to a deliberate effort to develop personalities that have the ability to choose how to respond to a stimuli (see section 4.2.2.1).

4.3.3.2 Group work and feedback systems

EL offers experiential lessons on how to give feedback. Many participants referred to their ability to deal with conflict using the skills they have learnt in EL on giving feedback. They mentioned that the situation, behaviour and impact (SBI) approach to giving feedback was a useful tool they had acquired. In the SBI approach, the learners are taught that if a conflict arises, in the course of their interactions with others, that, instead of shying away, they should address it with the person(s) involved. When they confront the person, they should describe the conflict situation, the behaviour they are not happy with and the impact of the behaviour. A learner interviewee said:

But I think that one thing that ALA does help us do greater at is to give each other, to have the courage to actually give each other instant feedback. So if at all someone is doing something that you think is not in line with what the values at ALA are or what your personal values are, I think the courage to confront them is what has helped me to see conflict resolution in another lens, so to speak, and also

not just any sort of feedback, but ALA does teach you to give feedback in a certain way. So, an example of that could be what we call SBI. When you don't just go to someone and scold them, but instead you go to the person and you tell them the situation; you tell them about their behaviour, and also the impact it had on you. So, in that way the person gets to look at you in a clearer way.

Group work as a learning method is an approach that is used in all of the subjects. In EL, in particular, students always work in teams in such areas as Community Service Projects (CSPs) and Student Enterprise Projects (SEPs). According to the participants, before students start working in such teams, they would have had lessons on conflict resolution or conflict management. They are coached on how to resolve conflicts through what is referred to as "crucial conversations". Crucial conversations are discussions that have to take place, despite the fact that the subject that they have to broach involves strong emotions, opposing opinions and high stakes. For example, critiquing a colleague's work or asking a friend for the money he or she owes you. A learner had this to say regarding crucial conversations: "EL has brought up things like crucial conversations to help us in addressing conflicts. Personally, I tend to do a lot of practice with that. "

According to the two EL educators, the EL perspective is that conflicts are inevitable and, therefore, learners are encouraged to view conflicts as stepping stones to progress. They are encouraged to develop a mind-set that would appreciate the value that could be gained from a conflict that is well managed. The general opinion was that the teams provided real-life experiences in conflict resolution including self-regulation, self-awareness and impulse control. Some of the comments by learner interviewees included: "I remember we had a group work assessment, so, people wouldn't want to work. That provided opportunity for us to exercise resolving such conflicts." And another one said: "Sometimes we could be put in a situation where you need self-regulation. For example, working with others in a team, in the first year of EL class, helped us to learn self-awareness and self-regulations." The student participants acknowledged that the SBI approach to giving feedback, within the context of the ALA value of empathy, was effective as a conflict resolution strategy.

According to some participants, interpersonal and the intergroup activities, as provided for in the structures of the residential halls and SEPs, enabled experiential development of skills for negotiation – a key element in conflict resolution. Here one can use the example, previously mentioned, of the roommates, with conflicting expectations, who would enter into negotiations about the rules that would apply in that space and then, subsequently, signing the roommate contracts. A participant said:

In ALA, most students are from schools where they were leaders and most of them are very assertive and they have agendas. They have the way things should go and when you go out into the world, you will find people being assertive, but in a school of leaders, all of them want to be leaders. So, you have to find a way to come to terms with that and sacrifice some things and when you learn to sacrifice, you learn to control yourself. So, all your friends, your hall-mates, your roommates, they want certain things and they stick to them and you have to find a way to sacrifice and make deals with them so that you can meet in the middle.

Another learner, when asked what her experiences with regard to opportunities for development of conflict resolution skills in the day-to-day activities at ALA were, had this to say:

I think the major part of it is student run enterprises, because you have conflict with your team members, you have conflict with the student run bank, you have conflict with your customers, you have conflicts with your EL teachers, and with SEP board members. I think it is a perfect opportunity to just control your anger, to exercise your emotional intelligence, and just a first-hand opportunity to learn.

The participants were of the view that learner-educator conflicts were very rare in the ALA community, because of a culture of feedback. This view is reflected in the following comment by one of the participants:

Talking about learners and educators, I think that at ALA, there is a close relationship between learners and educators which help learners, in that they can also give feedback to educators. Like before or back home, when you don't like something about your teacher, you don't tell him because the teachers might get

angry and things like that. But here, the teachers are very understanding and they also embrace the culture of feedback. So, the students feel like fine with giving teachers feedback or the teachers giving the students feedback.

Some participants alluded to the fact that conflict arose between some learners and educators, mainly around issues of assignments and the learners' workload.

4.3.3.3 Self-leadership coaching and other support systems

Apart from topics cover in the EL lessons, learners are given opportunities to attend one-on-one self-leadership coaching sessions with self-leadership coaches. Participants find these sessions helpful to deal with internal or intra-personal conflicts. During these sessions, the learners are engaged in discussions on topics such as "Understanding your hot buttons", that is, those things that trigger your anger.

Other support systems include the advisors (for the learners) and peer councillors, who help to resolve minor conflicts. Peer counsellors (PCs) are learners that are carefully selected and trained to offer counselling support to fellow students. Each of the eight residential halls has a peer counsellor.

Many learner interviewees indicated that, compared to their previous schools, the ALA community was better at enabling people to solve issues through dialogue and in identifying and addressing the root causes of conflict. They felt that as far as communication is concerned, they have made major strides in their response to conflict situation. Whereas before they would keep quiet if they had a grievance or they avoid confronting the issue altogether, they now have the ability to engage in crucial conversations and to skilfully use the tools that they have been taught, such as SBI, one method presented in the lesson about conflict resolution approaches. Some of the responses from three different participants were as follows:

For me personally, I was a very shy person and I would keep a lot of feelings to myself and you would think that, that is the other person would think that the

conflict is resolved when it is actually not. But over time I have gotten to be a little bit more outspoken. So I find it very easy to air my feelings.

I think I have become better conflict resolver so to speak and I credit that to the EL department, because they have an entire topic in the curriculum dedicated to discussions, dedicated to dialogue, and dedicated to how to peacefully resolve conflicts.

I think, first of all, I have to admit that I came to ALA with very bad anger management skills. I had no control over emotions before coming to ALA because of my previous experiences. But then, one of the first lessons we learnt in leadership class was emotional intelligence and get time to take us through the whole topics. One of them is self-awareness, emotional control, so, all those things, just reminds you, and makes you self-aware, anytime you are about to lose your anger, there is just that reminder that comes in, that you are about to lose control. And to me, that has helped me a lot.

A number of learner participants did mention that they have not witnessed learners fighting at ALA, compared their previous schools, where fighting was not an uncommon phenomenon. Similar sentiments were echoed by some of the teacher participants. One learner mentions:

So, I think there is a culture in ALA of not fighting and I am not sure or may be because we are in South Africa or is it just different people from different countries. But back in my school, you would have people at least fight once in two days; a major fight once in two days.

Discipline issues are handled through the formal channels of the school as clarified in the students' handbook (see section 4.2.1.2).

4.3.3.4 Conflicts between students and administration

Sometimes conflicts also arise between the learners and the administration. Some participants attributed such conflicts to a sense of entitlement on the part of the learners or what may be perceived, in some quarters, as a lack of adequate channels of communication or flow of information. An educator had this to say:

I think one of our biggest growth areas is our systems of communication. I don't think we have quite figured out, those systems of how we communicate. Say, I am a resident and I know, as an advisor, I think that advisors often don't have the information they need to have, to be able to be part of the conflict resolution with their advisees. So, they are not often involved in the process, when they should be. They should actually be one of the primary support people. So, I think to me in conflict resolution, communication is the most important thing. So, I think at ALA, across the board, communication is probably the biggest growth area.

A similar sentiment was expressed by a learner participant:

I think it would be helpful for the students to be at least kept in the know with these things in order to avoid students feeling dissatisfied with rules when they don't really understand the rationale behind those rules and procedures.

It is perceived that this sense of entitlement stems from the ALA community's tolerance and encouragement of divergent views and opinions as well as the fact that learners are not referred to as future leaders, but rather addressed as young leaders, who are considered to have already started a lifelong leadership journey. The learners tend to be assertive and this may sometimes generate conflict. For example, there are times when school policies, such as the sign-out procedure, are revised and, when this happens, there is usually some tension, as learners may complain that they were neither involved in the decision making nor given an adequate explanation for the change.

Similarly, there are times when a learner may commit an offense which, in line with the school's policy as stated in the student handbook, warrants some disciplinary action. The DC would take the issue through the hearing process and finally make recommendations for the dean to consider and implement. Depending on the nature of the offense and for the sake of protecting the dignity

of the offender, the school discloses only the necessary information to the student body, in keeping with ethical conventions. This lack of information, sometimes also generate some conflict as there is of a lack of clarity, which raises suspicions.

4.3.3.5 Conflict between the staff and the administration

Conflict resolution between the educators and the administration is an area perceived by some educator interviewees as a process that is always developing. The educators, who have been in the system for a long time, observed that the situation has improved over time, but, on the whole, there is still a room for improvement. The following are some perceptions by some of the educators interviewed:

I think that the students are better in ALA in addressing conflicts. We as educators are not that good at it. I think, because we don't have enough sense of feeling of safe place to engage in conflict. I think often we talk about the idea of affective versus cognitive conflict and I think in most cases, whether you are young or old, it is easy to be personal when attacked by conflicts. I think, we as educators in ALA I think, there is no enough space where you are encouraged to have vigorous cognitive conflicts around ideas. I think we actually have a lot of people who have conflicts about rules or procedures or policies and those are never given enough space for argument. I think that brews some underlying discontent.

Another educator, when asked what his experiences of conflict at ALA were and about how they were dealt with, had this to say:

I think I have seen effective ones and ineffective ones, I have seen well mediated situations where things about everything was laid on the table and people understood the different opinions and perspectives of the others and the understanding was arrived at and that not everybody walked away completely happy, but the way people walked away feeling completely at peace and something beneficial was happening. I have also seen a number of times here where conflict was completely squashed by administration and avoided all

together and where people were overtly or certainly told to be quiet and mind their own businesses. So, I would not say there is norm for effective conflict management at ALA. I don't think it is something that has always been done well, but I have seen it is done well.

4.3.3.6 Discussion

In the aftermath of the Second World War, there was renewed interest in “education for global citizenship”, which emphasised the interdependence of human beings and the development of skills in peace making, conflict resolution and social justice (Stormfay-Fitz, 2008:3). In the new millennium, the emphasis has been placed on interpersonal relations and systems that enable disputing parties to resolve their differences with communication skills (Clark-Habibi, 2005:35). Educators teach human relations skills such as anger management, impulse control, emotional awareness, empathy, assertiveness and problem solving.

The documents, observations and interviews discussed in this chapter, reflect this emphasis. Evidence of this, is the teaching of emotional intelligence, which includes self-awareness and self-regulation, as well as the group work activities, which is practiced in all the subjects, which provide opportunities for experiential learning of human relations skills. This is confirmed in the experiences of the learners, who states that the group work activities generate some conflict situations which they are taught to resolve through the application of the skills that they have gained. Learners are also taught skills in regard to giving feedback by using the SBI format. While learners are provide opportunities to develop their conflict resolution skills, it is coupled with an emphasis on compassion, one of the ALA values. It is clear that in the EL approach to the teaching of conflict resolution, conflict is perceived as something inevitable and, therefore it is crucial to equip learners with skills and attitudes to resolve conflict.

This is the position held by many scholars including Cahn and Abigail (2007:10), although Danesh and Danesh (2006:66) consider this notion to be a conflict-based view of reality (Danesh & Danesh, 2002:66). Clark Habibi (2005:1339) also argue that if peace education is intended to result in qualitative transformation in the perceptions, feelings, attitudes and behaviours of both

individuals and society, such that they voluntarily choose peace-based behaviours, goals and policies over conflict-based ones, then the adoption of conflict as a normative platform for such education represents a conceptual contradiction. Evidently, the teaching of peace principles in EL is implicit, as the curriculum has not laid emphasis on “peace” as a theme in the learning activities.

Learners noted that they have developed in their conflict resolution skills through their day-to-day experiences in the ALA environment. This is also evidenced by the apparent absence of violence or violent conflicts at the school. However, occasionally, conflicts arise between learners and the administration. Some participants believe that this can be attributed to learners having a sense of entitlement. The ALA environment encourages learners to voice their concerns and to be actors in resisting the status quo. Striking a balance between that and having a sense of entitlement may be hard, resulting in some conflicts. Participant identified a lack of clear channels of communication or free flow of communication as an area that generates conflict between the learners and the administration and between the administration and both the teaching and non-teaching staff. It is evident that the resolution of conflict between the staff and administration, through improved communication systems is a growth area for the ALA community.

Conflict issues can be complex. According to Cahn and Abigail (2007:23), conflicts are either real or unreal. Real conflicts occur in important relationships over important issues. Unreal conflicts are thought to exist in someone’s mind or they can exist in reality, but they are misperceived. Unreal conflicts may be treated as real, if an accurate judgement is not made. Hence, time and energy would be lost in trying to manage unreal conflict. Efficient communication channels would reduce the chances of the occurrence of unreal conflicts. Poor communication systems would increase the frequency of the same. People would end up seeing conflicts where they don’t exist or they would end up not seeing those conflict which they should address (Cahn & Abigail, 2007:24).

Structures such as the HC and DC are good prototypes of real life situations, where all citizens are expected to abide by the laws of the land, provided that these systems are built on consultative and

cooperative power structures (Danesh, 2006:68), which characterises a unity-based worldview. Such structures would create conditions in which legitimate exercise of power and facilitation of empowerment take place within the framework of unified and caring interpersonal and group relationships.

4.3.4 A culture of peace

4.3.4.1. ALA values

ALA is a school founded on core values and founding beliefs. The ALA values and founding beliefs are posted on the walls of classrooms and meeting rooms. The school encourages and gives recognition to people who embody or model any of these values in the ALA community – teachers, students and non-teaching staff. For example, the annual performance appraisal tools for educators and non-teaching staff include these values.

The EL curriculum includes a series of seminars, which are discussion-based presentations on topics that entrench the ALA values. Using the Socratic method, the EL coaches engage students in challenging discussions around big questions that force critical thought about morality, power, core values and courageous leadership, among others.

Some of the discussion questions covered in the seminars include:

- Excellence: What is excellence and what are its benefits, limitations and dangers?
- Integrity: To what extent are you willing to exercise integrity and who gets to determine what is moral or ethical?
- Courage: Is it a critical element of leadership and how does one practice it?
- Crucial conversations: How can you carry out difficult or even contentious conversations in a manner that leaves all parties satisfied?
- Corruption: Is it really avoidable?
- Moral use of power: Isn't leadership effectively just the accumulation of power? If so, what are the bounds of ethical use of that power?

- Humility: What does a life of gratefulness look like and why is that more powerful than “power”?
- Compassion: How far are you willing to go to empathise with another person and how far do you need to go?
- Curiosity: Is the “status quo” always the enemy?
- Diversity: Why are you bound to be creative in a room full of strangers than in a room full of friends?

The answers to these questions are not supplied by the EL coaches, but are arrived at through discussions; they are explored collaboratively within the classroom settings. The learners are challenged to arrive at their own tested answers, though they are guided through this process in a way consistent with the ALA values.

The seminars also incorporate a range of experiential learning activities that challenge learners' preconceptions and test the boundaries of their own personal values. The experiential activities include such exercises as the integrity test and the compassion challenge.

4.3.4.2 Human-centred entrepreneurship (HCE)

The EL educators, who were interviewed, perceived the focus on “human-centred entrepreneurship” as promoting a culture of peace. One of the educators commented:

You see, there is also the very strong social entrepreneurship thread that runs through our EL course and again that relates to this issue of addressing root causes of issues. Key to that is our focus on human-centred entrepreneurship. That is a core part of how we teach entrepreneurship and leadership. We say that it has to be human centred. When we say root causes, we mean root causes of human problems. Which fundamentally brings us to the heart of peace and conflict resolution. That is the things that bring conflicts to the humans are the ones you want to resolve.

Yet another EL educator, when asked what activities in his subject area promoted a culture of peace, had this to say:

We do talk about root causes which is part of human-centred entrepreneurship. We also talk about how to have enquiry based discussions. We teach crucial conversations, which is all about dialogue and reaching agreements. Students also get to practice negotiations, not necessarily for peace, between the enterprises. Sometimes the negotiations go sour, but never violent.

The BUILD process, discussed earlier, is essentially a tool for identifying the root causes of any challenges in a society or community and provides a method to come up with solutions to the problems requiring the facilitator to make an effort to understand the affected people and the systems in which they operate. Some participants were of the opinion that the skills and approaches developed in the application of BUILD concept have the potential to enhance a culture of peace. They suggested that if the concept is applied with peace as the theme, it had the potential to transfer a conflict situation into a peaceful product, thereby cultivating a culture of peace.

4.3.4.3 The orientation programme

It is the opinion of the participants that the two-week orientation process for new learners also contributes to a culture of peace, in addition to enhancing unity among members of the ALA community. During the two weeks, learners are introduced to various aspects of life at the academy, including the expectations as articulated in the students' handbook. The orientation culminates in an elaborate welcoming ceremony. A learner comments: "I think orientation plays a big role in creating a better understanding and also teaching students how to live with others." Some participants mentioned the principle of equality embraced by the ALA community as a reflection of a culture of peace. The principle of equality is practiced in the residence halls, for instance, where the arrangement is that two students will share a room – a first-year learner would normally share a room with a second-year learner of a different nationality – and, to ensure fairness, the students have to negotiate and sign a roommate contract, which they enter into as equal partners.

A learner interviewee from Ghana had this to say:

I came to ALA with a preconception that every school is like my old school where once you are senior, you have this huge authority over the junior and you could do anything. Really, a junior is virtually almost technically a slave to you, but then, I came here with that in my mind and I realised that ALA doesn't encourage that. The fact that you are a first year, a second year, doesn't give you an upper hand over everyone or give you the power to touch everyone. But then, this was opposite for me in my old school. As a senior, you could even decide to slap a junior and no one could question you. They just tell you it is part of high school and you will not even feel like going to report to anyone, because no one would listen to you. And then I came here, and there is that sense of equality, we are humans and we all have something to give. And then finding my roommates, no teams of who is a second year, no teams of either me or no teams of above me or no teams of having power over me. To me, that created a peaceful atmosphere, for me, in my room and even in the environment around.

Likewise, an educator, who was asked about his perceptions of ALA in terms of a culture of peace, observed:

I think we are ahead of many other educational institutions, because so much of what we do are based on values. So, there is a strong sense of values. We have values at the core, so that is one key ingredient of a culture of peace. I think that is something that is very strong and also one of our founding beliefs is to do with addressing the root causes. Because of that foundation, again, I would say that ALA is ahead of many other educational institutions. I think a lot of our practices are based on dialogue and we are working towards really understand each other as we teach dialogue and skills of dialogue. So, I think we create space for dialogue.

And yet another educator added:

Well, I can see a lot of things that would promote unity, or better resolve conflicts, or enable critical thinking. And I say, if I was asked which one of these

I would give the highest marks to ALA, for me, I would think it is the culture of peace. It seems to be quite a peaceful place.

4.3.4.4 Relationships

At ALA, there also exist good teacher-student relationships and student-student relationships as captured in narratives like the one featured below, by a learner interviewee, who came from a refugee camp in Uganda and is a citizen of the DRC. She was asked what experiences she had at ALA that she believed, helped to enhance a culture of peace in the setting and she answered:

I would say that they first make people have a common ground, common understanding. If I relate to my own experience here and back home, it was totally different first students and teachers. First it would be difficult for me to enter the staffroom. When I would be called in the office, I was like I am dying even when I had not done anything wrong. But then, when I came here, it is really hard to differentiate between a teacher and a student. Sometimes I would say maybe a parent or a relative, but actually it is the teacher. Of which if I can say ALA provides a better environment for students like me would not have succeeded if I was in my former school because having good relationship with the teachers help students manage stress or any other thing because teachers are understanding. If I would say students, I feel ALA gives more freedom for students to handle a variety of challenges either individually or with friends. So with this, I think it creates more bonds with the students and being strong among themselves in a way that I would not just rush to the teacher yet I know that there are some people I am confident with that maybe if I am in need of something they are going to help me. This starts when students come here, they have time to bond, time to understand one another by sharing stories and things like that and the way like they learn empathy and other things like that. I think it makes everything easy and it plays a vital role in creating a culture of peace among these people.

The participants were also of the view that the advisory family arrangement contributed to a culture of peace. A participant relates:

I think ALA is doing a very good job in putting systems in place to help in making everyone comfortable. As students, with us on campus, we consider our teachers to be our friends in the same way do our teachers consider with us. So, when we have a problem, we cannot address a specific teacher, we are so open to our advisors because they give us that space. They act as our friends, as our mentors, as our parents and we tell them, and they do what is necessary to inquire, make sure that what we are saying is of relevance and if it is something that they need to address, they will make sure that it is addressed and taken care of. So, that is something that I think ALA has put a great system in place to make sure that a culture of peace and harmony is maintained within the community. It is very rare that you have heard of two people having a conflict that cannot be resolved.

Several of the educators and students interviewed mentioned that at ALA “you never see students fight, nor teachers use violence on students” as there seems to be an atmosphere of mutual respect. One learner noted:

I think that teachers do a great job of making sure that we respect each other’s opinions. Even in the language we choose to use when we are trying to give out opinion shows the other person that we differ in opinions and not the personality.

Another process that contributes to better teacher-student relationships is the opportunity given to learners to give feedback to the educators on a regular basis. Some teachers use forms, in which students are asked by the teacher to describe, anonymously, what the teacher should start doing, what the teacher should stop doing and what the teacher should continue doing. Other ways for learners to give feedback to the educators include an online feedback system. In this regard, a learner observed:

So I just mention some experiences, so there is celebrating peace that is one thing that we did as a community. There is also again feedback, is very important at this point as well like when you have conflict with someone, you don’t always

use violence, you use words and feedback to solve the conflicts and it helps the relationship to be peaceful.

Learners are also encouraged to keep a journal in which they record their reflections on the daily activities they participated in. The idea is to help them to reflect on their behaviours and their interactions with others, among other things.

4.3.4.5 Learners' experiences

When learners were asked to comment on how their experiences at ALA had impacted on them with regard to a culture of peace, the learner interviewees, on the whole, felt that they had grown more peaceable, especially when they compare their current situation to conditions in their previous schools. One participant said,

I think that ALA helped me develop the culture of peace in a way that has made me think and believe that all problems can be solved by words, can be solved by feedback rather than violence. Like, violence is not the solution to any problem.

Another one adds:

I have had a very peaceful ride. If I could give it a score, I could give it 95% as compared to my old school which I would give 10% regarding a culture of peace. So, comparatively, I have made huge progress in ALA, and I could have scored 100% if I have not had issues with ideologies and beliefs.

Yet another participant had this to say:

Personally, I have learnt emotional intelligence practically beyond the EL lessons. So, in many cases, I get very reflective whenever I have strong emotions, to know why? When I am too excited about something I want know exactly what excites me or when I am upset, same case so, I think the experience of being taught to be very reflective has helped me to think of being more peaceful or more to seek to understand and not to keep reacting.

The general consensus was that the general atmosphere at ALA allowed for a culture of peace to prevail. This is also confirmed by the observation by some participants that learnt had learnt to live in harmony, irrespective of their religious backgrounds. A learner participant notes:

As much as we all have unique entities about other things that we learn from each other and that is most probably important, when I go to church, I see some Muslim people there, just not because they were converted or anything, but because they want to learn and some people go to the mosque just because they want to learn. So, I found this to be a unique aspect of our community.

4.3.4.6 Perceived hindrances to a culture of peace

Although the participants interviewed were generally in agreement that a culture of peace was very evident in the ALA community, some of them cited some areas where conflicts arose. One such area was the issues around the learners' workload, which is always a source of stress. Learners, who are not able to keep up with the assignment schedule, would naturally find themselves in conflict with the subject educators. It was noted that the situation had improved in the recent past. This could be because the issue of the learners' workload had been reviewed by a committee and some of their recommendations had been adopted by the school. This was decided on in the spirit of addressing the root causes of this source of conflict.

Asked to describe any experiences that would contribute to a culture of violence, one learner, who had served in the electoral post of Chairman of Student Government, had this to say:

So, I have been in different positions where I have had the opportunity of students coming and voicing their concerns. But there were times when students felt agitated and felt like things were being imposed on them. They just felt that they had no say. So that is an experience I have had that is where I have seen students complain a lot and feel like they have no say in some rules and regulations and so forth. So, those are the small things that sometimes clouded a lot of students' judgments and or perception. Things like changes in times for signing up when you have to go out. People do get agitated, but the fundamental of it is again just trying to again to teach us punctuality and being more organised in our lives. So,

there have been those instances, but I think that if a lot of people took their time to sit down and really think about why they feel that way, they will actually realise o.k. fine.

And another one responding to the same question said:

So there are always some people with strong views, I cannot remember at this point a particular incident, but when we might be having an argument, a normal argument in the classroom and someone brings up his point of view and begins to raise their tone; begins to shout, I think sometimes that really...that kind of cultivates that culture of violence in the community. And sometimes, in the soccer pitch, people just get very emotional, while they are playing football, so, those little things. But these are usually isolated events. Immediately after that class or that game, things just get back to normal.

An educator made a similar observation:

I don't think we have a culture of violence, unless when it comes to house activities. I think that the house systems can get a little tense. The soccer matches, hall competitions, the battle of the axe. I think a lot of sports have the potential for violence, because they are so physical. I don't think that cultural violence continues into the classrooms or in the ALA community as a whole. I think it stays in the soccer field for the most part.

4.3.4.7 Discussion

Harber (1996:152) argues that education is what will enable us to move from a culture of war, which we, unfortunately, are all too familiar with, to a culture of peace. A culture of peace is defined as “consisting of values, attitudes and behaviours that reject violence and endeavour to prevent conflicts by addressing their root causes with a view to solving problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations (UNESCO, 2002:2)”

The United Nations Declaration and Program of Action on a Culture of Peace recommended the fostering of a culture of peace through education by: promoting education for all, focusing

especially on girls; revising curricula to promote qualitative values, attitudes and behaviour inherent in a culture of peace; training for conflict prevention and resolution, dialogue, consensus building and active non-violence (United Nations, 1999:4). This was a call for everyone – individuals and institutions – to assume a responsibility for a culture of peace; although education was seen as the pathway through which a culture of peace could be attained (UNESCO, 2002:6). Danesh (2008:59) believes that educating for peace must take place in the context of a culture of peace.

Participants interviewed have given an account of some the aspects of the ALA programme, which they believe enhanced a culture of peace at the school. Such aspects include the orientation programme, which appears effective in enabling the new learners to be easily assimilated into the ALA community. Learners not only build strong relationships among themselves, but also with the adult members of the community. The teaching of the values of integrity, curiosity, compassion, diversity, excellence and humility, through both the experiential and discussion-based approach, also helps to promote a culture of peace in ALA community. In addition, the Socratic approach to teaching, regularly used by teachers in the school, encourages respect for the learner’s voice as well as the group work activities, which encourages the development of cooperative skills and these cooperative skills are crucial for the enhancement of a culture of peace.

The teaching of Human-centred Entrepreneurship provides learners with skills and attitudes that further enhances a culture of peace, since learners are taught in this subject to think about “others” and how they can make life better for “others” by addressing the root causes of problems through the BUILD process.

The use of dialogue is evidenced in the use of the concept of “crucial conversations” and the use of the SBI approach to give feedback or in conflict resolution. Most of the learners interviewed acknowledged that there had been a growth in their ability to handle conflict situations. There is evidence of much respect between learners and educators and other adult members of the ALA community.

The general perception of the participants is that their experiences at ALA have had a positive impact on them with regard to developing attitudes for enhancing a culture of peace. There is acknowledgement, however, that challenges to the enhancement of a culture of peace do arise in some situations. Instances that reflect this, is when individual learners appear to struggle with their academic workload and end up being stressed. Such learners are not able to keep up with the assignment schedules and they then find themselves in conflict situations. Preparing for standard tests may also be very stressful to some learners. The development of inner peace and self-fulfilment for such learners is slowed down (Gettman, 1987:34). It is notable that assessments in EL, which is one of the core subjects at ALA, is not test-based.

A few learners also struggle with meeting expectations the school have regarding rules and regulations. Sometimes there is an aspect of tension when such regulations are revised and learners feel that they were not sufficiently consulted in the decision making or when they feel there has not been clear communication on the particular issue.

Some participants perceived inter-house activities or competitions as areas which do not enhance a culture of peace, as these activities sometimes generate a lot of cheers and jeers. These are the kind of activities which, according to Danesh (2006:67), promote limited unity, as they entrench an identity-based worldview. The positive aspect of such activities is that the conflicts that arise from such activities provide learning opportunities for the learners, since it encourages an appreciation for healthy competition and the importance of the rules of fair play (UNESCO, 2002:6). In a way, these areas provide opportunities for experiential learning of self-regulation.

4.3.5 Perceptions of the ALA programme and education for peace

The mission of ALA is to equip learners with skills and attitudes that would enable them to contribute to transforming Africa into a peaceful and prosperous continent. Education for peace is concerned with skills, attitudes and knowledge that people, including learners, need to develop in

order to have an environment conducive to the creation of peace. Participants were asked to narrate any learning activities or situations in their ALA experiences, which they thought served the purpose of education for peace. Some of the responses are captured below.

One respondent commented:

EL first year is very good at that, because it teaches you how to work with the team and it teaches you about emotional intelligence, about compassion, understanding the needs of other people and communicating effectively so that there is no misunderstanding.

Another one observed:

ALA has tried to build us into people who use our knowledge for the benefit of other people. We are not supposed to use that knowledge to hurt other people and disturb peace, so that is number one. Two, I think the EL class curriculum is very peace-centred so to speak. We have several topics and sub-topics, dedicated to conflict resolution. And I think, we also have the student enterprise programmes where you get assimilation of what conflicts look like in the real world. And EL, department is also there to offer you the learning, the skills, you require to move through that conflicts without necessarily hurting anyone else. I think the wellness department has been very keen on letting us know how to manage our anger and to interact with people in a proper way without disturbing peace. And a couple of the seminal readings we have done and we will be doing are very foundational texts enabling us to think very deeply about what peace actually means. Whether peace is about having a perfect society or whether it is about handling conflicts in a way which is an effective way essentially...I mean those are my a lot experiences which has been geared towards ensuring that the education offered at ALA is peace-oriented and I think they have been quite effective.

Yet another participant said:

It goes down to, but again I am not repeating this, to the idea of open-mindedness and diversity that there is really at the core of what ALA is and so when you learn

to accept because really peace can only be needed where there is a great variety or differences, in my opinion, and so when you are in an environment where differences are encouraged and are actually celebrated and where differences are like you get to work around with different people or groups in a way that is healthy to both parties and that is beneficial to any member of the community then you get appreciated to a whole lot more and whether you are conscious of the transformations or not.

The Seminal Reading sessions were recognised as serving the purpose of enhancing education for peace. An educator interviewee gave an example of the Seminal Reading discussion around the theme of the ALA Founding Beliefs, where, in the text entitled, “Getting to the Heart of the Matter – An interview with Wangari Mathai”, the late Noble Peace Laureate, Wangari Maathai, gave an analogy of development being similar to the African three-legged stool. The educator said:

One of the things that Wangari Maathai said is part of seminal reading. She described development as similar to an African stool with three legs and she said one leg is peace, the other is good governance and the third one is good management of resources. I have adapted this. And I use it in my subject, Development Studies. I use it as one of the definitions of development. So because it is very important that you have peace; you cannot progress without peace, if there is war going on, there is no way that you can be able to build an industry. Some people may benefit from war. But generally, the majority tends to suffer during war situation. So peace is very important. I think peace is very important to be able to build the continent. So I think, activities, aim at promoting that peace, promoting cohesion among the people and being able to work together. So teamwork and that is why we do a lot of discussions in groups. In discussions, we give them tasks on their groups, group-based so that they can work together as a team. And that they don't see their differences, they explore on the strengths of each other.

As detailed earlier in this chapter, the other themes raised at these Seminal Readings and discussions included: overcoming preconceptions, identity, oppression and resistance, the good society and power, people and choices.

The participants also mentioned that EL activities such as coaching on crucial conversations, ways of giving effective feedback through the SBI approach also have a bearing on education for peace. In this regard a participant stated:

It teaches you how to work with the team and it teaches you about emotional intelligence, about compassion, understanding the needs of other people, and communicating effectively so that there is no misunderstanding.

An EL educator considered the “BUILD in a box” programme to have the potential for providing education for peace in the short-term or, what he termed, as a “front door” approach and, in the long term, or “back door” approach as follows:

In the front door approach you can have a BUILD in a box project, and the theme be something like ‘peace’. So wherever the students go, or whatever they may come up with is going to be a peace-building project or something of the sort. We can theme BUILD in a box projects in any way; we can theme them around agriculture, or unemployment and so on, depending on the needs of the stakeholders. For example, you can take it to the bordering towns of two warring communities in South Sudan, bring the people together and apply BUILD process in finding ways of peace-building. Then you can find out how that would look like.

The subtle back door or long-term approach would involve looking at root causes of violence or lack of peace. One of them is lack of economic opportunities. If BUILD in a box is effective; it can be effective in unlocking the potential of entrepreneurs or people who have entrepreneurial talents. Then if they go on to be entrepreneurs, and they make some money, they are less likely to be involved in violent activities, because they are less dissatisfied. They will have their own income and be less likely to be manipulated by governments, perhaps.

“BUILD in a box” is a tool kit which has the materials required to take a learner through a series of experiential activities in order to teach learners about the BUILD concept and how to apply the BUILD process. Learners in the ALA programme are equipped with skills that enable them to become facilitators of workshops on the BUILD process. In short, they are given an opportunity to be teachers of what they have been taught in the EL curriculum. With the help of the “BUILD in a box” tool kit, under the supervision of EL coaches, some learners have been able to facilitate workshops in two schools in Soweto. Learners have also been encouraged to organise such workshops or camps back in their own home countries, when they are on vacation. The idea is to reach a larger population of young people across the continent, to impart entrepreneurial skills and an entrepreneurial mind-set through the BUILD concept.

Another activity that had an element of peace education that was identified by some of the participants, is the annual celebration of World Peace Day at ALA. World Peace Day is an international day for peace. At ALA, the event is usually organised by members of the Student Government. One of the learners, who had participated in the organisation of the celebration, when asked what the event entailed, had the following to say:

What we basically did was that we all dressed in white because that is a signal for peace and purity and then it sadly coincided with the Westgate attack in Kenya. So, we used that also as an arena to talk about what happens and this is not a peaceful act whatsoever and during that day, we basically had some music and we took a huge peace picture from above the roof and at the end of it all, the students formed peace- circular and this is a peace sign and then we had a photo movement saying what peace meant where the people said in different languages and the end of it all people shared creative works, poems or anything they had collected on the subject of peace.

Yet another event that has an element of peace education is the annual workshop on the topic of “Appropriate Behaviour”, which involves day-long activities, including discussions in a number of forums, skits and presentations with the theme mainly around an awareness about sexual harassment. The activities provide opportunities for the participants to reflect on how they engage

with each other and, especially, with the opposite sex. They also provoke thoughts on how to be caring enough to confront inappropriate behaviour, in the spirit of being accountable to each other in the community, but maintaining the value of non-violence.

Learning activities in African Studies that focused on the different types of leaders, conflicts or the horrors of war were also perceived to serve the purpose of educating for peace. A learner interviewee, referring to his experiences in African Studies, said:

We learn about a lot of African dictators that have reigned on African countries since post-colonial era and what it means to be peaceful, what it means to be dictatorial leaders and how conflicts are resolved. And I think this is important. I feel like the African studies is very important in terms of creating an awareness of the need peace in the African continent.

The general perception of the participants was that activities that form part of the ALA programme are centred on peace principles in an implicit way. There seems to be less thinking of peace or explicit use of the word “peace” on a daily basis, although the environment enhances qualities of unity, a culture of peace and the development of critical thinking skills. As one educator interviewee puts it, “the students are taught how to create peace without being at the centre of conflict, as emphasis is placed on behaviour and habits of peacemakers”.

When the participants were asked to comment on whether the day-to-day activities in the ALA programme needed to have a stronger link to education for peace or not, the views were rather divergent. Some participants were of the view that there may be a need to make the learning of peace more explicit through the purposeful use of the word “peace” in activities and in documents. However, some participants felt that the implicit way in which the programme teaches peace was effective enough.

One participant commented:

I think education for peace is best approached in a subtle way and the most long-lasting education for peace lessons are those that are learnt tangentially. And I think that ALA is excellent on that. There are interesting messages that are conveyed through a whole range of things that we do here and I think that they add up to a very strong education for peace messages. So I would say, No! We don't need to have a stronger link to education for peace, because it is already strong.

Another one said:

If there is an opportunity to create a specific area to learn about education for peace, definitely. But I think it can also be done through enhancing it in all the classes that we have by making a deliberate effort to teach education for peace within what we are already doing, but kind of creating awareness, perhaps, by using the word peace. Because if we create another kind of entity, it is going to be overwhelming for the students.

Yet another one said:

I was thinking may be if peace can be a topic in seminal readings, a topic by itself where the students get to talk more and more about it and where we can discuss more peaceful solutions to violence or different problems in the continent.

And yet another one noted:

I think one way to do is to bring in more case studies around peace creation. I think we don't really talk about peace in African Studies, we talk about the national bodies intervening in conflict, but we don't really talk about...we talk about their coming and soldiers; peace-keeping forces. This is essentially the only thing we talk about, I would say.

Some participants felt that there was more emphasis on wealth creation rather than creation of peace. One participant had this to say:

I think somehow we are too focused on the prosperous part of the whole ALA mission, for most people it is exciting, because it is like it has immediate gratification to the person involved. The whole idea of helping Africans to be prosperous persons in a certain way. Somehow it is also helping me to be prosperous and seems to be a quicker again than peace. Peace seems to be something that is far-fetched, especially because most of us only think of peace (when) we think of the wars that are happening in many African countries and terrorism. It is a cause that looks too far to be solved, than getting money. So, I think most people a lot of times think about entrepreneurship; we think about the wealth creation more than conflict resolution or other peace activities. So, most of the time, as people, we talk of ways of generating revenue. It is very few times we ever talk of, or discuss them and link them to peace. Whenever we link things to issues that may be crucial and related to peace, it is always about how they prevent wars. I would say we talk about war, you know, because this country is in war, the economy is affected; the focus is in the economic line than peace and part of it.

Some participants were of the opinion that teaching of peace could be made visible by having some learners carry out peace projects in their home countries, identifying conflict problems and piloting solutions through partnerships with the local leaders.

4.3.5.1 Discussion

Education for peace is concerned with skills, attitudes and knowledge that learners or people need to enable a creation of peace. Peace, in this context means a condition in which individuals, families, groups or communities experience low levels of violence and engage in mutually harmonious relations (Anderson, 2004:103). Many aspects of the content and methodology used in the ALA programme tend to be in the line with education for peace. The general perception of the participants is that the programme is delivering education for peace, but this is done in an implicit or rather non-deliberate way. The education for peace is reflected in such areas as teamwork activities that is used across all subjects; the teaching of emotional intelligence; teaching

of the six core values of the school and the teaching of communication skills, specifically how to manage crucial conversations and provide effective feedback.

Helping learners develop a mind-set of using their knowledge for the benefit of “others”, as in the case in the BUILD process, or developing of skills for problem solving by attempting to understand and address the root causes of problems in communities is, in essence, peace education. This is in line with the Freire’s (1996:70) notion of education, as a transformative process where learners develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they live. The same attitude is reflected in the organisation of activities to mark World Peace Day, Africa Day and even in the “Appropriate Behaviour” workshops.

The culture of mutual respect among learners and between learners and the adults in the ALA community creates a conducive environment for the teaching of peace principles. However, there were divergent opinions as to whether this approach – the implicit approach – is the most effective option for the purpose of the mission.

Though some people thought that this was adequate, others were of the opinion that the explicit approach – through the deliberate use of the term “peace” as a theme in the content, in delivery of the content and in the day-to-day activities – would be more effective. Perhaps this would reinforce the notion that the educational curriculum should integrate and pay equal attention to all aspects of peace including the social, economic and political causes; moral and ethical dimensions and transcendent spiritual foundations (Danesh, 2006:62).

The data reveals that ALA provides learning opportunities for the development of critical thinking skills. At ALA learners are taught the principles involved in effective problem solving, that is, identifying a need or a problem; seeking to understand the need or the root causes of a problem; inventing a solution; iterating on this and delivering a solution, which is in line with the skills associated with problem-posing education as proposed by Freire (1996:70). The same skills are

enhanced through the discussion-based approach or Socratic method of teaching, which is evidently applied in this learning environment.

4.4 Summary

In this chapter, the findings that emerged from the analysis of documents, observations and interview data have been presented and discussed. The documents analysed included staff and faculty handbook, handbook for students and parents and curriculum documents for the core subjects in the ALA programme. The findings of classroom observations from Entrepreneurial Leadership, African Studies and Seminal readings were included. The interview data from both learners and educators were presented. The data was discussed with reference to peace principles – qualities of unity, critical thinking skills, conflict resolution and a culture of peace. In the next chapter, a summary of the findings of the study is provided. Conclusions are also drawn and recommendations made.

CHAPTER 5: A SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In chapter 1 of this study, an overview of the research was provided. This included the background of the study, problem statement and an outline of the research design. A literature study, outlining the causes of violence and violent conflicts, and the concept of peace education was done in chapter 2. This included the theoretical frameworks of peace education as put forward by Paulo Freire, Hossain Danesh and Maria Montessori. Chapter 3 focused on the methodological approach including design, methods of data collection and analysis. The data obtained from documents, observations and interviews was analysed and discussed in chapter 4. This chapter presents a summary of the findings, conclusion, recommendations and limitations of the study.

5.2 A summary of the findings

5.2.1 Qualities of unity

There are many aspects of the ALA programme that enhance qualities of unity. These include the celebration of diversity, the advisory family units, the high sense of school community and a shared sense of unity of purpose that is in alignment with the ALA's mission, its values and founding beliefs. There is clear evidence of the transformation of the mind-set of the members of the school community towards a unity-based worldview. However, the inter-house and inter-hall competitions, language barriers and ideological differences are perceived by some participants as hindrances to complete transformation. On the other hand, these activities provide opportunities for individuals to exercise the values of self-control, to exhibit emotional intelligence and develop an appreciation for the rules of fair play.

5.2.2 Critical thinking

The activities in the ALA programme provide opportunities for development of innovative and critical thinking. Dialogical relationships are established through a discussion-based approach to teaching, which is applied across the curriculum and, more particularly, in Seminal Readings. Such a learning environment helps to sharpen the critical consciousness of the learners. In EL, ALA values, including curiosity, is taught through seminars. The BUILD process, offered in EL is a typical example of problem-posing education. The activities also help in the development of cooperative and introspective skills.

5.2.3 Conflict resolution

Conflict resolution skills are taught through the interactive opportunities provided in group work. Learners are taught skills that advance human relations such as emotional intelligence, self-regulation, crucial conversations, communication and effective approaches to giving feedback. The school values, that is, humility, diversity and compassion, which are taught through seminars, contribute to creating an environment that is free of violence or violent conflicts. Learners are encouraged to voice their concerns and to be proactive on issues that will advance social justice. Sometimes this is perceived to create a sense of entitlement in some learners. There is evidence for the need to further improve the communication systems in order to minimise the chances of conflicts arising between various stakeholders in the ALA community.

5.2.4 A culture of peace

Qualitative values, attitudes and behaviour inherent in a culture of peace are promoted in the ALA school community. Learners are initiated into the system through an elaborate orientation programme. They built strong relationships among themselves and with the adult members of the community. Experiential and discussion-based learning of the values of integrity, curiosity, compassion, diversity, excellence and humility help to entrench the culture of peace. Some learners struggle academically and socially because of language barriers, having a poor academic background or they have not been equipped yet to meet the expectations of the school. Hence, they

have low self-esteem and are more susceptible to finding themselves in conflict situations. The inter-house and inter-hall competitions are also perceived to generate conflict situations.

5.2.5 The ALA programme and education for peace

The ALA mission is to equip learners with skills, values and attitudes that would enable them to contribute to transforming Africa into a peaceful and prosperous continent. Evidence points to the fact that the ALA programme is more explicitly geared towards addressing prosperity, rather than peace, or the lack thereof, on the continent. In other words, the teaching of peace principles is more implicit and not easily identified. As a value-driven school, ALA has incorporated into its curriculum content and delivery several aspects of the knowledge, skills and values that are in line with peace education principles. These include cooperative learning through teamwork activities, communication, emotional intelligence, self-regulation, crucial conversations and effective feedback. Values such as curiosity, diversity and compassion are inculcated in learners to enable them uphold these peace principles. The approach is implicit, as the curricular activities do not directly address the theme of peace.

5.3 Conclusions

From the evidence in the policy documents, observations, curricular documents and interviews, it can be concluded that the ALA programme includes several aspects of the principles associated with peace education, though the curriculum is not specifically tailored as a peace education project. Also, though it does not consider education for peace as a specific learning area, peace principles are non-deliberately incorporated into the curriculum in the form of skills, attitudes and values that learners acquire as they go through the programme. Activities in subjects such as EL, African Studies, Seminal Readings, and Writing and Rhetoric clearly offer some scope for education for peace. The teaching of peace principles does not specifically fall under any of the peace education approaches discussed in the literature review in chapter 2 (see section 2.4). The core curriculum does not seem to cover environmental education, which has become an important component of peace education.

The classroom environment and the culture of the school community inculcates in learners the qualities of unity through an emphasis on the six ALA values. Conflict resolution skills are developed as learners are taught emotional intelligence and self-regulation, among other interpersonal skills. Innovative and critical thinking skills are also inculcated in learners as they are taught to proactively interact with the world around them and to resist passively accepting the status quo.

5.4. Recommendations

5.4.1 Recommendations for ALA

- There may be a need to review the ALA programme with a view to laying more emphasis on explicit teaching of peace principles, rather than the implicit approach. As far as possible, every subject should be taught through the lens of peace.
- As much as the values and skills to which learners are exposed at ALA make the environment transformative, there is a need to invest on improvement of the communication channels. This would go a long way in further enhancing a culture of peace in the school community. The codes of conduct for learners and staff, including the school routine, should be drafted or reviewed with the input of all stakeholders. The consequences of contravening the same should be stated unambiguously. Through effective communication systems, it is possible to eradicate situations where learners appear to display an attitude which reflects a sense of entitlement. Effective communication systems would also improve staff-administration relations and minimise both real and unreal conflicts.
- There is need to mainstream the teaching of peacebuilding skills in the ALA programme, in alignment with the mission statement. In addition to the “BUILD in a box” toolkit, which has been essentially designed for use in outreach programmes, to teach human-centred entrepreneurship skills, there should be a “peace” toolkit. Such a toolkit would be a modified version of the “BUILD in a box” toolkit, and will be used in outreach programmes to teach peacebuilding skills. It could also be used to conduct workshops on peacebuilding

skills in regions or countries where the need for such workshops has been identified. In such workshops the young leaders from ALA would engage the youth in their countries on peace at a grassroots-level. Where necessary, this could lead to a national dialogue on peace.

- The school should continue to invest in appropriate teaching strategies and support structures that take into account the social, cultural and academic backgrounds of the learners, with a view to effectively deal with learners' needs and to minimise the chances of misbehaviour that may arise as a consequence of unmet needs.
- The evidences from the data show that the content and methodology used in ALA programme have resulted in, to a large extent, a culture of peace in the school community. The school environment is perceived to be safe and violence free. The school should consider opening its doors to educators from other schools that would wish to use the ALA programme as a benchmark with regard to introducing strategies to develop a culture of peace in schools.

5.4.2 Recommendations for further research

- A quantitative research should be carried out to establish the impact of the programme on the learners with regard to transformation of the mind-set of learners towards a unity-based worldview.
- A longitudinal study should be conducted on the graduates as they go through college and into the world of work. This should be done to establish whether the skills, values and attitudes gained from the programme create a lifelong positive impact on the graduates. It would also establish if the graduates of the programme stand out in terms of conflict resolution skills or non-violence.
- A comparative study should be done to compare the ALA programme and a regular school following a typical South African curriculum in Grades 11 and 12.

5.5 Contributions and limitations of this study

5.5.1 Contributions of this study

- This study adds to enquiry-based knowledge in the field of peace education.
- It highlights the need for schools to be established that are founded on key values which all learners and the adults in the school community would be expected to live up to.
- It also highlights the importance of skill-based teaching. Teaching interpersonal skills should form part of curricular and co-curricular activities. Establishing a culture of peace in schools will eventually translate to establishing a culture of peace in the broader society in generations to come.

5.5.2 Limitations of this study

- The research does not offer quantitative evidence, although it provides rich descriptions.
- The study may be criticised for its lack of generalisation, since it is a case study of only one school with a rather unique educational programme.
- It is not easy to ascertain if the participants interpreted all items correctly.
- Peace education is contextual in nature. The study has not addressed a specific context, as it does not focus on the problem of violence or violent conflicts in a specific region on the continent.
- Since the learners in the school are not drawn from a specific local community, but from all over the continent, it is difficult to gauge the impact of the ALA programme on its catchment area.

5.6 Summary

The findings of this qualitative case study of ALA show that the two-year programme is not specifically designed as a peace education programme, but the teaching of peace principles are non-deliberately embedded in the curriculum in the form of the skills, attitudes and values that learners acquire in their day-to-day activities at the academy. The researcher has made recommendations, to the school and to other stakeholders in education, based on the findings of interview data, observations and document analysis, and on his informed opinion. It is hoped that the results of this study will be useful in informing the decisions around incorporation of peace principles in educational programmes and around the promotion of a culture of peace in schools.

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