

**THE PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF FRIENDSHIP  
AMONGST ADOLESCENTS**

by

Colleen Marcelle Burton

submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of

**Master of Education – with specialisation in Guidance and Counselling**

at the

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**Supervisor: Prof H E Roets**

December 2011

## **DECLARATION**

Student number: **33762856**

I declare that **The Psycho-Educational Value of Friendship Amongst Adolescents** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

---

SIGNATURE

---

DATE

**The Psycho-Educational Value of Friendship Amongst Adolescents.**

## **ProQuest Information and Learning**

**Title:** The Psycho-Educational Value of Friendship Amongst Adolescents

**By:** C.M. Burton

**Degree:** MEd – with specialisation in Guidance and Counselling

**Promoter:** Prof. H.E. Roets

### **Summary:**

The focus of this dissertation revolved around the phenomenon of friendship, specifically amongst adolescents. Friendship is a universal phenomenon, that occurs in every race, culture and religion. Within friendship there are some universal aspects that were investigated. The research attempted to understand the phenomenon of friendship amongst the developmental phase of the adolescent. Furthermore, the effect of friendship on the adolescent's general psychological functioning had been investigated.

The research came to the conclusion that friendship does have a positive influence on an adolescent's general psychological functioning but that some psychological factors, such as communication skills, social skills and self confidence need to be developed to a certain extent in order for friendship to have a positive influence on the adolescent's psychological functioning. If these psychological factors are however not in place, friendship may to a certain extent highlight an adolescent's weaknesses and reinforce his/her social inadequacy, inferiority, lack of self confidence and negative self talk.

### **Key terms:**

Friendship; Adolescent; Psychological factors; Social skills; Loneliness; Attachment styles; Parental relationship styles; Alternatives to friendship; Friendship difficulties; Psychological functioning.

## TABLE OF CONTENT

### CHAPTER 1

<b>ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.1 AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>1.2 LITERATURE OVERVIEW</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1.3 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1.5 ASSUMPTIONS</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1.6 AIMS</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.7 RESEARCH STYLE</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.8 ETHICAL PRINCIPLES</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.9 DEFINITION OF TERMINOLOGY</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>1.10 PREVIEW OF CHAPTERS</b>	<b>13</b>

### CHAPTER 2

<b>LITERATURE STUDY ON THE PHENOMENON OF FRIENDSHIP</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>2.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.2 PARENTAL RELATIONSHIP STYLES AND ROLES</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.2.1 Parental relationship styles</b>	<b>16</b>
<i>2.2.1.1 Authoritarian parental style</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>2.2.1.2 Permissive parental style</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>2.2.1.3 Authoritative parental style</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>2.2.1.4 Negligent parental style</i>	<i>18</i>
<b>2.2.2 Parental roles</b>	<b>19</b>
<i>2.2.2.1 Different parental roles of the father and the mother</i>	<i>19</i>
<b>2.3 ATTACHMENT STYLES</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2.3.1 Secure attachment style</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.3.2 Avoidant attachment style</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2.3.3 Anxious or ambivalent attachment style</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2.4 THE NEED FOR FRIENDSHIP</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>2.4.1 Belonging and a sense of reliable alliance</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>2.4.2 Emotional integration and stability</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>2.4.3 Opportunity for communication about ourselves</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>2.4.4 Provision of assistance and physical support</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>2.4.5 Reassurance of our worth and the opportunity to help others</b>	<b>26</b>

<b>2.4.6</b>	<b>Personality support</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>2.5</b>	<b>DEVELOPMENT OF THE ADOLESCENT</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>2.5.1</b>	<b>The global development of the adolescent</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>2.5.2</b>	<b>Erikson's stages of psycho-social development</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>2.5.3</b>	<b>Development of friendship in adolescence</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>2.6</b>	<b>LONELINESS</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>2.6.1</b>	<b>The meaning of loneliness</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>2.6.2</b>	<b>Kinds of loneliness</b>	<b>37</b>
<i>2.6.2.1</i>	<i>Loneliness of the inner self</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>2.6.2.2</i>	<i>Physical loneliness</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>2.6.2.3</i>	<i>Emotional loneliness</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>2.6.2.4</i>	<i>Social loneliness</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>2.6.2.5</i>	<i>Spiritual loneliness</i>	<i>39</i>
<b>2.6.3</b>	<b>Loneliness and self-esteem</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>2.6.4</b>	<b>Loneliness and the adolescent</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>2.7</b>	<b>ALTERNATIVES TO FRIENDSHIP</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>2.7.1</b>	<b>Other relationships</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>2.7.2</b>	<b>Non-social alternatives</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>2.8</b>	<b>FRIENDSHIP DIFFICULTIES</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>2.8.1</b>	<b>Problems initiating a friendship</b>	<b>44</b>
<i>2.8.1.1</i>	<i>Social anxiety</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>2.8.2.1</i>	<i>Poor body image</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>2.8.1.3</i>	<i>Poor social skills</i>	<i>45</i>
<b>2.8.2</b>	<b>General problems with friendship</b>	<b>46</b>
<i>2.8.2.1</i>	<i>Low close esteem</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>2.8.2.2</i>	<i>Alienation</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>2.8.2.3</i>	<i>Mistrust</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>2.8.2.4</i>	<i>Fear of self-disclosure</i>	<i>47</i>
<i>2.8.2.5</i>	<i>Pacing problems</i>	<i>48</i>
<i>2.8.2.6</i>	<i>Unrealistic expectations</i>	<i>48</i>
<i>2.8.2.7</i>	<i>Low assertiveness</i>	<i>48</i>
<i>2.8.2.8</i>	<i>Restriction of affect</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>2.8.2.9</i>	<i>Problems in friendship selection</i>	<i>49</i>
<i>2.8.2.10</i>	<i>Fear of entrapment</i>	<i>49</i>
<b>2.9</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>50</b>

<b>CHAPTER 3</b>	
<b>RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>3.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>3.2 RESEARCH AIMS</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>3.3 RESEARCH STYLE</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>3.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLE</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>3.5 DATA COLLECTION</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>3.5.1 The questionnaire</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>3.5.2 The interview</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>3.6 DATA ANALYSIS</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>3.7 ETHICAL PRINCIPLES</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>3.9 CONCLUSION</b>	<b>68</b>
 <b>CHAPTER 4</b>	
<b>RESEARCH FINDINGS</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>4.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>4.2 DATA COLLECTED</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>4.2.1 The questionnaire</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>4.2.2 The interview</b>	<b>76</b>
<i>4.2.2.1 Respondent A</i>	<i>77</i>
<i>4.2.2.2 Respondent B</i>	<i>79</i>
<i>4.2.2.3 Respondent C</i>	<i>81</i>
<i>4.2.2.4 Respondent D</i>	<i>85</i>
<i>4.2.2.5 Respondent E</i>	<i>88</i>
<b>4.3 INTEGRATION OF DATA</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>4.4 INTERPRETATION OF DATA</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>4.4.1 Parental relationship styles</b>	<b>105</b>
<i>4.4.1.1 Authoritarian parental style</i>	<i>106</i>
<i>4.4.1.2 Permissive parental style</i>	<i>106</i>
<i>4.4.1.3 Authoritative parental style</i>	<i>107</i>
<i>4.4.1.4 Negligent parental style</i>	<i>107</i>
<b>4.4.2 Attachment styles</b>	<b>108</b>
<i>4.4.2.1 Secure attachment style</i>	<i>109</i>
<i>4.4.2.2 Avoidant attachment style</i>	<i>109</i>
<i>4.4.2.3 Anxious of ambivalent attachment style</i>	<i>110</i>

<b>4.4.3</b>	<b>Needs for friendship</b>	111
4.4.3.1	<i>Belonging and a sense of reliable alliance</i>	112
4.4.3.2	<i>Emotional integration and stability</i>	112
4.4.3.3	<i>Opportunity for communication of ourselves</i>	112
4.4.3.4	<i>Provision of assistance and physical support</i>	113
4.4.3.5	<i>Reassurance of our worth and the opportunity to help others</i>	113
4.4.3.6	<i>Personality support</i>	113
<b>4.4.4</b>	<b>Loneliness</b>	114
4.4.4.1	<i>Loneliness of the inner self</i>	115
4.4.4.2	<i>Physical loneliness</i>	115
4.4.4.3	<i>Emotional loneliness</i>	115
4.4.4.4	<i>Social loneliness</i>	116
4.4.4.5	<i>Spiritual loneliness</i>	116
<b>4.4.5</b>	<b>Alternatives to friendship</b>	116
4.4.5.1	<i>Other relationships</i>	117
4.4.5.2	<i>Non-social alternatives</i>	118
<b>4.4.6</b>	<b>Friendship difficulties</b>	118
4.4.6.1	<i>Problems initiating a friendship</i>	120
4.4.6.2	<i>General problems with friendship</i>	122
<b>4.4.7</b>	<b>Summary</b>	126
<b>4.4.8</b>	<b>General psychological functioning</b>	127
<b>4.4.9</b>	<b>Meaning of friendship</b>	128
<b>4.4.10</b>	<b>Influence friendship has on the respondents' general psychological functioning</b>	128
<b>4.5</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	129

## CHAPTER 5

<b>EVALUATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	132
<b>5.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	133
<b>5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE INVESTIGATION</b>	133
<b>5.3 FINDINGS OF THE LITERATURE RESEARCH</b>	134
<b>5.3.1 The phenomenon of friendship</b>	134
5.3.1.1 <i>Parental relationship styles</i>	134
5.3.1.2 <i>Attachment styles</i>	135
5.3.1.3 <i>Needs friendship addresses</i>	136
5.3.1.4 <i>Loneliness</i>	137
5.3.1.5 <i>Alternatives to friendship</i>	137

5.3.1.6	<i>Friendship difficulties</i>	137
<b>5.3.2</b>	<b>The adolescent developmental phase</b>	139
5.3.2.1	<i>Physical development</i>	140
5.3.2.2	<i>Cognitive development</i>	140
5.3.2.3	<i>Social development</i>	140
5.3.2.4	<i>Affective development</i>	140
<b>5.4</b>	<b>FINDINGS OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH</b>	141
5.4.1	<b>Parental relationship styles</b>	142
5.4.2	<b>Attachment styles</b>	143
5.4.3	<b>Needs for friendship</b>	144
5.4.4	<b>Loneliness</b>	145
5.4.5	<b>Alternatives to friendship</b>	145
5.4.6	<b>Friendship difficulties</b>	146
5.4.7	<b>Meaning of friendship</b>	148
5.4.8	<b>Influence friendship has on the respondents' general psychological functioning</b>	148
<b>5.5</b>	<b>LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH</b>	149
<b>5.6</b>	<b>CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY</b>	150
<b>5.7</b>	<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY</b>	151
<b>5.8</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	152

## **TABLES**

1.1	<b>Major themes in current literature</b>	5
2.1	<b>Erikson's stages of psycho-social development</b>	30
2.2	<b>Stages of healthy adolescent development</b>	31
3.1	<b>Quantitative- versus qualitative research style</b>	55
3.2	<b>Data collection techniques</b>	58
3.3	<b>Styles of interviewing</b>	63
4.1	<b>Biographical data of research population</b>	73
4.2	<b>The responses of the 20 respondents on the close-ended questions in the Friendship Elements Questionnaire</b>	74
4.3	<b>Percentages ascribed to each of the individual questions of the Friendship Elements Questionnaire</b>	91
4.4	<b>A combined list of responses on the different elements from the 20 respondents who completed the Friendship Elements Questionnaire</b>	96
4.5	<b>Integration of the data obtained from the 20 respondents who completed the Friendship Elements Questionnaire</b>	103
4.6	<b>Parental relationship styles of the five respondents' parents collected from the individual interviews</b>	105
4.7	<b>Attachment styles of the five respondents' parents collected from the individual interviews</b>	108



4.8	Needs of friendship for the five respondents collected from the individual interviews	111
4.9	Data collected from the five respondents in the individual interviews surrounding loneliness	114
4.10	Data collected from the five respondents in the individual interviews surrounding alternatives to friendship	117
4.11	Data collected from the five respondents in the individual interviews surrounding friendship difficulties	119

## **FIGURES**

2.1	Parental relationship styles	16
2.2	The different attachment styles	20
2.3	Needs that friendship address	24
2.4	Patterns of friendship within a social network amongst adolescents	34
2.5	The five specific kinds of loneliness according to Gaev	38
2.6	The difficulties according to Young's Cognitive developmental view of friendships	43
2.7	Difficulties prohibiting an individual from initiating a friendship	44
2.8	General problems individuals experience with friendship	45
4.1	Integration of data from Respondent A in the individual interview	98
4.2	Integration of data from Respondent B in the individual interview	99
4.3	Integration of data from Respondent C in the individual interview	100
4.4	Integration of data from Respondent D in the individual interview	101
4.5	Integration of data from Respondent E in the individual interview	102
4.6	Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire filled in by the 20 respondents involving the different parental relationship styles	105
4.7	Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire filled in by the 20 respondents involving the different attachment styles	108
4.8	Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire filled in by the 20 respondents involving the different needs of friendship	111
4.9	Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire filled in by the 20 respondents involving loneliness	114
4.10	Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire filled in by the 20 respondents surrounding alternatives to friendship	117
4.11	Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire filled in by the 20 respondents involving friendship difficulties	119

<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	154
---------------------	-----

## **ANNEXURE**

<b>A</b>	<b>Friendship Elements Questionnaire</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>Letter of Consent</b>

## CHAPTER 1

### ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

*"A friend is someone who knows  
The song in your heart  
And can sing it back to you  
When you have forgotten  
The words."*

(fbru@chevrontexaco.com)

# CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

## 1.1 AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM

*"The glory of friendship is not the outstretched hand, nor the kindly smile, nor the joy of companionship; it is the spiritual inspiration that comes to one when you discover that someone else believes in you and is willing to trust you with a friendship."*

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

(Norberg, 2004)

Emerson was a well-acclaimed American essayist, philosopher and poet. When I read this quote of him, it made me think why such a highly intellectual person as himself would feel the necessity to ponder and write about the topic of friendship. Thinking about reasons for Emerson to write about the topic of friendship, I did some research on the internet about his literary works and could not find any other significant literary works of him on the topic of friendship. (Norberg 2004)

Researching his autobiography I found a very interesting piece of information regarding his personal life. I read that during a winter trip around 1826, Emerson made the acquaintance of Prince Achille Murat to St. Augustine in Florida. Murat, the nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, was only two years his senior and they became extremely good friends and enjoyed each others company. (Norberg 2004) This information made me think about how close these two friends must have been and I wondered if this dear friendship could have inspired him to write this famous quote.

Pondering on the topic of friendship, I came to the realisation of the intense impact that friendship has on one's life. I am of the opinion that friendship serves as a learning curve for all other relationships outside of one's family. I think that building and maintaining intimate friendships enable us to relate effectively with the opposite sex and later in life with our marriage partner. I also think that friendship helps us to be able to get along with others in school, work or in church, to work effectively in groups and to be able to communicate clearly with our authoritative figures and leaders in our society.

Reading further on the topic of friendship I found that the ability to make friends and to sustain a friendship is actually not instinctive, genetically programmed or inherited (Schneider, Attili, Nadel and Weissberg, 1989:34). According to these authors the ability to make friends comes through social experiences during childhood and adolescence. Initiating and sustaining a friendship to them mean that it has to be acquired, learned carefully and practiced which involves a reasonable level of self-esteem and an understanding of the meaning of justice and teamwork, the ability to use and comprehend non-verbal behaviour, acknowledgement of the activities that suit a particular level of

style of relationship, trust, intimacy, self-disclosure and an ability to give in return. The above mentioned information made me think that if the ability to initiate and sustain a friendship is actually not instinctive but learned and acquired through socialization, than to me, it shows the potential for personal growth and development in a person's personal life, especially if a person mastered the skill of building healthy friendships.

While working with children and adolescents in an educational setting as an Intern Educational Psychologist, I became aware of the significant difference between the emotional adjustment and well-being of children and adolescents who initiate and sustain friendships easily and those who have difficulty in initiating and sustaining friendships. To me it seems as if children and adolescents who are able to initiate and sustain friendships without difficulty are better adjusted as youths. I am of the opinion that children and adolescents who form friendships easily have a better self-esteem and self-confidence than children and adolescents who have difficulty in making friends. Through observation and informal discussions with children and adolescents who find it difficult to make friends, I got the impression that they are more insecure, anxious and lacking self-confidence than the children and adolescents who find it easy to make friends.

During my observation of children and adolescents' ability to form friendships, I noticed that friendship becomes truly significant in the adolescent years. Bukowski's (1993:23) research proved that one of the most challenging developmental periods of the life span is in fact early adolescence. In his research he concluded that in the adolescent phase the nature of interpersonal relationships changes as the adolescent begins to function in a variety of new environments and as part of these changes, the establishment of healthy relations with peers and the development of a sense of emotional well-being become increasingly important. Reading the abovementioned conclusion of Bukowski I found myself more fascinated by the idea of friendship in the adolescent years than in early childhood.

I started to question the value that friendship might have on an adolescent's psychological functioning. I began to think that should there be a link between the ability of an adolescent to initiate and sustain a friendship with his peers and the psychological well-being of the adolescent, it would be of great importance to all educational psychologists to recognize this link and assist those adolescents with difficulties initiating and maintaining friendships.

The above mentioned contributed to the following pre-scientific questions, which were formulated in accordance to this research namely:

- What does the phenomenon friendship entail?
- At what age do friendships form?

- Does the phenomenon friendship hold psychological value to the adolescent and if so, what aspects of his/her psychological well-being are positively influenced?
- Does the parents' parental relationship style towards the adolescent influences the adolescent's ability to form friendships?
- How do the different attachment styles influence the adolescent's ability to initiate and sustain friendships?
- Does the role of the father and mother in the rearing of their children play a role in the adolescent's ability to initiate and sustain a friendship?
- What are the needs that friendship fulfils for the adolescent?
- How does the unique developmental stage of the adolescent influences the ability to initiate and sustain a friendship?
- What does the opposite of having friends entail, namely being lonely, and what effect does it have on the adolescent's psychological well-being?
- What are the different types of loneliness an adolescent can experience?
- What are the alternatives to friendship?
- What effect do alternatives to friendship have on the adolescent?
- What are the problems an adolescent can experience with friendship?
- What effect does friendship have on the adolescent's self-concept, self-respect, and self knowledge?
- What effect does friendship have on the adolescent's communication skills?
- How does having friends influence the adolescent's motivation, acceptance of challenges, coping with competition and self-actualization?
- What role does friendship play in the setting of healthy boundaries and assertiveness?
- What effect does friendship have on the adolescent's thinking patterns and self-talk?
- Does having friends influence the adolescent's other relationships for example his/her relationship with his/her family?
- Does friendship influences an adolescent's independency, ability to take responsibility and adaptation to new situations?
- Does friendship have an effect on an adolescent's conflict management, resilience and emotional control?
- What influence does friendship have on the adolescent's career choice?

While wondering about the phenomenon friendship a great number of questions came to mind as seen in the above list. I will however only address some of the questions, as I will show in my demarcation of this study later in Chapter 1.

In the following section I would like to give an overview of literature currently available on the topic of friendship.

## 1.2 LITERATURE OVERVIEW

In an overview of the literature available on the topic, it appeared to me as if there is a variety of literature on friendship during childhood but it seemed to me as if relatively little is written about friendship amongst adolescents. The literature sources on this topic are also very outdated. Laursen (2007:1) points out that theory of adolescent development, as well as research, have concentrated almost exclusively on changes within the family unit. He suggests that due to a lack of sufficient theory, the phenomenon friendship has been neglected. He further states that this problem is aggravated by the fact that it is slightly more difficult to research friendship amongst adolescents, as they are more prone to privacy than younger children are. Laursen (2007:1) makes the following direct statement while referring to the lack of research according to him on the phenomenon on friendship in the adolescent developmental phase:

*“Whatever the reason for neglect, efforts to understand close friendship during adolescence are long overdue.”*

Furthermore Derlega and Winstead (1986:vi) note the following on the phenomenon of friendship:

*“A neglected topic in the field of personal relationships has been the study of friendships. Social psychologists have studied how and why individuals are attracted to one another and the processes of interaction to ongoing friendships”.*

Reading these quotes I came to the conclusion that there might be a need to research friendship in the adolescent phase.

The following table gives a summary of the available literature on friendship and adolescence.

**Table 1.1 Major themes in current literature**

THEME	SOURCE	FOCUS
Relationship	Amongst others: Erwin, P. (1998) Hendrick, C and Hendrick, S. (2000) Finkel, JE and Vohs, KD. (2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Attachment and later relationships</li><li>• Patterns of social interaction</li><li>• Relationship problems</li><li>• Peer relationships</li></ul>

	Duck, S. (1991) Engels, CM, Kerr, M and Stattin, H. (2008) Finkel. EJ and Vohs, KD. (2006) Alanen, L and Mayall, B. (2001)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interpersonal conflict</li> </ul>
	<b>Amongst others:</b> Feeney, JA and Noller,P. (2006) Duck, S. (1991) Swoszowski, S and Van House, L (1993) Bass, L. (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent-adolescent relationship</li> <li>• Emotion and cognition in close relationships</li> <li>• Needs and benefits of close relationships</li> <li>• Sexuality in close relationships</li> </ul>
	<b>Amongst others:</b> Willmott, P. (1987) Duck, S. (1991) Swoszowski, S and Van House, L (1993) Corsano, W. (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social relationships with strangers, friends, neighbours and relatives</li> </ul>
<b>Friendship</b>	<b>Amongst others:</b> Darlon, EB. (2007) Hanish, LD and Rodkin, PC. (2007) Laursen, B and Zukauskiene, R. (2007) Willmott, P. (1987) Engstrom, TW. (1985) McConnon, S (1989a) McConnon, S (1989b) Demer, M and Özdemer, M. (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meaning of friendship</li> <li>• Friendship networks</li> <li>• Friendship patterns</li> </ul>
	<b>Amongst others:</b> Hibbs, D and Jensen, SJ. (2005) Alanen, L and Mayall, B. (2001) Bass, L. (2005) Jenks, C. (2005) Prout, A. (2004) Prout, A and Hallet, C. (2003) Keenan, T. (2002) Hauser, ST. (1991)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent-assisted friendship training</li> </ul>
	<b>Amongst others:</b> Gaev, DM. (1976) Duck, S. (1991)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendship and belonging</li> </ul>
	<b>Amongst others:</b> Gaev, DM. (1976) Schultz, H, Selman L and Watts, C. (1997)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meaning of loneliness</li> <li>• Loss of intimacy</li> </ul>
	<b>Amongst others:</b> Jensen, AL and Larson, RW. (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendship and human development</li> </ul>

	Gaev, DM. (1976) Clarke-Stewart, A and Dunn, J. (2006)	
	<b>Amongst others:</b> Lewis, M and Rosenblum, LA. (1975) Gaev, DM. (1976) Hanish, LD and Rodkin, PC. (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's friendships</li> </ul>
	<b>Amongst others:</b> McGinnis, AL. (1998) Gaev, DM. (1976) Steyn, ST. (2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Factors influencing one's friendship</li> <li>• Intimacy and love</li> <li>• Rejection and friendship</li> <li>• Negative emotions surrounding friendship</li> </ul>
	<b>Amongst others:</b> Donahue, M, Wong, YL. (2002)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendship and learning disabilities</li> </ul>
	<b>Amongst others:</b> Allan, G. (1985) Gaev, DM. (1976) Smoller, J and Youniss, J. (1985)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendship in old age</li> <li>• Gender and friendship</li> <li>• Friendship and social organisation</li> </ul>
<b>Adolescence</b>	<b>Amongst others:</b> Darlon, EB. (2007) Hanish, LD and Rodkin, PC. (2007) Laursen, B and Zukauskienė, R. (2007) Cotterell, J. (2007) Rice, FP. (2008) Santrock, JW. (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adolescent in social context</li> <li>• Physical issues</li> <li>• Sexual values and behaviour</li> <li>• Self concept</li> <li>• Work and vocation</li> <li>• Substance abuse</li> <li>• Adolescent development</li> </ul>
	<b>Amongst others:</b> Darlon, EB. (2007) Blokland, A and Nieuwbeerta, P. (2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implications of friendship networks for adolescent delinquency</li> </ul>
	<b>Amongst others:</b> Hanish, LD and Rodkin, PC. (2007) Laursen, B and Zukauskienė, R. (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Antisocial behaviour and friendship</li> <li>• Friendship patterns and bullying behaviour</li> <li>• Peer rejection</li> </ul>
	<b>Amongst others:</b> Hibbs, DE and Jensen, PS. (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adolescent disorders</li> </ul>
	<b>Amongst others:</b> Derlega, J. and Winstead, BA. (1986) Gaev, DM. (1976) Moshman, D. (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategies in developing friendships</li> <li>• Interracial friendships</li> <li>• Friendship in the workplace</li> <li>• People without friends</li> </ul>
	<b>Amongst others:</b> Laursen, B. (1993) Gaev, DM. (1976) McCormick, C. and Pressley M. (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close friendship in adolescence</li> <li>• Friendship and imaginary companions</li> <li>• Conflict management among adolescents</li> </ul>



In the overview of the existing literature it appeared to me as if the research focuses tremendously on relationships as a phenomenon. I am of the opinion that a need to research friendship as a phenomenon exists, specifically friendship amongst adolescents. I also noted a lack of literature on the themes covering the link between friendship and the psychological well-being of an individual, in this instance the adolescent.

These are some more specific topics I personally feel are in need of more in-depth research:

The effect that friendship has on the adolescent's:

- self-concept, self-confidence, self-respect and self knowledge
- communication skills
- motivation and self-actualisation
- assertiveness and setting of healthy boundaries
- resilience
- problem solving and decision making
- conflict management and emotional control
- thinking patterns and self-talk
- other relationships
- adaptability to new situations
- independency
- acceptance of responsibilities
- acceptance of challenges
- coping with competition
- need for recognition
- development of trust
- norms and values
- role identification
- career choice

### **1.3 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY**

For the purpose of this research, I intend to focus mainly on the following themes:

- Friendship as a phenomenon, with specific reference to friendship amongst adolescents.
- The effect that friendship has on the adolescent's psychological functioning.

## 1.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem I wish to address is as follows:

**What is the psychological value of friendship amongst adolescents?**

I am of the opinion that this problem promotes the investigation of further aspects namely:

- Friendship as a phenomenon.
- Adolescence as a developmental phase.
- The role the adolescent's parents parental relationship- and attachment style plays.
- The different roles of the mother and father in childrearing.
- The different aspects surrounding the psychological value of friendship.
- Loneliness as the opposite pole on the friendship continuum.
- Alternatives to friendship.
- Problems with friendship.

## 1.5 ASSUMPTIONS

Given the demarcation of this research, I would like to assume the following:

- It may be empirically determined which psychological factors are present in initiating and sustaining a friendship.
- It may be assumed that by having friendships, the adolescent benefits psychologically.
- It may be assumed that the psychological factors which will benefit from the ability to successfully initiate and sustain a friendship would include the following: self-concept, self-confidence, self-respect, self knowledge, motivation, emotional control, assertiveness, setting of healthy boundaries, resilience, problem solving, decision making, conflict management, positive thinking patterns and self-talk, self-actualization, independency, acceptance of challenges, positive role identification and making a career choice.
- It may be shown that adolescents struggling to initiate and sustain friendships are less emotionally well adapted than those who make friends easily.

## 1.6 AIMS

From an educational-psychological perspective I would like to realize the following aims with this research:

- To do a literature research on the phenomenon of friendship.
- To do a literature research on the adolescent developmental phase.
- To do an empirical research with the aim to determine the psycho-educational value of friendship amongst adolescents.
- Set some recommendations for further study.

## 1.7 RESEARCH STYLE

All data, factual information and human knowledge must ultimately reach the researcher either as words or as numbers. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) distinguishes quantitative research methodologies as dealing with data that is predominantly numerical and qualitative research methodologies as dealing with data that is predominantly verbal. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:14) confirms that qualitative- and quantitative research differs according to the manner in which the data is collected and analyzed, but also according to the assumptions made about the world and the aim of the research.

I am of the opinion that the research question namely: *“What is the psychological value of friendship amongst adolescents?”*, will be best addressed through a quantitative data collection method within a qualitative study. Friendship, according to me, is an interactive process and affected by the adolescent’s circumstances. I think that the phenomenon of friendship cannot be researched without paying attention to the adolescent’s different values. According to me, no two adolescents will view or experience the phenomenon of friendship in the same manner, making each experience authentic.

With the above mentioned in mind, Berg (2007:8) states that qualitative research seeks to answer questions by examining various social settings and the individuals who inhabit these settings. Morse and Richards (2007:47) confirm that the data that qualitative research seeks to understand is complex and can only be approached in context, since it seeks to understand how people make sense of the world and how they experience events. Therefore, the quantitative data collection method within a qualitative study will be used in this research. The research style will be discussed more in detail in Chapter 3 of this research (Cf. 3.2 and 3.3).

## 1.8 ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

The term ethics comes from the Greek word *ethos*, meaning character. According to Israel and Hay (2006:12) ethics *“is concerned with perspectives on right and proper conduct”*. Sieber (1992:3) refers to ethics as the systematic study of value concepts – good, bad, right, wrong – and the general principles that justify applying these concepts.

The following ethical principles listed by Burton and Bartlett (2009) will be applied when doing the empirical research: Informed consent, confidentiality and privacy, honesty and openness, access to findings and avoiding harm. Each of these ethical principles, that will be adhered to in this research, will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3 (Cf. 3.6). The reliability and trustworthiness of the study will be discussed as this is a very important aspect of any research.

## 1.9 DEFINITION OF TERMINOLOGY

In this section I would like to clarify the following terms for the purpose of this research:

### **Psycho-educational (or psycho-pedagogical)**

Bodenstein, Landman and Van Rensburg (1994:202) state that psycho-educational or psycho-pedagogical is the study of the psychological life of the child in an educational setting. Psycho-educational is the study of the self-actualization of the child's psychological life in terms of his experiences, significance attribution and involvement in an environment of assistance from his educators either primary or secondary.

### **Friendship**

According to the Concise Oxford English Dictionary (Colman 2009), a friend can be defined as *“. . . a person with whom one enjoys mutual affection and regard, a person who is a sympathizer or helper, someone who is on the same side as you”*.

Wiseman (1986:193) views friendship as a voluntary bond between two people with an unwritten contract between them which includes a number of ideals. In ideal circumstances a friend according to Wiseman is an open, affectionate, trusting, helpful and reliable companion who has respect for the other person's privacy, does not criticize the other in public and who does favours to the other and return the ones that the companion does to him/her.

The definitions for friendship available in the literature are numerous but it appeared to me that there is one very important aspect that all had in common which is that it is a relationship between two

people and that this relationship is formed by free choice on both sides. It is important to note that this research will be based on the western understanding of friendship.

## **Adolescence**

Louw (1998:393) states that adolescence is the developmental stage between childhood and adulthood. The term adolescence comes from the Latin word “*adolescere*”, which means “*to grow up*” or “*to grow up to adulthood*”. According to Louw the age, which marks the beginning of adolescence, varies between 11 and 13 years and the age which marks adolescence end varies between 17 and 21 years, depending on cultural differences. Louw states that the secondary school years can also be called the adolescent years which can be described according to him as change in most developmental facets. Therefore, Louw concluded that the developmental stage in terms of specific developmental characteristics, gives a better indication in which developmental stage the individual currently finds himself/herself.

The Oxford Dictionary of Psychology (Colman: 2009) defines adolescence as follows: “*The period of development from the onset of puberty to the attainment of adulthood, beginning with the appearance of secondary sexual characteristics, usually between 11 and 13 years of age, continuing through the teenage years, and terminating legally at the age of majority, usually at 18 years of age.*”

In Louw’s (1998:394) research on human development he states that adolescence starts in puberty – the stage in which rapid bodily growth takes place, the reproduction organs start to function, sexual maturity are reached and the secondary sexual characteristics are present. He states that the end of adolescence is determined by not such visible characteristics as the beginning of the developmental stage. Socially the end of adolescence is characterised according to his research by independency, self sufficiency and acceptance of adult roles, for example a career. He states in his research that psychologically the end of adolescence is characterised by certainty of self identity, emotional independency from parents, development of own value system and the ability to initiate an intimate adult relationship. According to Louw (1998:394) the tendency is to describe adolescence in early adolescence (10 to 15 years) and late adolescence (16 to 22 years).

In the following section a preview of the contents of the chapters following Chapter 1 will be given.

## **1.10 PREVIEW OF CHAPTERS**

### **Chapter 2: Literature study on the phenomenon of friendship and the adolescent phase**

Chapter 2 will form a literature study on the phenomenon of friendship and the developmental stage of the adolescent. The chapter will also discuss the different types of parental relationship styles and how each style affects the adolescent's style and the range of relationships he/she is capable of developing later in life. Information on the different parental roles and attachment styles will be given as well as the influence these styles have on the adolescent's ability to initiate and sustain friendships. The western understanding of parenting will be used in this research. The different needs that friendship can fulfil and alternatives to friendship will be viewed. Information regarding the development of the adolescent as a developmental phase in the human development will be given. The chapter will also focus on the difficulties initiating friendships as well as some general problems with friendships.

### **Chapter 3: Research design and method**

The research style in this research will be mainly qualitative but the quantitative research style will also be incorporated (mixed method). In Chapter 3 a description of the research methodology to be used in the empirical study, including the aim and motivation of the empirical study will be given in detail (Cf 3.2 and 3.3). The actual research design to be followed will also be given in detail including the population and sample, data collection techniques, method of data analysis as well as the ethical principles which will be adhered to.

### **Chapter 4: Research findings**

Chapter 4 will discuss the research findings. The literature given in Chapter 2 will serve as a foundation of knowledge on which the empirical research rests which will ensure the trustworthiness of the research. This chapter will include the presentation, integration as well as the interpretation of the quantitative- and qualitative data obtained through a questionnaire and individual interviews. Conclusions made from the data obtained in the empirical research will also be given in this chapter.

### **Chapter 5: Evaluations, conclusions and recommendations**

Lastly, Chapter 5 will present a synopsis of both the literature- and the empirical research. The chapter will also include the conclusions that may be drawn from the qualitative- and quantitative research. A list of some of the limitations experienced while conducting the research will be given. Some contributions the study made, as well as recommendations for future research will be offered prior to the concluding remark.

## CHAPTER 2

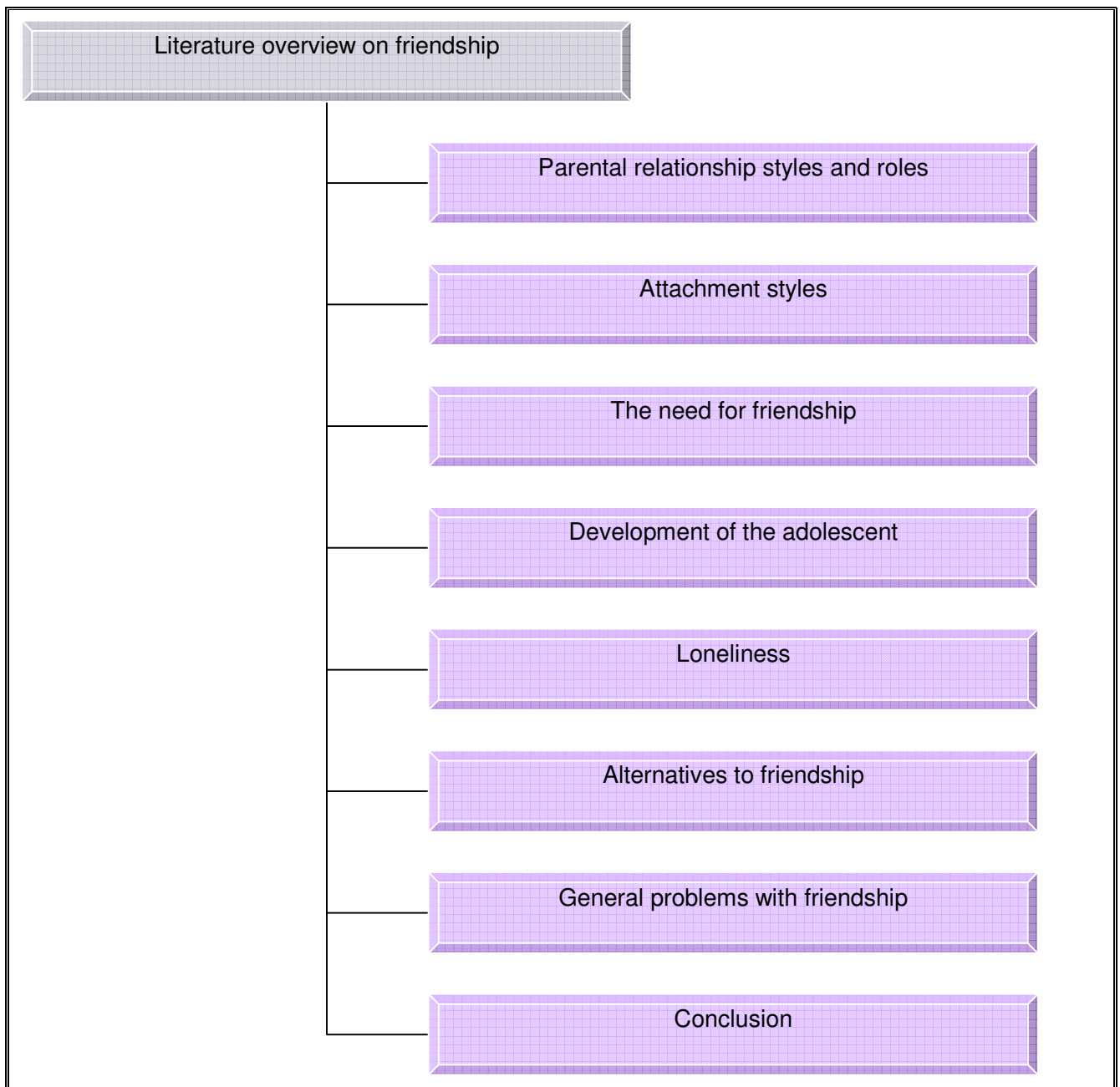
### LITERATURE STUDY ON THE PHENOMENON OF FRIENDSHIP

*"Don't walk in front of me,  
I may not follow.  
Don't walk behind me,  
I may not lead.  
Walk beside me and  
Be my friend."*

(fbru@chevrontexaco.com)

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE STUDY ON THE PHENOMENON OF FRIENDSHIP

### Content of Chapter





## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 will attempt to give an overview on the literature found on friendship and on the developmental phase adolescence. It is important to take note that this chapter as well as the discussions around friendship are based on a western understanding of friendship and parenting. In an overview of the literature available on the topic, it appeared to me as if there is a variety of literature on friendship during childhood but it seemed to me as if relatively little is written about friendship amongst adolescents. The literature sources on this topic are also very outdated (Cf. 2.1).

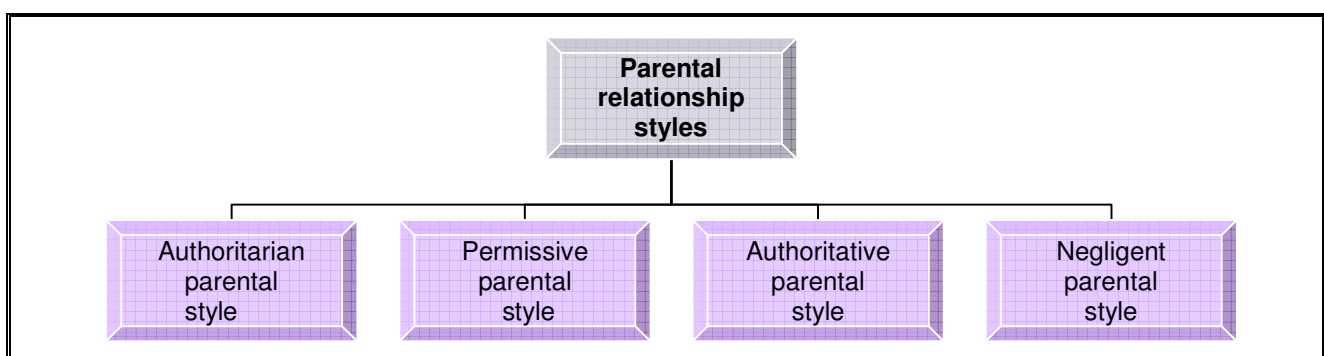
The above diagram shows the different components of the phenomenon friendship. The chapter will focus on the different parental relationship roles and attachment styles as well as the affect both have on an individual's ability to initiate relationships in future. The chapter will explore the needs that friendship addresses as well as alternatives to friendship. The concept of loneliness and the different kinds of loneliness will be discussed. General problems with friendship will be given. The chapter will furthermore give information on the adolescent as a developmental phase in the human development. I am of the opinion that certain risk factors exist which can influence an adolescent's ability to initiate and sustain a friendship for example: birth order, chronic illness, socio-economical status, changing schools, being raised by drug dependant parents or parents who are suffering from a mental illness like for example depression. These risk-factors will not be discussed in this study because the research is of limited scope.

Please take note that the sources used in the literature study are old.  
Little new research has been done on the topic of the phenomenon of friendship.

## 2.2 PARENTAL RELATIONSHIP STYLES AND -ROLES

### 2.2.1 Parental relationship styles

**Figure 2.1** Parental relationship styles



The above figure shows the different parental relationship styles of one of the best known theories of parenting style developed by Baumrind (Santrock, 2007). In her research she proposed that parents fall into one of four categories of parenting styles namely: authoritarian, permissive, authoritative or negligent.

Hazan and Shaver (1987) have shown in their research that childhood experiences of relationships to parents have strong parallels with the kinds of attachment that persons form as adults. They concluded in their research that a parent through their specific parenting style sets the frame for the person's subsequent relationships throughout life.

According to Burgess (1981) the parental relationship is an extremely important factor in the adolescent's social development. In his research he concluded that parents are the major agents who turn the child into a social being and help to develop his social tendencies, skills and understandings. I am of the opinion that the different parenting styles will also influence the adolescent's ability to initiate and sustain healthy friendships.

The following section will attempt to give a better understanding of each of Baumrind's parental relationship styles:

#### *2.2.1.1 Authoritarian parental style*

Baumrind (Santrock, 2007) characterized the authoritarian parental style in her research by high expectations of conformity and compliance to parental rules and directions, while allowing little open dialogue between parent and child. The authoritarian parent, according to Baumrind, expects much of their child but generally do not explain the reasoning for the rules and boundaries. Baumrind suggests that these parents are less responsive to their children's needs and are more likely to give the child a hiding than to discuss the problem. Baumrind concluded that the child with an authoritarian parent may have less social competence as the parent generally tells the child what to do instead of allowing him to choose by himself. According to Baumrind's research this relationship style produces over-anxious children who are dependent and intimidated by authority, rules and social pressures. (Santrock, 2007)

#### *2.2.1.2 Permissive parental style*

Baumrind characterized in her research the permissive parental style, also called the indulgent, non-directive or lenient parental style, as having few behavioural expectations for the child. According to Baumrind these parents consult the child about standards of behaviour and use reason rather than

punishment to exercise their childrearing duties. Baumrind in Santrock (2007) described parents of this parental style as being nurturing, accepting and very responsive to the child's needs and wishes but who do not require children to regulate themselves or behave appropriately. According to Baumrind this may result in creating self-indulgent children who show little respect for other people.

#### *2.2.1.3 Authoritative parental style*

The authoritative parental style, also called the balanced parenting, is characterized by Baumrind (Santrock, 2007) as a child-centred approach that holds high expectations of maturity. According to Baumrind's research, authoritative parents can understand their children's feelings and teach them how to regulate them. They help their children to find appropriate outlets to solve problems. They teach them how to be independent but still places limits and controls on their actions. Authoritative parents, according to Baumrind, are warm and nurturing toward the child. They are not usually controlling and allow the child to explore freely, thus having them make their own decisions based upon their own reasoning.

Baumrind states that these parents set limits and demand maturity, but when they punish the child they will explain the motive for the punishment. Baumrind suggests that the authoritative parents' punishments are consistent in discipline and not harsh. The parents are according to Baumrind attentive to the child's needs and concerns and will typically forgive and teach instead of punish when the child falls short. Baumrind's research concluded that the authoritative parental style result in children having higher self esteem and independence because of the democratic give-and-take nature of the style. According to Baumrind this style is the most recommended style of parenting (Linwood, 2004).

#### *2.2.1.4 Negligent parental style*

Baumrind characterized parents of the negligent parental style as being low in warmth and control, as being generally not involved in their child's life, are disengaged, undemanding, low in responsiveness and who do not set limits. These parents according to Baumrind are emotionally unsupportive of their children, but will still provide their basic needs. Baumrind's research found that children whose parents are neglectful develop the sense that other aspects of the parent's lives are more important than they are. These children, according to Baumrind, often display contradictory behaviour and are emotionally withdrawn from social situations. Her research shows that this disturbed attachment also impacts relationships later on in life. Baumrind's research proved that in adolescence, they may show patterns of truancy and delinquency (Post and Bryan 2003).

Baumrind's research on parental relationship styles show according to Duck (1991) that the relationship that a child experiences himself will affect the range and style of relationship that he is capable of forming with other people later in life. Duck made the following suggestion to explain the relationship the parent's parental style has on the child:

*"The key piece in the jigsaw is the way in which the child learns through his relationship with his parents to perceive himself"* (Duck 1991:118).

From the above information on Baumrind's research on the parental relationship styles I am of the opinion that friendship is a way of relating to those people close to you and is influenced by the type of parental relationship style your parents exercised on you. I think that an adolescent's ability to form friendships is influenced by the parental relationship style his/her parents used.

## **2.2.2 Parental roles**

### *2.2.2.1 Different parental roles of the father and the mother*

I am of the opinion that the roles of the mother and the father of the adolescent in establishing relationships outside the direct family is a very important aspect which needs to be given attention when doing a literature study on the phenomenon of friendship.

Researchers paid very little, if any, attention to the role of the father in the upbringing of children in the past. Mead goes as far as describing the father as *"a biological necessity, but a social accident"* (Jenks, 2005). Today researchers admit the tremendous role that the father plays in rearing his offspring as shown below.

In the Western traditional families, fathers were the heads of the families, which meant that his duties included providing financial support and making critical decisions, some of which must have been obeyed without question by the rest of the family members (Bass, 2005). The traditional role of the father, according to Bass (2005), is declining, the mother is becoming the supplementary provider and she retains the responsibilities of child rearing. The father's role is now caregiver as well as provider. The gender roles are increasingly interwoven according to Bass (2005).

Prout (2004) states in his research that a child is born as a social being. He states that the child is firstly in need of another human being to feed, love and nurture him. This role is fulfilled by the mother. The mother is therefore the nurturer of the child throughout the child's life. The child is however according to Corsaro, also in need of an adult who can show him the world. The world itself and how things work in the world. This adult, according to Alanen and Mayall (2001), needs to

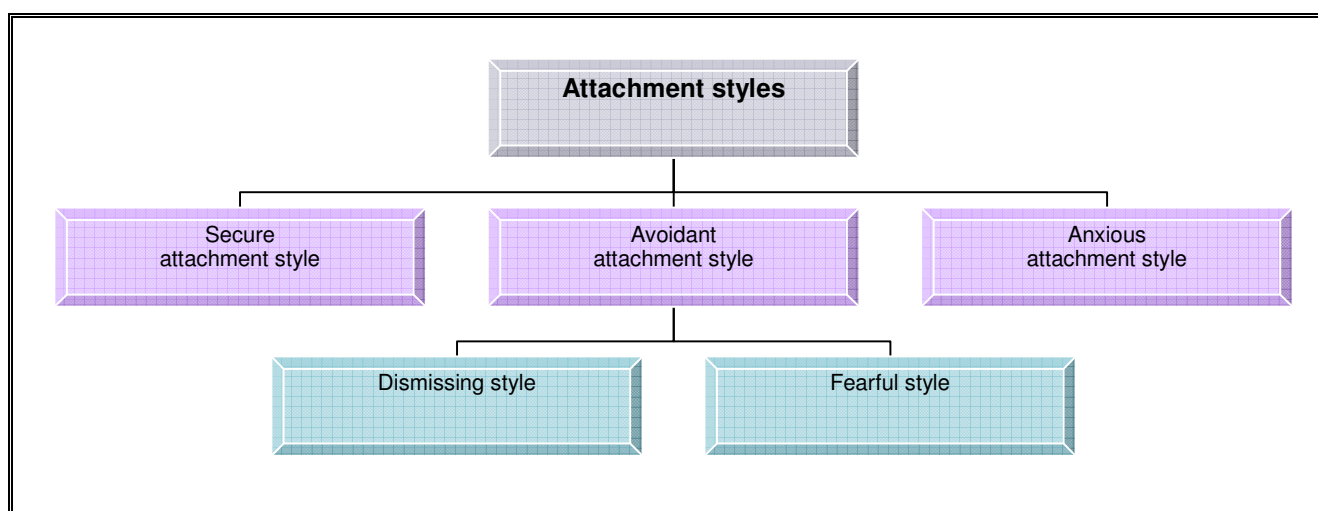
orientate the child in the world and make him feel comfortable there. Alanen and Mayall state that this person is the breadwinner, caregiver, introducer of the world, anchor, identification figure and the model of people.

The father is the main person who teaches the child indirectly to socialize with the world outside his family (Prout and Hallet, 2003). Because of the fact that the father plays an important role in the child's socialization, I am of the opinion that the father's role in the child's life determines the way in which the child, and later the adolescent, has the ability to initiate and sustain friendships.

The next section will look at the different attachment styles from Bowlby's attachment theory that according to Hazen and Shaver (1987) may play a role in a person's relationships later in life.

## 2.3 ATTACHMENT STYLES

**Figure 2.2 The different attachment styles**



The figure above shows the different attachment styles identified by Ainsworth in reference to the attachment theory of Bowlby (1969) which will be discussed in the following section.

The Concise English Oxford Dictionary describes the concept attachment as a *“special emotional relationship that involves an exchange of comfort, care and pleasure”*. The roots of research on attachment began with Freud's theories about love, but Bowlby is usually credited as the father of the attachment theory (Cassidy and Shaver, 2008). Bowlby (1969) devoted extensive research to the concept of attachment. He shared the psycho-analytical view that early experiences in childhood have an important influence on development and behaviour later in life and that our early attachment styles

dictate our future relationships. Bowlby (1969:194) described attachment as a: *"lasting psychological connectedness between human beings"*.

Bowlby (1969) has shown in his work in the relationship field that childhood experiences of relationships to parents have strong parallels with the kinds of attachment that individuals form as adults. According to Bowlby (1969) a child's attachment to his/her parents sets the frame of the individual's subsequent relationships throughout life.

During the 1970's psychologist Mary Ainsworth further expanded upon Bowlby's work in her "Strange Situation" study. The study involved observing children between the ages of 12 to 18 months responding to a situation in which they were briefly left alone and then reunited with their mother (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters and Wall, 1987). Based on these observations, Ainsworth concluded that there were three major styles of attachment: secure, anxious or ambivalent and the avoidant attachment style. Bartholomew (1990) later distinguished between the dismissing and fearful style within the avoidant attachment style.

The following section will attempt to give the reader a better understanding of each of the attachment styles distinguished by Ainsworth et al (1987) developed from the attachment theory of Bowlby (1969).

### **2.3.1 Secure attachment style**

Ainsworth et al (1987) describes in her research the characteristics of children with the secure attachment style as children who become visibly upset when their parents leave them and are relieved when they return, they will seek comfort from their parents, contact initiated by a parent is readily accepted, they greet the return of a parent with positive behaviour and while these children can be comforted to some extent by other people in the absence of a parent, they clearly prefer parents to strangers.

Ainsworth's (Ainsworth et al 1987) research suggests that parents of securely attached children tend to play more with their children; they react more quickly to their children's needs and are generally more responsive to their children. Research according to Ainsworth have shown that these children are more empathetic during later stages of childhood and are also described as less disruptive, less aggressive and more mature.

Ainsworth et al (1987) concluded in her research that as adults, those who are securely attached tend to have trusting, long-term relationships, seem to have high self esteem, enjoy intimate relationships, seek out social support and easily share their emotions with other people.

### 2.3.2 Avoidant attachment style

Ainsworth's (Ainsworth et al 1987) describes in her distinction of attachment styles children with avoidant attachment style as children who tend to avoid parents and caregivers. This avoidance often becomes especially pronounced after a period of absence. According to her research children might not reject attention from a parent, but would not seek comfort or contact. Ainsworth suggests that children with an avoidant attachment show no preference between a parent and a complete stranger (Hartup, Laursen, Stewart and Estenson 1988).

Ainsworth (Ainsworth et al 1987) concluded in her research that individuals with avoidant attachment as adults tend to have difficulty with intimacy and close relationships. Ainsworth states that these individuals do not invest much emotion in relationships and experience little distress when a relationship ends. Ainsworth's research shows that they avoid intimacy by using excuses (such as long work hours), they show a failure to support partners during stressful times and show an inability to share their feelings and thoughts with other people (Hartup et al 1988).

Within the avoidant style Bartholomew (1990) furthermore distinguished between two different types, namely:

- The *dismissing style* where the person defensively denies the need or the desire for greater social contact. These individuals have a positive view of them and play down any distress or social needs that they may have.
- The *fearful style* where the person desires contact but is afraid of it and of commitment and its consequences. These individuals see themselves essentially as undeserving of other people's love and affection.

### 2.3.3 Anxious or ambivalent attachment style

Ainsworth's research suggests that children who are ambivalently attached tend to be extremely suspicious of strangers. They display, according to her research, considerable distress when separated from a parent, but do not seem reassured or comforted by the return of the parent. In some cases, the child might passively reject the parent by refusing comfort or may even openly display direct aggression toward the parent (Hartup et al 1988)

Ainsworth's research concluded that as adults, people with an ambivalent attachment style often feel reluctant about becoming close to others which leads to frequent break-ups, often because the relationship feels cold and distant. Her research shows that these people feel especially distraught

after the end of a relationship, they are insecure in relationships and find it extremely hard to trust other people (Phelan, 2007).

From the abovementioned information about attachment styles I am of the opinion that the adolescent's ability to initiate and sustain a friendship is influenced by the type of attachment style he/she has adopted. According to the research I would think that the secure attachment style will enable the adolescent to initiate and sustain positive friendships with his peers, mostly because he seeks out social interaction, in this instance friendship. The adolescent with a secure attachment style will probably have more success in a friendship because he shows to be empathetic towards others and has a positive self-esteem, making it easier to accept others.

I am of the opinion that the avoidant attachment style will hinder the adolescent to initiate and sustain a positive friendship with his peers. The adolescent with the avoidant attachment style will probably not be upset when a friendship ends, mostly I think because he did not invest any emotion on his part into the friendship.

Furthermore, I am of the opinion that the adolescent with the anxious attachment style will find it difficult in initiating and sustaining a friendship as it is very hard for this adolescent to trust other people. I think that the adolescent with the anxious attachment style will have many friendships that end because his peers probably feel that the friendship lacks warmth and closeness. It is my view that the adolescent mentioned above will be distraught after a friendship ends which will make it harder to initiate a new friendship in future.

In the following section the needs that friendship addresses will be discussed.

## **2.4 THE NEED FOR FRIENDSHIP**

According to research done by Demir and Özdemiş (2009:243) friendship quality is an important predictor of happiness. In two separate studies Demir and Özdemiş investigated satisfaction of basic psychological needs as a mediator of relationship between friendship quality and happiness. Both Demir's and Özdemiş's studies' findings suggest that one reason why the quality of friendships is related to happiness is because friendship experiences provide a context where basic needs are satisfied.

Gottman and Parker (1987) concluded in their research that according to them, there are six important functions to adolescent friendships. In their research, they state that when a child lacks a function in a friendship they will experience confusion and conflict and without comprehending the source of their



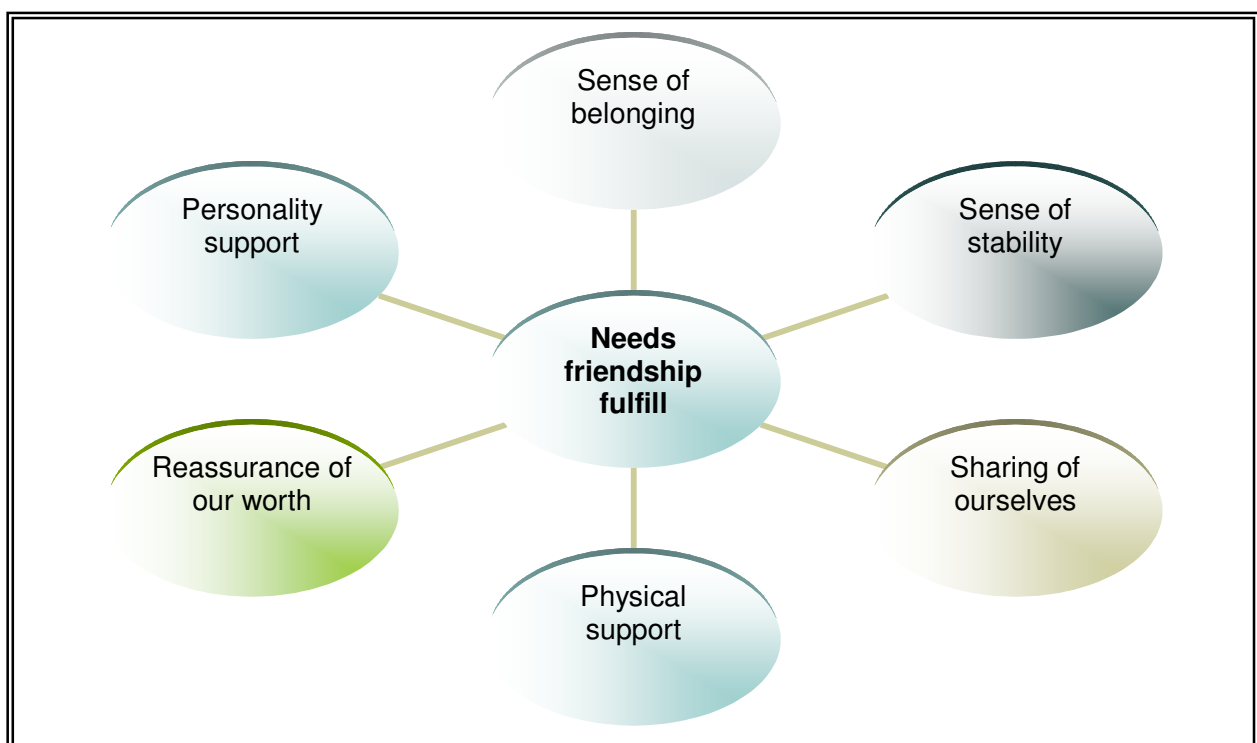
frustration will lash out in a variety of ways. This, according to Gottman and Parker, often avoids the true issue considering friendships are the foundation of adolescent life.

Gottman and Parker (1987) listed the following six functions of friendship:

- Companionship
- Stimulation
- Physical support
- Ego support
- Social comparison
- Intimacy or affection

Duck (1991) referred to the functions listed by Gottman and Parker (1987) as needs that friendship addresses. The following figure shows the needs that friendship address listed in Duck (1991:11-28).

**Figure 2.3 Needs that friendship address**



#### **2.4.1 Belonging and a sense of reliable alliance.**

Weiss (Hooyman and Kiyak 2002) proposed that a major consequence of being in relationships is a sense of belonging and of reliable alliance. According to Weiss every person likes to belong or to be accepted, even those who choose solitude want it to be the result of their own choice, not someone else's. Weiss states that no individual wants to be rejected or to be the social outcast. Relationships give us, according to Weiss, a sense of inclusion, a sense of being a member of a group. Weiss concluded in his research that membership has its privileges; one of these privileges is the existence of a bond that can be trusted to be there for you when you need it. According to Weiss friendship creates a reliable alliance: one of the signs that someone is a true friend is when they help you in times of trouble.

#### **2.4.2 Emotional integration and stability.**

Weiss (Hooyman and Kiyak 2002) states that friendship provides a person with certain anchor points for opinions, beliefs and emotional responses and that friends are benchmarks that tell a person how he should react appropriately, and they correct or guide a person's attitudes and beliefs in both obvious and subtle ways. According to Weiss like cultures, friends develop their own set of shared concerns, common interests and collective problems, as well as shared meanings, common responses to life and communal emotions. Weiss concluded in his research that friends are often appreciated exactly because they share private understandings, private jokes or private language. Hopper (Guerrero, Andersen and Afifi, 2010) proved in his research on communication that friends develop their own "personal idioms" or ways of talking about such things as feelings, activities, bodily parts and more which are strange to a third party.

According to Duck (1991:12) friends provide a stable, meaningful background for responses to many familiar things such as political events, other people, work, the weather and life. Duck (1991) states that if these stabilities and comparisons are taken away from someone, he or she becomes uncertain and unstable. Another function of friendship that Duck (1991) gives is to keep us emotionally stable, to help us to see where we stand towards other people and whether we are "doing ok". I am of the opinion that this is particular noticeable in times of stress and crisis.

#### **2.4.3 Opportunity for communication about ourselves**

Rawlins (2008) states in his research on communication and friendship that people of different stages of life described one of the benefits of a close friendship as somebody to talk to. Rawlins (2008) proved in his research that communication with friends relieves loneliness and contributes to physical

and psychological well-being. According to Rawlins (2008) communication can include about anything, not just important events, but also trivial things as well as personal, intimate details about oneself. Rawlins' (2008) research showed that most conversations with friends last very short periods of time and deal with trivialities but that they are nonetheless rated as extremely significant.

Berg and McQuinn (1989:159) have shown that one of the skills essential for us to be effective in obtaining support is the ability to self disclose – *“that is to open ourselves up to other people, to reveal our fears and hopes, concerns, desires, prides and shames”*.

Rawlins (2008) suggests that communication revitalizes the relationship, reaffirms it and celebrates its existence, through the medium of conversation. He conveys that loss of such opportunities to communicate is one of the more significant consequences of social isolation.

#### **2.4.4 Provision of assistance and physical support**

Rawlins (2008) stated in his research on communication and friendship that one of the benefits of close friendship is to depend on and rely on somebody else for instrumental help.

Duck (1991) shows in his research that friendship offers an individual support, whether physical, psychological or emotional. According to his research physical support involves help with day-to-day tasks and psychological support is when someone shows that the other person is appreciated and valued. Duck (1991) states in his research that human beings need both of these types of support, although the two types are significantly different. According to Gottman and Parker (1987) a friend provides physical support through giving time and resources to the other person.

#### **2.4.5 Reassurance of our worth and the opportunity to help others**

Gottman and Parker (1987) state in their research that a friendship provides support and encouragement as well as feedback that help develop the person's sense of competency, self-image and self-worth.

According to Gotlib and Hooley (1988) people who are lonely characteristically say that no-one cares about them, that they are useless, uninteresting and of low value. Gotlib and Hooley (1988) reveal in their studies of the conversations of severely depressed people indications that they have lost their self-respect or self-esteem and that they have come to see themselves as valueless, worthless and insignificant, often because that is how they feel that everyone else sees them. Gotlib and Hooley

(1988) states that one reason for individuals to appreciate friends is because of the contribution friends make to a person's self-evaluation and self-esteem which happen both directly and indirectly.

Duck (1991) proved in his research that friends can also increase a person's self-esteem in other ways for example by attending to what he does, listening, asking his advice and generally acting in ways that indicate the value that they place on his friend's opinions. According to Duck's (1991) research friends trust and depend on their friends which gives them a chance to help them; giving them the opportunity to take responsibility for them, to see themselves helping them with their lives, to give them their measured advice and consequently to feel good about themselves.

According to Duck (1991) people who have difficulty at indicating interest in others, who seems to have little time for other people or never let them help or let them give them advice, will find that other people are not interested in friendships with them. He states in his research that one of the consequences of isolation and social rejection is the loss of this sense of esteem, worth and value and that the nature of fantasy and wish-fulfilling daydreaming in such cases is often the recollection of cases where self-esteem was high, for example past social successes or past instances where other people came for help and advice.

#### **2.4.6 Personality support**

According to Duck and Lea (1982) recent research indicates that each feature mentioned above – sense of community, emotional stability, communication, provision of help, maintenance of self-esteem – in its own way serves to support and integrate the person's personality. Furthermore, they state that each of us is characterized by many thoughts, doubts, beliefs, attitudes, questions, hopes, expectations and opinions about recurrent patterns in life and that our personalities are composed not only of our behavioural style (for example our introversion or extraversion) but also our thoughts, doubts and beliefs. Duck and Lea (1982) proved that each of us needs to be assured regularly that our thought-worlds are sound and reliable and because of this a friend can help us to see that we are wrong and how we can change, or that we are right about some part of our thinking.

According to Duck and Lea (1982) an individual's personality would be of no worth to him if all of his opinions were not supported by others. Furthermore, they state that these individual would simply stop behaving if he had no trust in his thoughts or beliefs about why he should behave or how he should behave. They suggest in their research that people would stop behaving in the same way as individuals would stop doing other things they are convinced are wrong. According to Lynch (1977) some schizophrenics and depressives actually stop behaving when their thought-world falls apart - they just sit and stare.

Duck (1991) concluded the following in his research:

People that share an individual's way of thinking provide them with the best personality support. The more of these thought-ways the other person shares with someone, the easier it is to communicate with that person. The type of similarity that a person needs to share with someone in order to communicate effectively depends on the stage that the relationship or friendship has reached. At early stages it is quite enough that people who the individual meets are broadly similar, but at later stages the similarity must be more intricate, precise, refined and detailed.

The abovementioned section gave a list of important needs that friendship addresses. I am of the opinion that all these needs namely: sense of belonging, sense of stability, self-disclosure, physical support, reassurance of our worth as well as personality support will be influential in the psychological well-being of the adolescent as a developmental phase and therefore I am of the opinion that the teacher and the educational psychologist should be aware of the different needs in order to identify and assist the adolescent who shows a need which is not addressed because of some or other reason.

The following section will focus on the adolescent, specifically on the developmental phases of the adolescent. The section will give information on Erikson's psycho-social developmental phases from birth to adulthood as well as the different stages in the optimal development of the adolescent. The section will also focus on the development of friendship in the adolescent phase.

## **2.5 DEVELOPMENT OF THE ADOLESCENT**

### **2.5.1 The global development of the adolescent**

According to the following information downloaded from the Child Development Site, children must pass through several stages on their road to becoming adults. For most people, there are four or five such stages of growth where they learn certain things: infancy (birth to age two), early childhood (ages 3 to 8 years), later childhood (ages 9 to 12 years) and adolescence (ages 13 to 18 years) (Monsour, 2002).

The research done by Kidsgrowth site, which I downloaded, states that adolescence is a challenging period for both children and their parents. Three stages of adolescence - early, middle, and late, are experienced by most teens, but the age at which each stage is reached varies greatly from child to child. These different rates of maturation are connected to physical development and hormone balance, neither of which the child can control. For this reason, adolescents should be treated as individuals and any guidelines should be adapted to the particular child (McKay, 2006).

In my literature study, I concluded that adolescents face a range of developmental issues. Havighurst (1952) suggested that two important areas included work and relationships. Levinson (1978) focused on changing relationships and on exploration, while Erikson (1968) commented on intimacy and commitment to goals. Super (1963) indicated that exploring and crystallizing vocational choice are important to older adolescents and young adults. I am of the opinion that the adolescent phase is probably one of the most challenging developmental phases the individual will have to face in his life cycle.

According to Gelatt (1989) older adolescents and young adults enter transitions with the goal of becoming independently functioning adults, as they strive to meet evolving personal and career related needs. Gelatt (1989) states in his research that rapid and escalating changes in labour market and post-secondary educational opportunities, mean that adolescents now are confronted with the challenge of meeting their personal and career needs, when neither can offer certainty or a sense of personal control.

In the following section, the stages of psychosocial development according to Erikson (1968) will be discussed in order to understand the stage the adolescent finds him or herself.

### **2.5.2 Erikson's stages of psycho-social development**

Erikson (1968) explains in Meyer, Moore and Viljoen (1994) eight stages through which a healthily developing human should pass from infancy to late adulthood. According to Erikson, the person confronts, and hopefully masters, new challenges in each stage. Furthermore, Erikson explains that each stage builds on the successful completion of earlier stages. Erikson's research states that the challenges of stages not successfully completed may be expected to reappear as problems in the future.

The following table shows the different psychosocial developmental stages according to Erikson. In the table each stage is accompanied by a psychosocial crisis, virtue, main question and related elements in the society. The stages in the table starts from the Infant stage (0 to 1 years) and ends with the Adulthood stage (35 to 65 years). The table gives an indication of where the Adolescent stage (13 to 19 years) fit into the psychosocial developmental stages (Meyer et al 1994).

**Table 2.1: Erikson's stages of psycho-social development**

<b>Erikson's stages of psycho-social development (Louw, 1998)</b>				
<b>Developmental stage</b>	<b>Psycho-social crisis</b>	<b>Virtue</b>	<b>Main question</b>	<b>Related elements in society</b>
Infant (0 to 1 year)	Trust vs. Mistrust	Hope		
Toddler (2 to 3 years)	Autonomy vs. Shame and doubt	Will	"Can I do things myself or must I always rely on others?"	
Preschool (4 to 6 years)	Initiative vs. Guilt	Purpose	"Am I good or am I bad?"	Ideal prototypes or roles
Childhood (7 to 12 years)	Industry vs. Inferiority	Competence	"Am I successful or worthless?"	Division of labour
Adolescent (13 to 19 years)	Identity vs. Role confusion	Fidelity	"Who am I and where am I going?"	Ideology
Young adult (20 to 34 years)	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Love	"Am I loved and wanted?" or "Shall I share my life with someone or live alone?"	Patterns of co-operation (often marriage)
Adulthood (35 to 65 years)	Generative vs. Stagnation	Care	"Will I produce something of real value?"	Parenting, educating and other productive social involvement

The table above shows that the psychosocial crisis in the adolescent stage revolves around identity versus role confusion. The virtue in the adolescent stage is fidelity and the main question, which needs answering, is: "Who am I and where am I going?" The related element in society for this stage is the ideology (Meyer et al. 1994).

According to Louw (1998) the adolescent is newly concerned with how they appear to others. Louw states that the superego identity is the confidence that the outer sameness and continuity prepared in the future are matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for oneself, as evidenced in the promise of a career.

Erikson (1968) proposed that most adolescents eventually achieve a sense of identity regarding which they are and where their lives are headed, but to make the transition from childhood to adulthood, adolescents ponder the roles they will play in the adult world. According to Erikson (1968) adolescents, initially, are prone to experience some role confusion- mixed ideas and feelings about the

specific ways in which they will fit into society and may experiment with a variety of behaviours and activities.

The following table gives a summary of the different developmental stages of a normal, healthy adolescent.

**Table 2.2 Stages of healthy adolescent development (McKay, 2006)**

<b>Stages of healthy adolescent development</b>		
<b>Stage with age range</b>	<b>Early adolescence (10 to 15years)</b>	<b>Late adolescence (16 to 22 years)</b>
<b>Physical development</b>	Puberty: rapid growth period  Secondary sexual characteristics appear	Secondary sexual characteristics advanced  95% of adult height reached  Physical maturity and reproduction growth leveling off and ending
<b>Cognitive development</b>	Concrete thought dominates "here and now"  Cause-effect relationships underdeveloped  Stronger "self" than "social awareness"	Growth in abstract thought, reverts to concrete thought under stress  Cause-effect relationships better understood  Very self-absorbed  Abstract thought established  Future oriented, able to understand, plan and pursue long range goals
<b>Autonomy</b>	Challenge authority, family, anti-parent  Loneliness  Wide mood swings  Things of childhood rejected  Argumentative and disobedient	Conflict with family predominates due to ambivalence about emerging independence  Emancipation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- vocational, technical, college and work</li> <li>- adult lifestyle</li> </ul>
<b>Body image</b>	Pre-occupation with physical changes and critical of appearance  Anxieties about secondary characteristic changes  Peers used as a standard for normal appearance (comparison of self to peers)	Less concern about physical changes but increased interest in personal attractiveness  Excessive physical activity altering with lethargy  Usually comfortable with body image



<b>Social development</b>	Serves a developmental purpose	Strong peer allegiance
	Intense same sex friendship	Sexual drives emerge and teens begin to explore ability to date and attract a partner
<b>Identity development</b>	Contact with opposite sex in groups	Decisions, values less influenced by peers
		Relates to individuals more than peer group
<b>Identity development</b>	Daydreaming	Selection of partner based on individual preference
	Vocational goals change frequently	Experimentation with sex, drugs, friends, jobs and risk-taking behaviour
<b>Identity development</b>	Begin to develop own value system	Pursue realistic vocational goals with training or career employment
	Emerging sexual feelings and sexual exploration	Relate to family as adult
<b>Identity development</b>	Imaginary audience	Realizations of own limitations and mortality
	Desire for privacy	Establishment of sexual identity, sexual activity is more common
<b>Identity development</b>	Magnify own problems: "no one understands"	Establishment of ethical and moral value system
		More capable of intimate, complex relationships

The table above is divided into two different age ranges for the adolescent namely early adolescence and late adolescence. A summary of the physical, cognitive-, social- and identity development, autonomy and body image is given in the table. A distinct change that takes place in the adolescent's social development from same sex friendships to an attraction towards the opposite sex is evident in the table, although it firstly takes place in a group situation.

I am of the opinion that because of development in autonomy where the adolescent challenges authority, family and especially parents, friendship starts to play a more intense role in the adolescent phase. The table also shows how the adolescent uses his peers as a standard for normal appearance, comparing his self to peers. It is evident in the table that loneliness is one of the characteristics of autonomy for the adolescent in the early stage of adolescence. It is my view that if an adolescent has difficulty with attachment, as shown earlier in this chapter, he may emotionally be stuck in his loneliness "phase" which may affect his psychological well-being. The table, however, gives an outline of a normal, healthy adolescent, which moves from loneliness to a strong need to initiate relationships with his peers.

### 2.5.3 Development of friendship in adolescence

Ennet and Bauman (1993) suggest in their research they did on social networks amongst adolescents, that there are different forms that friendship can take on in the adolescent phase. According to Ennet and Bauman (1993) some simple forms are best friendships between a pair of adolescents, friendships involving peers other than the best friend and friendship groups formed of a tight cluster of more than two friends. Ennet and Bauman (1993) stated that some adolescents have wide ranging friendships where they intermix with many peers, while others have relatively few friendships. According to Ennet and Bauman, taken together, these friendship patterns form the social network that binds adolescents into an overall matrix of peer relationships.

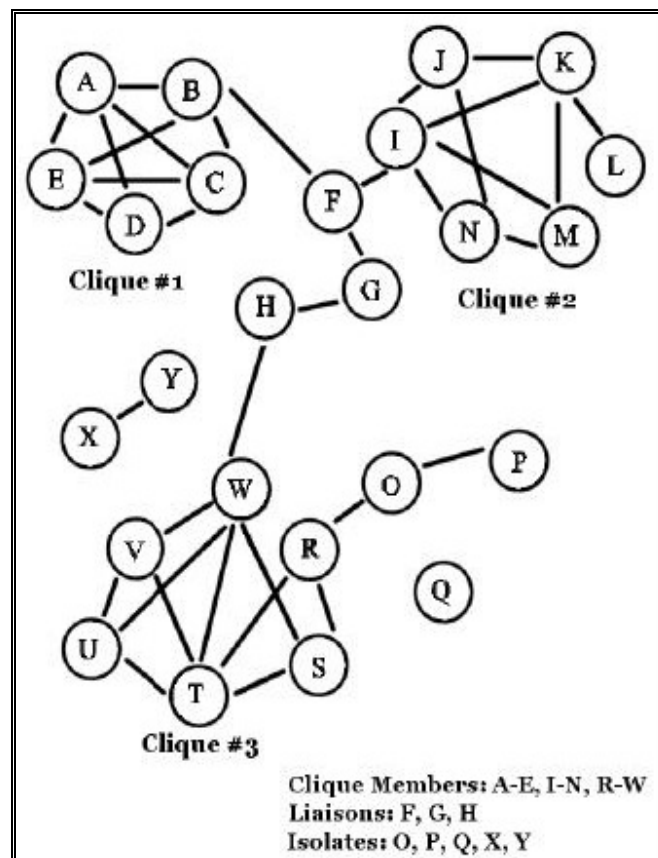
In their research Ennet and Bauman (1993) used social network analysis, a way of using information provided by adolescents about their friends, to map friendships. Social network analysis uses the aggregated data on the relationships reported by individuals in the same social system to identify groups and other relationship patterns. Network analysis identifies relationship patterns through analysis of the relationships that are present and absent between the individuals in the network. The most familiar friendship pattern generally characterizing adolescence according to Ennet and Bauman (1993) is the friendship group or clique (a small group of at least three adolescents whose primary friendships are with each other).

(Dunn 2004).

Ennet and Bauman (1993) suggest that although most adolescents have a best friend, best friendship pairs are usually embedded in a friendship clique instead of standing alone. They observed in their research that while friendship cliques are prominent in adolescence, that not all adolescents belong to a clique. Ennet and Bauman state that two other primary friendship patterns they identified were a pattern of friendship whereby an adolescent maintains several friendships without being in a particular friendship clique, which they called the liaisons because their friendships provide cross-cutting ties to various groups of adolescents. The other pattern Ennet and Bauman identified is a social isolate, an adolescent who has relatively few friendships with others. They state that while most adolescents interact with a number of peers, social isolates do not although they are still part of the overall social network of adolescents. (Ennet and Bauman: 1993).

The following figure illustrates these three predominating patterns of friendship within a social network namely: cliques, liaisons and isolates.

**Figure 2.4: Patterns of friendship within a social network amongst adolescents (Ennet and Bauman: 1993)**



According to Douvan and Adelson (1966) part of the adolescent's struggle is to work toward independence from their parents, although parents normally remain an important source of guidance and support. Douvan and Adelson suggest that adolescents continue to rely on their parents for material support and instrumental rewards, normally respecting their ideals as sources of continuity and stability. Douvan and Adelson (1966) state in their research, that adolescents are less likely, however, to see their parents as helpful in developing their views on present and future issues. Naturally, parents feel an obligation according to Douvan and Adelson to socialize their adolescents properly and tend to be judgmental.

Therefore, Douvan and Adelson (1966) suggest that close friendships, because they involve non-judgmental yet caring equals, help the adolescent develop a sense of identity by offering a climate of growth and self-knowledge that the family is not equipped for.

Monsour (2002) suggests in his research that as adolescents carry out their friendships, girls are more likely than boys to emphasize expressive rather than instrumental rewards. Monsour found in his research that as in pre-adolescence, both girls and boys usually form friendships with members of

their own sex, although, cross-gender friendships are not uncommon. Most adolescents maintain careful distinctions according to Monsour between opposite-sex partners who are friends and those who are romantic or dating partners.

Monsour (2002) proved that where cross-gender friendships exist, both girls and boys find them valuable sources of information and insight about the opposite sex in a relationally neutral ("safe") context. Boys, especially according to Monsour, find cross-gender friendships advantageous because they provide expressive rewards that are not as readily available in their friendships with other boys. Monsour concluded that the qualities of cross-gender friendships evident in adolescence tend to persist throughout adulthood. (Monsour 2002)

Duck (1991) stated in his research that the adolescent go through significant intellectual, social and sexual changes which have important consequences for friendship.

Duck (1991) listed the following reasons which could be found for the changes and for their consequences. The following are some of the reasons (Duck 1991:154):

1. The development in understandings about friendship continues and grows.
2. The adolescent becomes capable of forming friendships in different ways from the ones that younger children find to be important. Adolescents are increasingly concerned about the character of their friends, and place great emphasis on loyalty and trust in friendship.
3. Adolescents begin to develop the adult concern over finding support for their personality and have to nourish the skills of detecting it and exploring its extent.
4. Adolescents become much more independent and responsible for the conduct and success of friendship. This requires the skills of forming and stage-managing relationships to a much greater extent than previously in childhood.

The following section will discuss the concept of loneliness being the opposite pole of friendship on the relationship continuum.

**"Plant a seed of friendship, reap a bouquet of happiness."**

**Lois L. Kaufman**

## 2.6 LONELINESS

### 2.6.1 The meaning of loneliness

Archibald defines loneliness in Rotenberg and Hymel (1999:263) as following:

*“Loneliness is the feeling a person has whenever the quantity and quality of desired relationships is higher than the quantity and quality of actual relationships.”*

Loneliness refers according to Marangoni and Ickles (1989) to the emotional state that result from desiring close interpersonal relationships but being unable to attain them. According to Duggan and Brennan (1994) loneliness can be traced back to Bartholomew’s attachment patterns where both the dismissing and fearful style individuals are hesitant to become involved in relationships. Braza, Braza, Carreras and Munoz (1993) propose in their research that loneliness begins in childhood when a child fails to develop appropriate social skills – for whatever reason.

Researchers on the topic of loneliness distinguish between two types of human loneliness namely: *existential and psychopathological loneliness* (Christakis and Fowler 2009).

Moustakas (1972:20) describes existential loneliness as:

*“a reality of human, of being aware and of facing ultimate experiences of upheaval, tragedy and change, the intrinsic loneliness of being born, of living at the extremes, of dying”.*

Feinstein and Krippner (1988) refer to existential loneliness when they have suggested that life presents many “little deaths” every day. Feinstein and Krippner give examples like when someone ignores you, a friend fails to return a call, a person you like rejects you, someone else is selected before you, a loved one fails to understand you, a friend moves away and so forth. These according to Feinstein and Krippner are all “little deaths” in everyday life. Feinstein and Krippner propose that the deepest kinds of death are not physical but rather psychological and spiritual, which has to do with vulnerabilities and deep fears. They state these deaths have to do with a person’s fear of being reduced to nothingness (killing of the human spirit)

According to Gaev (1967) loneliness is a feeling of sadness and longing a person feels when his need for relatedness with some aspect of the world is frustrated. Gaev (1976) states that loneliness is a normal part of the experience of being human. Every person feels lonely at times. This loneliness, which may be intensified after the separation from a loved one or after an emotional loss, is called by Gaev as *existential loneliness* which is a universal part of human experience for all humans. Such

experiences as birth, growing up, separations and reunions are all according to Gaev existential; they are part of existence itself (Gaev 1976:7).

Gaev states that when the feeling of sadness and longing becomes chronic, because we are unable to form close relationships with others we care about, or if we are chronically unable to relate healthfully to ourselves, society or life as a whole; then we are experiencing *pathological loneliness*. People troubled with pathological loneliness are almost always lonely since they can't have genuinely close relationships, nor are they able to satisfy other important relatedness needs (Gaev 1976:8).

Fromm-Reichmann (1959) used the term "*real loneliness*" to describe those states of loneliness that are so severe. She described it as follows:

*"We might feel as if we were locked in a small room with blank walls – no windows or doors, just blankness. But, when we reach out to touch the walls, there is nothing there. It is uncanny. We realize then that the walls are within ourselves, we are caught in our own prison within. The depth of our isolation is overwhelming; there is a sense of horror and helplessness."*

Sullivan (1953:262) referred to the term loneliness as: "*. . . more terrible than anxiety.*"

In addition to the two main kinds of loneliness – existential and pathological – Sadler (Wapner, 2000) differentiated between five types of loneliness namely: interpersonal, social, cultural, cosmic and psychological. Gaev (1976) also identified five specific kinds of loneliness. In this study I will focus on Gaev's five specific types of loneliness. These specific kinds of loneliness can, according to Gaev, be a part of either existential- or pathological loneliness, depending on the circumstances in which they occur.

In the next section the different kinds of loneliness according to Gaev (1976) will be discussed.

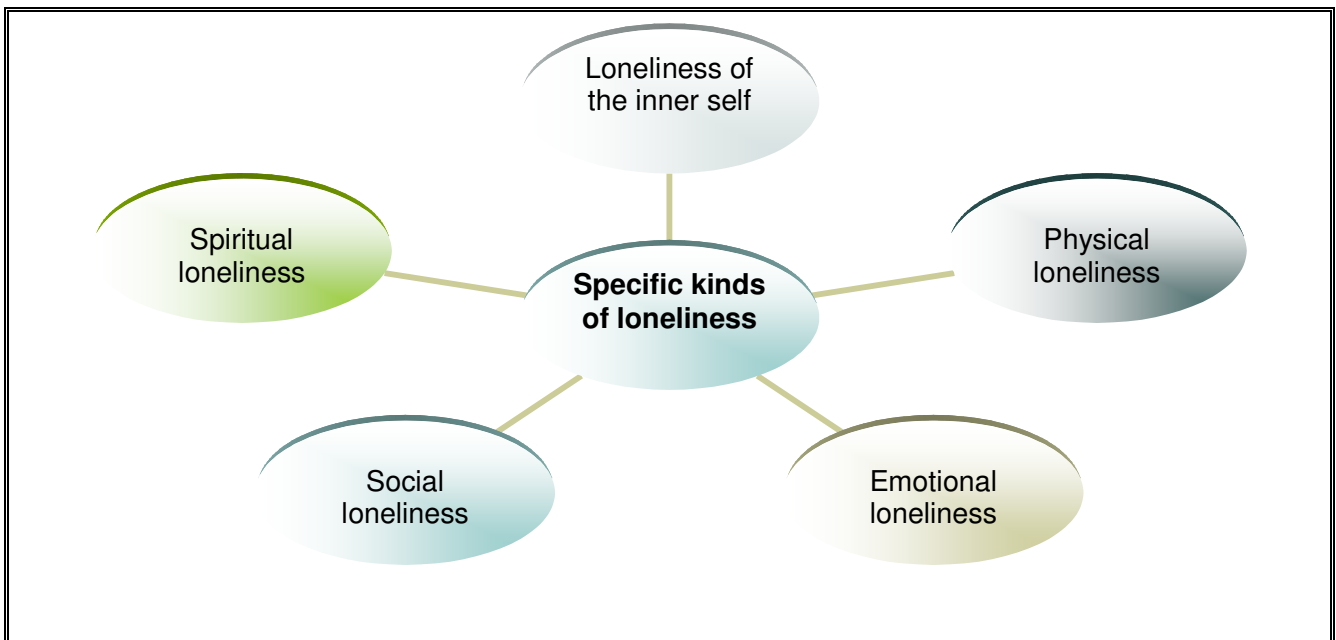
*"A friend may well be reckoned the masterpiece of nature."*

Ralph Waldo Peterson

## **2.6.2 Kinds of loneliness**

The following figure shows the different kinds of loneliness which Gaev (1976) identified in his research on loneliness.

**Figure 2.5**    **The five specific kinds of loneliness according to Gaev**



#### *2.6.2.1 Loneliness of the inner self*

Loneliness of the inner self can be defined according to Gaev (1976) as a feeling of estrangement from one's own real personality. Gaev states that people who are experiencing this type of loneliness often say they feel they are not real or authentic. They feel according to Gaev as if they are out of touch with their real feelings and desires and they are not sure who they really are. Gaev concluded that a person feeling out of touch with his feelings depicts a struggle within the self to get in touch with one's true potentialities (Gaev 1976:9). Horney (1939:199) used the term "self-alienation" to describe this inner kind of loneliness.

#### *2.6.2.2 Physical loneliness*

Gaev (1976) describes physical loneliness as the feeling of frustration and longing a person feels when his need for physical closeness, contact and touch with significant others are frustrated. Gaev gives the example of people who divorced or widowed after many years of marriage often experience physical loneliness (Gaev 1976:9).

#### *2.6.2.3 Emotional loneliness*

Emotional loneliness according to Gaev refers to the general feeling of sadness and longing a person feels when his need for closeness with significant others is frustrated. Gaev gives the example of a

marriage in which a couple may live together for many years without ever achieving emotional closeness (Gaev 1976:10).

#### *2.6.2.4 Social loneliness*

Gaev refers to social loneliness as the feeling of sadness and longing a person feels when his need to belong is frustrated. Social loneliness according to Gaev may involve both pathological barriers within the person, and social pathology within the structure of society, or even both. Gaev suggests that adolescents are often vulnerable to social loneliness in our society, since peer group ties are especially important to them (Gaev 1976:10).

#### *2.6.2.5 Spiritual loneliness*

Gaev states that spiritual loneliness is the feeling of emptiness and isolation a person feels when his need for meaning in life is frustrated. According to Gaev spiritual also refers to that dimension of human personality that seeks meaning, direction and purpose in life, it is the spiritual aspect of the human mind that is not satisfied by food, shelter, or material possessions, but needs in addition a sense of meaning (Gaev 1976:11).

### **2.6.3 Loneliness and self-esteem**

According to Gaev a person who feels that they can attract and interest others socially, firstly need a healthy sense of self-esteem. Gaev states that experiences that give most people anxiety are experiences of rejection, disapproval, ridicule, being disliked, and left out, unwanted, unloved or ignored. All these experiences according to Gaev have one thing in common – they all lower self-esteem and the lower our self-esteem the less worthwhile a person feels, and the more the person fears that others will not find him worthwhile. Gaev suggests that if a person does not feel worthwhile to others, then those others may not want to be with the particular person, in which case the person would have no friends or companions, he would be alone (Gaev.1976:20).

In my literature study about loneliness, I found two general misconceptions surrounding the topic. The first misconception according to Storr (1988) is that loneliness is not the same as being alone. Storr suggests that we all need time alone for reflection, creativity, and reintegration and that voluntary isolation for these purposes is healthy and even necessary to offset the challenges of social life.

The second misconception about loneliness I found in my literature study is stated by Anderson (1990). He states that loneliness is not synonymous with depression. Anderson suggests that people



misidentify their loneliness by naming it depression, which will, according to Anderson, obscure the true nature of what they are experiencing. Anderson states that they may even begin to behave as if they were depressed, which complicates their situation considerably since emotions and behaviours flow from cognition. Anderson states that these people should be conceptually clear about what they are feeling so they can deal with the real issues challenging their lives. Anderson concluded that this misconception has critical implications for psychotherapy, which I agree with. It is my view that, especially in the adolescent phase, where an adolescent does not really know himself yet as well as whether the feelings he has is in fact only loneliness or depression. I am of opinion that he will differentiate very difficult between depression and loneliness as he only has his behaviour as a child to compare his different behaviour at present.

According to Booth (1997) everyone is lonely sometimes, even if for short periods. However, it would be in error according to Booth to dismiss loneliness as too commonplace an experience to warrant concern. Booth states that loneliness carries with it far too many risks, both physical and psychological, to merely be ignored as if it were meaningless. I agree with Booth that loneliness, especially in the adolescent phase, is of too much of a risk factor for the adolescent to leave unattended. Therefore, I am of the opinion that it is of crucial importance for the teacher and educational psychologist to be informed about friendship and loneliness in order to identify the adolescent who suffers from loneliness.

#### **2.6.4 Loneliness and the adolescent**

Feelings of loneliness and isolation can occur at various stages of development according to Gaev, as a result of rejection by one's own peer or friendship group. He states that these feelings are usually most intense in adolescence. Gaev states that a young child derives a sense of belonging from being part of a family group. The child has a clear-cut role according to Gaev of a dependent person who is cared for and supported but an adult on the other hand has some kind of independent role within the larger society, usually related to some kind of work, vocational or community involvement. There are numerous possibilities for adults to find a sense of belonging somewhere in society but not for an adolescent (Gaev 1976:109).

The adolescent, being neither a dependent child nor an independent adult, is more limited to peer group associations, in order to derive a sense of belonging and acceptance. The loneliness and isolation of peer group rejection at the adolescent stage can be overwhelming (Gaev 1976:109).

Gamsky states in Gaev (1976:109) that the most common problem adolescents seek counselling for, is loneliness. He feels that: *"the problem is related to acceptance by peers and includes factors such*

*as relationships with the opposite and same sex, boredom, and lack of social and interpersonal skills. Symptomatically it may be expressed as feelings of inadequacy, excessive shyness or self criticism, anxiety, tension, nervousness, depression, suicidal thinking, guilt and unhappiness with self. In some instances it is also expressed with the excessive use of drugs."*

Gaev states that in many instances parents intensify the emotional consequences of peer group rejection by making popularity an overriding value and that such parents may push their adolescents to be popular so that they are faced with double rejection should they fail to be accepted by the peer group (Gaev 1976:110).

Booth (1997) encourages in his research all health care professionals to be aware of the seriousness of loneliness. Booth states that it may be time to think about including loneliness in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Booth suggests that if that were to occur, it would legitimize loneliness and possibly allow clients to be treated more easily for particularly the pervasive cases of pathological loneliness. I agree with Booth because I am of the opinion that loneliness can affect an individual's whole being and without assistance the individual, especially the adolescent, can go through life knowing he feels alone and having all the negative affects on his psychological well-being, but without noticing it being a problem. It is my view that these individuals may even feel the need for psychotherapy but may feel that they have no "real problem" which needs assistance from a therapist. Therefore I am of the opinion that it will benefit society if loneliness could be included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders or even if educational psychologists are better informed on loneliness and the effects on a client's psychological well-being.

In the following section alternatives to friendship will be explored.

## **2.7 ALTERNATIVES TO FRIENDSHIP**

### **2.7.1 Other relationships**

Friends can fulfil various needs as mentioned earlier in the literature study but Demir and Özdemir (2009) further suggest that other types of people can also fulfil these needs friends address. Demir and Özdemir refer in their study to the roles that parents, grandparents, siblings and other family members can fulfil instead of friends. According to Demir and Özdemir these roles can be used interchangeably with friendship because the nature of friendship is not that different from these types of relationships.

LaGaipa (1993) found in his research substantial overlap in the characteristics of newly met people, casual friends and best friends. According to LaGaipa the only difference was in the amount and pattern of the characteristics. LaGaipa's studies came to the conclusion that friendship serves many of the same purposes that other close relationships do. Therefore, according to LaGaipa, a person without friends might well be able to fill these needs by using relationships other than friends. LaGaipa suggests that a person can have numerous close acquaintanceships in which he receives some understanding, but none of these relationships are quite intimate enough to be labelled "friendship". I am of the opinion that the level of intimacy once again depends upon which type of attachment style the person is familiar to, as discussed earlier in the literature study. It is also my view that a characteristic like introversion and extraversion will also influence the need for intimacy - for one person acquaintances can be sufficient to address the need for intimacy.

According to Solano (Solano, Batten and Parish, 1982:524) alternatives to friendship holds advantages in that some of the rewards of friendship are received while many of the costs are avoided. Solano states that these relationships are also easier to replace when lost. Disadvantages, according to Solano, would be that the lower level of intimacy in these casual relationships may not be enough to fill the need for understanding.

### **2.7.2 Non-social alternatives**

Derlega and Winstead (1986) suggest that people without any form of close relationships have some sort of resources for covering the needs previously outlined. According to Derlega and Winstead material goods can function as a cushion for a lack of friendship and they concluded in their research that wealthier and more knowledgeable people will feel the lack of friends less than will poor people. Derlega and Winstead stated that people require stimulation and a frame of reference beyond material needs. They suggest that friends can be important sources in satisfying these needs, but there are also many types of impersonal activities that can also serve these purposes. Some of the non-social activities Derlega and Winstead listed are working, watching television, eating, taking drugs, exercising, reading, listening to music, shopping, going to movies or working on a hobby.

Moore and Schultz (1983) found that adolescents reported that when they felt lonely they turned to listening to music and watching television for stimulation. Television, in particular, according to Moore and Schultz, is important in that it provides not just stimulation, but also a frame of reference because viewers can use fictional characters as a substitute for friends for social comparison.

According to Paloutzian and Ellison (1982) other important sources of stimulation and involvement that might replace friendship are careers and religion. Paloutzian and Ellison stated that a career can

provide both material security, stimulation and a frame of reference for many life activities. They found that religious affiliation can also satisfy these needs. Paloutzian and Ellison concluded that people who felt that they had a more personal relationship with Jesus Christ were less likely to feel lonely, even if socially isolated, than were people who had a more abstract image of God.

In the next section of the literature study friendship difficulties will be discussed.

“Friendship is to be purchased only by friendship.

A man may have authority over others,

But he can never have their hearts

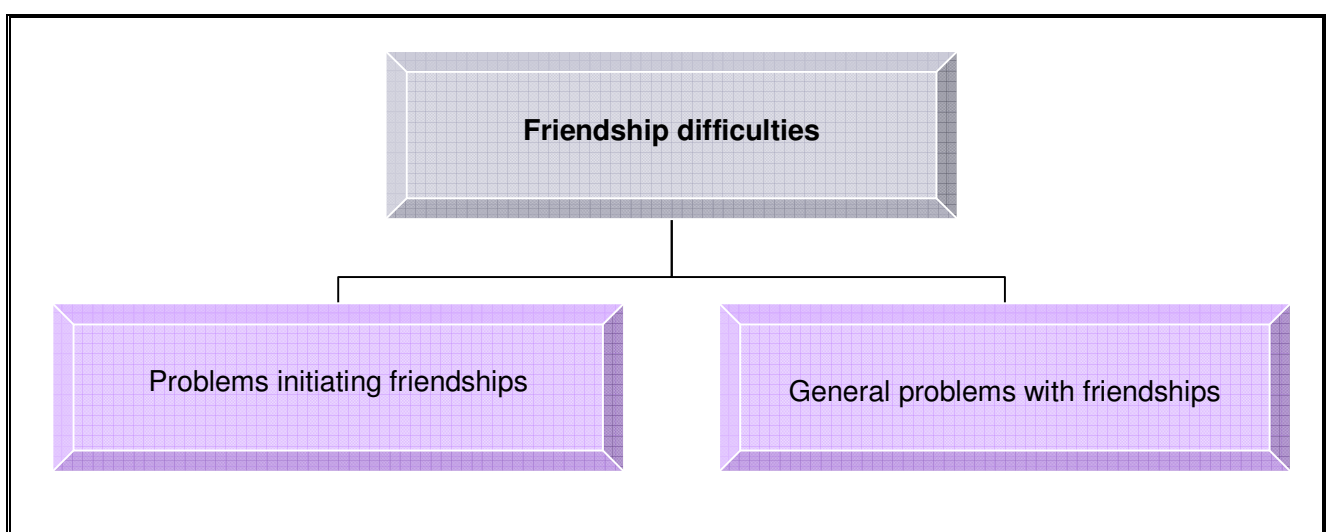
But by giving his own.”

Thomas Wilson

## 2.8 FRIENDSHIP DIFFICULTIES

Young (1982) made a classification of friendship difficulties in their Cognitive-developmental view of friendships. Young's classification of friendship difficulties include a variety of difficulties shown in the diagram below. The diagram shows the two main types of difficulties a person can experience within a friendship namely: problems with initiating a friendship and general problems with friendships. Both of these problems will be discussed more in detail after the figure.

**Figure 2.6 The difficulties according to Young's (1982) Cognitive-developmental view of friendships.**

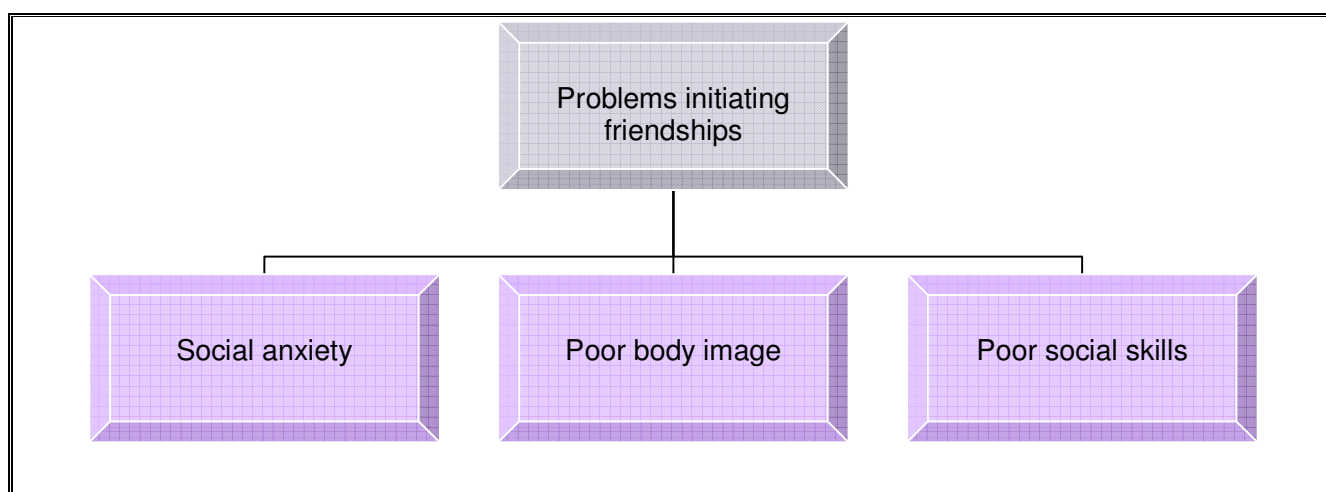


### 2.8.1 Problems initiating a friendship

Problems initiating a friendship, according to Young (1982), refer to all difficulties involved in the process of meeting potential new friends, whether in a group setting or one-to-one. Young states that in this stage people are most concerned with how they come across to others at a superficial level. He states that they are especially concerned with physical attractiveness, social confidence and conversational skills (Young 1982).

The following figure lists the main problems, according to Young (1982), a person can experience when trying to initiate a friendship. They are: Social anxiety, poor body image and poor social skills.

**Figure 2.7** Difficulties prohibiting an individual from initiating a friendship.



#### 2.8.1.1 Social anxiety

Young's (1982) research showed that some people are so worried about how they appear to others in a new situation that they become extremely anxious, some even develop panic attack symptoms, such as heart pounding, hyperventilating, blushing, sweating and trembling. According to Young the development of anxiety symptoms creates a vicious cycle and these people become so focused on the symptoms that they are unable to concentrate on the conversation. Young states that they become convinced that others will be able to see their anxiety and will view them as unstable, insecure or weak.

They then try, according to Young, to control the panic symptoms, but the more they try to control them, the worse they become. Young states that these people's initial fears that they will be socially inadequate are often the result of early family or peer experiences which lead to strongly held

schemas which are very difficult to change. Young concludes that these people become oversensitive to any cues that they are making an improper impression on others that they are also unable to accept any information contrary to their schemas. (Young 1982).

#### *2.8.1.2 Poor body image*

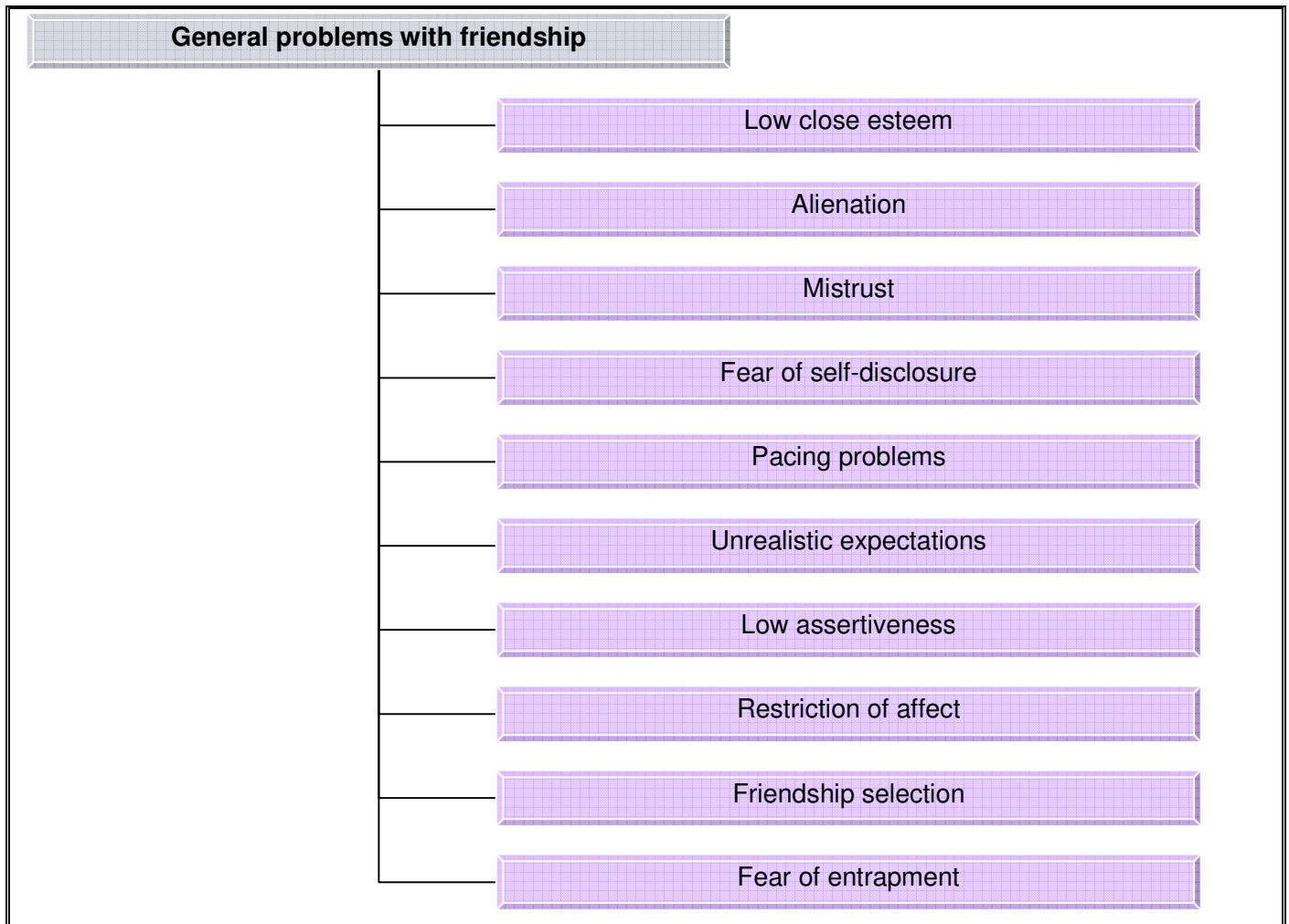
Another problem for people with difficulty initiating friendships according to Young (1982) is negative body image. Young states that these people are convinced that they are so unattractive that no one would want to be friends with them. Young suggests that this poor body schema often arises during childhood or especially adolescent years.

#### *2.8.1.3 Poor social skills*

Poor social skills according to Young (1982) are another problem when initiating friendships. Young states that some adolescents had inadequate role models as children and lack social sensitivity and they are now unable to see how their own behaviour is affecting other people. Young suggests that they might have had grossly impaired relationships with one or both parents in terms of intimacy and communication. Young concluded that they engage in self-defeating behaviour which causes them to become socially isolated, alienating almost all potential friends (Young 1982:256).

## 2.8.2 General problems with friendship

Figure 2.8 General problems individuals experience with friendship



### 2.8.2.1 Low close esteem

Problems with low close esteem, according to Young (1982), present obstacles for both initiating and deepening friendships. Young states that adolescents with low close esteem believe that they are inherently unworthy, unlovable and inadequate. Young suggests that the closer they get to other, the more certain they are that they will be “found out”. Young (1982:257) states that this conviction is based on an early self-concept schema that, “*Once people get to know the real me, they will reject me*”. According to Young this schema develops through the child’s interactions with parents. As children they were often given the message that nothing they did was good enough, that they were not valued or that they were unloved. Young suggests that they cope with their schema by keeping as distant from others as possible. Some remain isolated because, they reason, why even initiate

relationships if the eventual outcome will be rejection. Low close esteem may be the most serious and most resistant to change of all the problems with friendship (Young 1982:257).

#### 2.8.2.2 *Alienation*

According to Young (1982) some individuals with friendship problems feel alienated from others around them and have the schema: *"I am basically different from other people"*. Young states that this schema can develop either through feeling left out in one's family or through being excluded by peers. Young concluded, however, that these people do not feel inherently inadequate or inferior but rather they feel different, usually because of their interests or values. (Young 1982:257).

#### 2.8.2.3 *Mistrust*

Other individuals with friendship problems according to Young's research have a basic lack of trust in other people. Young states that this mistrust often arises from traumatic experiences with family members or peers. Young suggests that as children these people may have been psychologically, sexually or physically abused by parents, siblings or peers. According to Young the perception-of-others schema that develops is predicated on the notion that: *"Other people are dangerous and you can never predict when they will hurt you."* (Young 1982:257)

Young (1982) concluded that this schema leads to extreme avoidance of others, both in terms of initiating and deepening friendships. If the abuse was primarily in the peer situation, the adolescent may feel comfortable with a few close friends. If the abuse was in the family, the pattern of isolation is likely to be more extreme and avoidance, depending on the degree of abuse, may restrict the possibility of friends at any level (Young 1982:257).

#### 2.8.2.4 *Fear of self-disclosure*

Problems with self-disclosure are according to Young (1982) the most frequent cause of difficulty in deepening friendships. The schema most closely linked to "constriction" (a term used to describe the problem of having private thoughts and feelings bottled-up inside) has already been discussed in close self-esteem: *"Once people get to know the 'real me', they will reject me."*

This schema usually involves extremely critical or rejecting parents. These people go to extreme lengths to prevent others from finding out too much about them. They may only be comfortable discussing a narrow range of impersonal topics and usually avoid at any mention of private feelings. They sometimes report feeling smothered or trapped by closeness (Young 1982:258).



#### 2.8.2.5 Pacing problems

According to Young (1982) another difficulty in deepening friendships is not knowing how fast to pace the relationship, the greatest risk pressing too quickly to be close. Young states that some individuals come across as “needy” or “clinging”, leading potential friends to back away. Young suggests that they do not realize that developing trust and closeness takes time. The predisposing schema for pacing problems given by Young is often one of dependency: *“I cannot bear to be alone; I need others around me at all times to support me.”* (Young 1982:258)

Young concludes that this self-concept schema is generally the result of overprotective parents who give the child the message: *“You need us very much. Without us, you may not be able to handle all the problems that will arise.”* As adults these people constantly work to recreate the parental closeness they felt as children in their friendships. Sometimes they are successful, but in other cases they drive potential friends away (Young 1982:258).

#### 2.8.2.6 Unrealistic expectations

Unrealistic expectations according to Young (1982) are similar to pacing problems in that both want more from friendship than other people are usually willing to provide. Young suggests that they often have rigid expectations about what friends should and should not do and if these people’s friends let them down they become angry and express annoyance with them. They lack flexibility according to Young and do not allow for the possibility that others may disagree with their standards of friendship.

Young concluded that these individuals grew up with parents who were very rigid about the “right” and “wrong” way to behave with others. Their thinking style is very rigid and is applied to friendship as well. The relationship schema according to Young might be expressed as follows: *“Friends should follow my definition of friendship at all times and forever. Otherwise they are bad and unfair”* (Young 1982:259).

#### 2.8.2.7 Low assertiveness

Some people according to Young (1982) have difficulty asking to have their needs met in friendships. Young states that they frequently feel frustrated and angry because they do not get what they want and feel mistreated by friends. The problem according to Young is that they do not feel comfortable asking for what they want although their desires are usually perfectly reasonable. Young states that they do not assert themselves and they rarely feel satisfied with their friendships.

According to Young this problem is based on two interlocking schemas. Young states that these individuals have a self-concept schema of: *"I am not entitled to ask for more than what I have"* and they frequently have a perception-of-others schema of: *"Others will reject me if I ask for what I want"* (Young 1982:259). These schemas according to Young develop when parents actively discourage assertiveness in their children to minimize the demands on themselves or when parents model passivity in their relationships with other people (Young 1982).

#### 2.8.2.8 *Restriction of affect*

According to Young (1982) restriction of affect is another problem in friendships. Young states that these people have difficulty expressing emotions, especially warmth and affection, they come across as cold and impersonal to others and their friendships are rarely satisfying even to themselves. According to Young they often view friendships as obligations and the schema is: *"I do what I'm supposed to do for friends"* (Young 1982:260). Young states that they do not expect affection or feelings, nor are they usually aware why they are dissatisfied. Young concluded that they are usually products of emotionally cold parents who did not express feelings to their children and who function according to duty, not love or spontaneous involvement (Young 1982).

#### 2.8.2.9 *Problems in friendship selection*

Some individuals according to Young (1982) have difficulty in deepening friendships because of their selection of friends. Young stated that they seem to select people who are difficult to get close to, mostly to prove their own value by winning over people who seem hard to get. Young suggests that they are typically more concerned with status and prestige than closeness and the underlying self-schema is based on social inferiority: *"I am not accepted by the people who are popular and successful"* (Young 1982:260). They devote according to Young much of their lives to the pursuit of those aspects (money, cars, title, degrees and so forth) that will eventually earn them the status they so strongly desire but unfortunately the quality of their friendships usually suffers in the process (Young 1982).

#### 2.8.2.10 *Fear of entrapment*

The last problem Young (1982) identified in deepening a friendship is the fear of being entrapped by the demands of others. These people according to Young view close friendships as the potential loss of individuality, self-determination and privacy. Young states that they are usually ambivalent about close friendships and may devote considerable energy to protecting their privacy. They often overreact to the reasonable requests of friends and set up protective barriers when none are needed.

Young suggests that they are usually the product of enmeshed families and intrusive parents who, as children, their parents might have been involved in every decision they made. Young states that the family members may have kept no secrets from one another, and time spent alone may have been discouraged. Young concluded that as adults these individuals fight desperately to avoid feeling smothered again and the relationship schema can be expressed as follows: *"People will not respect my boundaries; therefore, I must fight hard to maintain them"* (Young 1982:260).

I am of the opinion that if a teacher or educational psychologist can identify an adolescent with one of the above difficulties Young (1982) mentioned in initiating and deepening friendships, that such an individual can be assisted to overcome his difficulties with friendship. Therefore I am of the opinion that teachers and educational psychologists should be informed on the different kinds of friendship problems as it will affect an individual's future relationships and according to me also his emotional well-being.

## **2.9 CONCLUSION**

In conclusion to the literature overview, I would like to emphasize the importance of friendship in the developmental phase of an adolescent preparing him or her for the road ahead. A road where the adolescent needs to come to an understanding of who they are and where they would like to see themselves in the future. Friendship in the adolescent stage prepares them, according to me, for more intimate relationships, for example marriage.

Friendship is, according to me, a crucial ingredient which needs to be nurtured in the adolescent developmental phase. I am of the opinion that the Educational Psychologist working with adolescents needs to understand the dynamics of friendship in order to assist the adolescent to reach his full potential. Therefore, research in this area, especially the psycho-educational value of friendship amongst the adolescent, seemed to me as a valid research area.

In the next chapter the research design will be given and discussed.

## CHAPTER 3

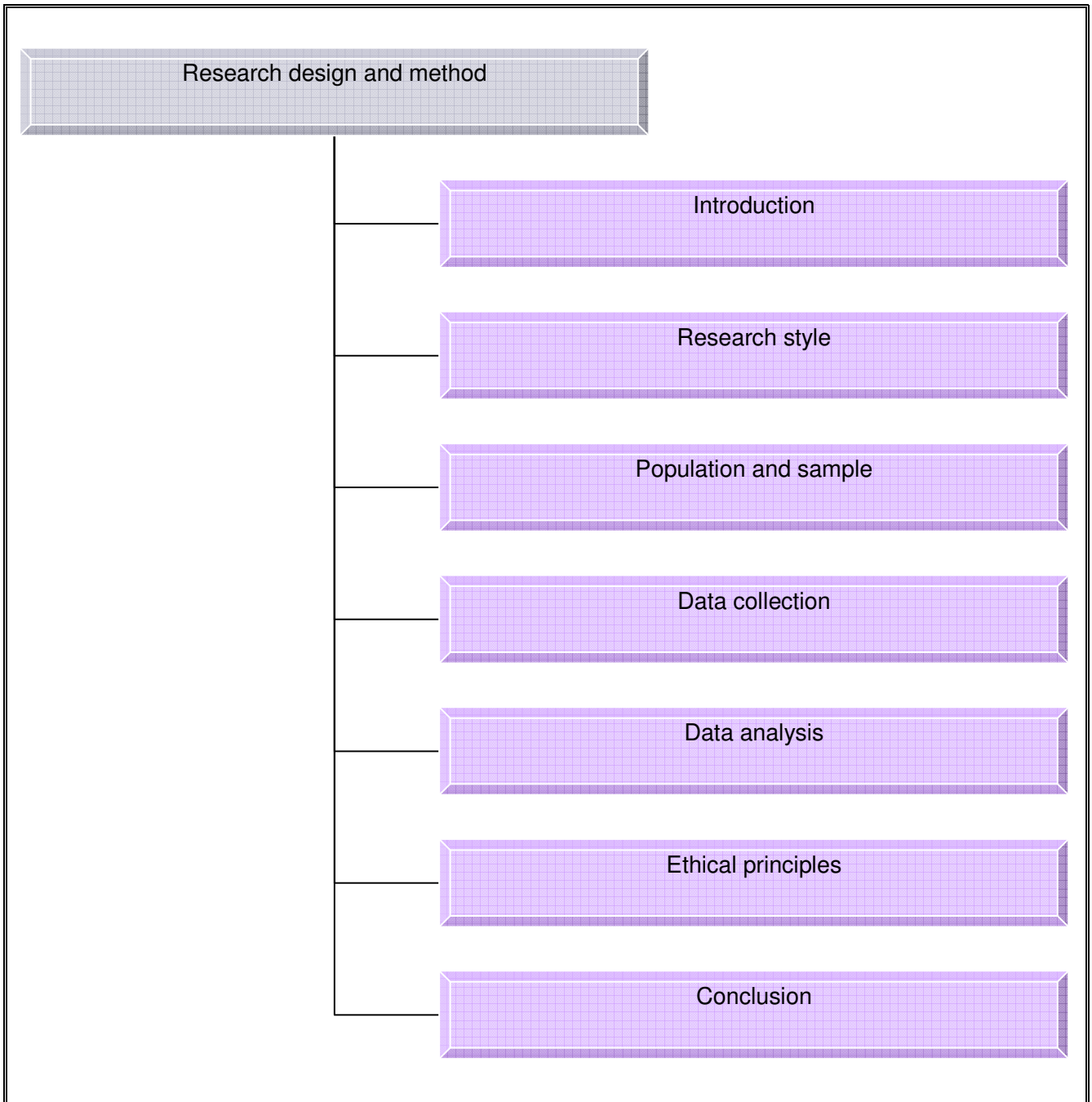
### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

*"A real friend  
Is one who walks in  
When the rest  
Of the world walks out."*

[fbru@chevrontexaco.com](mailto:fbru@chevrontexaco.com)

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

### Content of chapter



### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 1 the research question is stated namely: ***“What is the psychological value of friendship amongst adolescents?”***. Furthermore, the chapter lists some assumptions and aims for this research. The demarcation of the research is also given namely:

- Friendship as a phenomenon, with specific reference to friendship amongst adolescents.
- The effect that friendship has on the adolescent’s psychological functioning.

Chapter 2 gives an overview on the literature found on friendship and on the developmental phase of the adolescent. The chapter focuses on the different parental relationship- and attachment styles as well as the effect both have on an individual’s ability to initiate relationships in future. The chapter explores the needs that friendship addresses as well as alternatives to friendship. The concept of loneliness and the different kinds of loneliness are discussed. General problems with friendship are given and the chapter gives information on the adolescent as a developmental phase in human development.

The aim of Chapter 3 is to give an outline of the research process. Furthermore, the chapter will focus on the research aims, research style, population and sample, data collection, data analysis and the ethical principles concerning research. The final findings of the data collected will be given in Chapter 4 and finally the conclusions and recommendations for further study will be stated in Chapter 5.

The different research aims, which were also given in Chapter 1, will follow in the next section.

### 3.2 RESEARCH AIMS

I am of the opinion that the area of friendship amongst adolescents as well as the value thereof for the adolescent’s psychological well-being has been neglected and in need of research. Laursen and Zukauskienė (2007) confirms the lack of research on the phenomenon of friendship in the adolescent developmental phase, as previously noted in Chapter 1:

*“Whatever the reason for neglect, efforts to understand close friendship during adolescence are long overdue.”*

From an educational-psychological perspective, I would like to realize the following aims with this research:

- To do a literature research on the phenomenon of friendship.
- To do a literature research on the adolescent developmental phase.

- To do an empirical research with the aim to determine the psycho-educational value of friendship amongst adolescents.

The first two aims were realized by conducting a literature study in Chapter 2. The empirical research, which the third aim refers to, will be outlined in the next section and the findings will be presented in Chapter 4.

I would like to assume the following in this research:

- It may be empirically determined which psychological factors are present in initiating and sustaining a friendship.
- It may be assumed that by having friendships, the adolescent benefits psychologically.
- It may be assumed that the psychological factors which will benefit from the ability to successfully initiating and sustaining of friendships would include self-concept, self-confidence, self-respect, self knowledge, motivation, emotional control, assertiveness, setting of healthy boundaries, resilience, problem solving, decision making, conflict management, positive thinking patterns and self-talk, self-actualisation, independency, acceptance of challenges, positive role identification and making a career choice.
- It may be shown that adolescents struggling to initiate and sustain friendships are less emotionally well adapted than those who make friends easily.

In the next section the research design and method, which will be used in this research, will be discussed.

### **3.3 RESEARCH STYLE**

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:139) states the following: *“The nature of the data and the problem for research dictate the research methodology.”* Therefore, all data, factual information and human knowledge must ultimately reach the researcher either as words or as numbers. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) distinguishes quantitative research methodologies as dealing with data that is predominantly numerical and qualitative research methodologies as dealing with data that is predominantly verbal. Cohen and Swerdik (2005:222) confirm that quantitative research methods include techniques of data generation and analysis that rely primarily on mathematical or statistical procedures. McMillan and Schumacher (2006:14) suggests that qualitative and quantitative research differs according to the manner in which the data is collected and analyzed, but also according to the assumptions made about the world and the aim of the research. I am of the opinion that the research will benefit from the use of both research methodologies, the mixed-method design. This research will therefor use the

quantitative data collection method within a qualitative study. According to Cresswell (2009) by using different research methods, collecting and integrating different kinds of data, both qualitative and quantitative, the blend of strengths and advantages of the different methods counterbalance the weakness and disadvantages of the other. The mixed methods approach therefore is a combination of elements from both qualitative and quantitative research which may provide a better balance for findings than just either approach alone. In other words, quantitative data and qualitative data will be collected to answer a single research question (De Vos, 2001:361). Both quantitative research and qualitative research will be discussed individually to highlight the strengths of each.

The following table shows the key differences between a quantitative- and a qualitative research style.

**Table 3.1 Quantitative- versus qualitative research style (McMillan and Schumacher, 2006)**

Quantitative research style	Qualitative research style
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measure objective facts</li> <li>• Focus on variables</li> <li>• Reliability is key</li> <li>• Value free</li> <li>• Independent of context</li> <li>• Many cases, subjects</li> <li>• Statistical analysis</li> <li>• Researcher is detached</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct social reality, cultural meaning</li> <li>• Focus on interactive processes, events</li> <li>• Authenticity is key</li> <li>• Values are present and explicit</li> <li>• Situational constrained</li> <li>• Few cases, subjects</li> <li>• Thematic analysis</li> <li>• Researcher is involved</li> </ul>

The following research question needs to be addressed in this research:

**What is the psychological value of friendship amongst adolescents?**

I am of the opinion that the above research question will be best addressed mainly through the qualitative research style but incorporating the quantitative research style to compliment the qualitative data collected. Friendship, according to me, is an interactive process and affected by the adolescent's circumstances. I think that the phenomenon of friendship cannot be researched without paying



attention to the adolescent's different values. According to me, no two adolescents will view or experience the phenomenon of friendship in the same manner, making each experience authentic.

With the above mentioned in mind, Berg (2007:8) states that qualitative research seeks to answer questions by examining various social settings and the individuals who inhabit these settings. Morse and Richards (2007:47) confirm that the data that qualitative research seeks to understand is complex and can only be approached in context, since it seeks to understand how people make sense of the world and how they experience events. Therefore the qualitative research method will be followed in this research although some use of the quantitative research style will be incorporated into the research making it the mixed research method.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:134) list the following advantages and disadvantages of qualitative research.

The advantages of a qualitative research include:

- Revealing the nature of certain situations, settings, processes, relationships, systems and people.
- Enables a researcher to gain new insights about a particular phenomenon.
- Enables a researcher to develop new concepts or theoretical perspectives about the phenomenon.
- Enables the researcher to discover the problems that exist within the phenomenon.
- Allows the researcher to test the validity of certain assumptions, claims, theories or generalizations within real world contexts.
- Provides a means through which a researcher can judge the effectiveness of particular policies, practices or innovations.
- Conducted within natural contexts and it is more "true to life".

Disadvantages of qualitative research include:

- The findings of the research may be so specific to a particular context that they cannot be generalized to other contexts.
- Cause-effect relationships cannot be identified by the researcher.

The aim of the research is not to identify cause-effect relationships but rather to understand the phenomenon of friendship better amongst adolescents.

The qualitative research method can be defined as research which is used to answer questions about relationships among measured variables with the purpose of explaining, predicting and controlling phenomena (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005).

The following are advantages of using the quantitative research method (Delpont 2007):

- Quantitative researchers remain detached from the research participants which makes unbiased conclusions possible.
- Quantitative researchers rely more heavily on deductive reasoning, beginning with certain theories and then drawing conclusions about them, remaining objective in analyzing the data, conducting predetermined statistical procedures and using objective criteria to evaluate the outcomes of the procedures; resulting in more objective research.

The following are some disadvantages of using the quantitative research method:

- The studies done can be conducted in a somewhat artificial setting and then the results obtained may, in some cases, not be generalized to more natural settings (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005:97).

Ivankova, Cresswell and Clark (2007) are of the opinion that for many researchers doing social research it is desirable to combine qualitative and quantitative methods to improve the quality of their research. Quantitative research means that the data will be quantified or counted and the participants' perceptions and emotional reactions will be reported (Cresswell and Garrett 2008). As mentioned earlier, the mixed-method research will be used in this research.

### **3.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLE**

Strydom (2001:190) states that in order to conduct research a population must be identified from which a sample will be drawn. The researcher considers this sample as representative of the population. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:145) the research question will indicate how the sample will be identified.

According to Gall, Gall and Borg (2007:601) no specific sample size is stipulated in phenomenological research. Gall et. al (2007) states however that the sample being studied should have direct experience of the phenomenon being studied. The population in this research will include adolescents. According to Erikson (Louw 2007) the adolescent phase stretches from 13 to 19 years of age. This research will therefore also include adolescents in the age range of 13 to 19 years. A sample will be identified after a questionnaire on the relevant aspects surrounding the phenomenon of friendship has been answered by 20 adolescents in the above mentioned age range. From the 20 participants 5

adolescents will be identified for a further individual interview. Both male and female adolescents will take part in the research. Academic performance and intelligence will not be criteria when selecting the sample. English, Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking adolescents will be included.

Participant referrals will be the basis for choosing respondents for this study. Friends and acquaintances of the Intern Educational Psychologist at the place of internship that might be likely to know an adolescent willing to participate in the study will be contacted. A purposive sampling method will therefore be used. According to Wellington (2000:58) purposive sampling involves using or making a contact with a specific purpose in mind. The purpose in this research is to involve respondents in the adolescent developmental phase that has direct experience with the phenomenon of friendship. Five adolescents will be chosen for the interviews. Two adolescents who finds it difficult to initiate and sustain a friendship and three adolescents who have difficulty in initiating and sustaining a friendship will be chosen for the interviews, however only after consent from their parents as well as verbal consent from the adolescents.

The next section will attempt to give the method that will be used to collect data for the research.

### **3.5 DATA COLLECTION**

According to Best and Kahn (1993:184) qualitative research methods consists of three kinds of data collection, namely: in-depth and open-ended interviews, direct observation and written documents. Wellington (2000:95) lists a wide range of other techniques including questionnaires, standardized tests, scales, repertory grids, life histories, role-play, simulation and gaming.

The following table gives a summary according to Wellington (2000:95) of the most commonly used techniques in data collection.

**Table 3.2 Data collection techniques (Wellington 2000:95)**

<b>Data collection techniques</b>	<b>Different types within this technique</b>
1. Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant observation</li> <li>• Systematic observation</li> <li>• Simple observation</li> </ul>

2. Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured interview</li> <li>• Semi-structured interview</li> <li>• Open-ended interview</li> </ul>
3. Use of documents and records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written materials</li> <li>• Recorded materials</li> </ul>
4. Other techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questionnaires</li> <li>• Standardized tests</li> <li>• Scales</li> <li>• Repertory grids</li> <li>• Life histories</li> <li>• Role play</li> <li>• Simulation</li> <li>• Gaming</li> </ul>

In this research, qualitative- and quantitative data will be collected by means of a questionnaire and interviews in order to research the phenomenon of friendship and the psychological value of friendship amongst adolescents.

### 3.5.1 The questionnaire

According to Delport in De Vos (2002:172), the questionnaire is the most commonly used research instrument to collect data. Burton and Bartlett (2009) suggest that researchers should be clear about why they are planning to use a questionnaire to gather data. They state that whether the questionnaire is the most appropriate method or not will depend upon the type of information that needs to be collected to answer the research questions and the respondents it is going to be collected from. In this research a questionnaire will be designed which includes the different aspects of the phenomenon of friendship discussed in the literature study in Chapter 2 of this study. The questionnaire will serve to gain better understanding on the different aspects of the phenomenon of friendship. The questionnaire will also assist in the identification of five suitable adolescents for the interviews. These five adolescents will serve as the sample for the research.

Burton and Bartlett (2009) further states that a questionnaire tends to illicit responses that fit into broad categories, with little opportunity for respondents to express complex emotional feelings in response to impersonal questions. With this research I will attempt to eliminate this disadvantage by choosing five suitable adolescents whom I will interview afterwards. In the interview I will deal with these complex emotional feelings and experiences concerning the phenomenon of friendship.

Wellington (2000:104) emphasizes that a pilot questionnaire is essential in the sense that the printed word raises problems unforeseen in spoken, human contact, even if the questionnaire is developed from prior research methods. He suggests testing it on colleagues, friends and family at every stage to ensure the questionnaire's comprehensibility. In this research, I plan to first do a pilot questionnaire before administering the questionnaire to adolescents. The aim of the pilot questionnaire will be to test the clarity of the questions asked, the correctness of the language used and to collect commentary on the effectiveness of the questionnaire. Through administering the pilot questionnaire, any difficulties with any aspect of the questionnaire can be changed or adapted before I administer it to the adolescents who will participate in the research.

According to Neuman in Wellington (2000:104) a well-designed questionnaire begins with closed questions, leaving the open-ended, "matter of opinion" questions to the end. Neuman recommends that the researcher should sequence questions to minimize the discomfort and confusion of the respondents. He suggests that if a questionnaire is broken down into sections, topics or themes, then each section should follow the following pattern: closed, matter-of-fact questions to begin followed by the open-ended questions requiring opinions, feelings and value judgments at the end. Neuman states that the above mentioned can be time-consuming and difficult to answer – and hard to analyse - so therefore best to avoid too many. He does, however, feel that they yield fascinating qualitative data. In this research I will attempt to follow Neuman's (2000) recommendation on how to set a questionnaire. I will divide the questionnaire into sections, each section starting with closed questions and then follow with open-ended questions. Because the research is qualitative in nature, the open-ended questions will be of utmost importance to this research. The questionnaire uses the Likert-scale of the aggregate scaling method with four options in order to eliminate the "comfortable" neutral option of the three- or five option scale.

The following principles set by Berg (2007) were taken into account in the design of the *Friendship Elements Questionnaire*:

- Avoid jargon, slang and abbreviations.
- Avoid ambiguity, confusion and vagueness.
- Avoid double-barrelled questions.
- Avoid leading questions.
- Avoid asking questions that are beyond respondent's capabilities.
- Avoid false premises.
- Avoid asking about future intentions.
- Avoid double negatives.

The rationale for the *Friendship Elements Questionnaire* will follow next.

The *Friendship Elements Questionnaire* was designed according to the findings of the literature study in Chapter 2 with the aim to provide qualitative data regarding the friendship elements amongst adolescents. The questionnaire is made up of eight subsections, each investigating a particular element of friendship. The rationale for each subsection will be discussed.

#### Subsection 1: Biographical information

Biographical information is requested in order to understand the participant's family structure. Information about the family structure includes aspects such as a single parent household, number of siblings and their ages. The age of the adolescent is noted as the adolescent phase is divided into early, middle and late adolescence, each with its unique characteristics. The language, gender and type of school are also noted as it may play a significant role in the adolescent's social life. The parents' occupation might play a role in the adolescent's life and therefore the occupations of the parents are also noted.

#### Subsection 2: Parental relationship styles

The four parental relationship styles namely: Authoritarian-, permissive-, authoritative- and negligent parental style are investigated. According to the literature research done in Chapter 2 of this research, parental relationship styles play a significant role in the kind of attachment a child learns to form with others. Parental relationship style also plays a role in the adolescent's social development and therefore the role that it plays in initiating and sustaining friendships could be further investigated.

#### Subsection 3: Attachment styles

As mentioned in subsection 2, the attachment styles influences the individual's ability to develop other relationships. The following attachment styles will be investigated: Secure-, avoidant- and the anxious attachment style. The influence the different attachment styles have on the adolescent's ability to initiate and sustain a friendship will be investigated.

#### Subsection 4: Needs friendship addresses

The six needs that were discussed in the literature research in Chapter 2 of this research will be investigated. The needs that friendship addresses are according to Gottman and Parker (1987) the following: Sense of belonging, sense of stability, sharing of ourselves, physical support, reassurance of our worth and personality support. These needs will all be investigated in the questionnaire.

#### Subsection 5: Loneliness

Loneliness as the opposite on the continuum of friendship will be explored. The five specific kinds of loneliness according to Gaev (1976) will be investigated should it be present in the adolescent's life. The different types are: Loneliness of the inner self, physical-, emotional-, social-, and spiritual loneliness.

#### Subsection 6: Alternatives to friendship

Other relationships and non-social alternatives to friendship will be explored. Both these alternatives are discussed in more detail in the literature research in Chapter 2 of this research. Both will be investigated by means of the questionnaire as they might influence the adolescent's friendships.

#### Subsection 7: Friendship difficulties

The two main friendship difficulties will be explored in the questionnaire. Problems initiating friendships and other general problems with friendships will be explored. Social anxiety, poor body image and poor social skill are included in problems initiating a friendship. General problems include aspects such as: Low close esteem, alienation, mistrust, fear of self-disclosure, pacing problems, unrealistic expectations, low assertiveness, restriction of affect, friendship selection and fear of entrapment.

#### Subsection 8: Psycho-social functioning

The psycho-social functioning of the adolescent will be explored. This is however a very broad topic and therefore only some aspects around self concept will be touched on in the questionnaire.

The *Friendship Elements Questionnaire* can be viewed in Annexure A of this research.

Information on the interview that will follow after the administering of the questionnaires will be discussed in the next section.

### **3.5.2 The interview**

The interview can be defined as a conversation with the specific purpose to gather information (Berg 2007:89). Berg states that the interview is an especially effective method of collecting information for certain types of research questions and for addressing certain types of assumptions. Taylor and Bogdan (in Berg 2007:97) report that interviewing can provide a useful means of access, particularly when investigators are interested in understanding the perceptions of participants or learning how participants come to attach meanings to phenomena or events.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:146) the interview can produce useful information about the phenomenon in question and the researcher may ask questions about the phenomenon related to the following:

- The individual's feelings and motives.
- Factual information.
- The individual's beliefs and perspectives about the facts.
- Present and past behaviours.
- Thoughts around standards of behaviour.
- Thoughts and feelings about why individuals feel that their behaviour is desirable or not.

Goodwin (2008:443) confirms that the most important advantage of an interview is that it has the potential to be comprehensive and yield highly detailed information. He states that the problem of unclear questions is reduced by having an interviewer presenting the questions, who can clarify it on the spot. Goodwin warns though that the interview can be costly, it can be complicated logistically and the interviewer can be biased.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005) a phenomenological research using semi-structured interviews is a study that attempts to understand people's perceptions, perspectives and understandings of a phenomenon or a particular situation. Sandelowski (1999:79) states that there is no specific sample size stipulated for phenomenological studies, as numbers are unimportant in ensuring the adequacy of the sampling strategy, but he states clearly that the participants should be selected according to their direct experience of the phenomenon being studied.

The following table lists the different styles of interviewing and their characteristics.

**Table 3.3      Styles of interviewing (Wellington 2000:74)**

<b>Unstructured</b>	<b>Semi-structured</b>	<b>Structured</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some 'control' on both sides</li> <li>• Very flexible</li> <li>• Guided by the interviewee</li> <li>• Direction unpredictable</li> <li>• May be difficult to analyse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More control by interviewer</li> <li>• Flexible</li> <li>• Not completely predetermined</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most control by interviewer</li> <li>• Less flexible</li> <li>• Guided by researcher's pre-determined agenda</li> <li>• More predictable</li> <li>• May provide easier framework for analysis</li> </ul>



In this study five adolescents will be interviewed. These five adolescents will be identified from the population of 20 adolescents who will complete a questionnaire on the friendship elements mentioned in section 3.4.1. The participants will be interviewed individually. The semi-structured interview type will be used as I am of the opinion that this type of interview will fit the participants, being adolescents, the best.

The following principles, according to Burton and Bartlett (2009:87), will be taken into account when conducting the interviews:

1. The quality and nature of questioning

The interviewer needs to be clear about what experiences he wants of the respondent and he must ensure that all key areas are covered in the interview. The appropriate language should be used for the respondent and the interviewer needs to consider how sensitive issues should best be presented.

2. Listening skills

Interviewers should use verbal and facial signals to indicate interest in the respondent's responses. The interviewer should give a summary at various intervals to show that he is listening and to check that the responses are correctly recorded.

3. Body language

The interviewer should use appropriate eye contact and facial expressions to encourage the respondent when suitable and should also offer empathy in response to the interviewee.

4. Setting and atmosphere

The interviewer will be in 'control' of the setting as he 'set up' the interview, but he will also be the one who determines the atmosphere he wishes to create. Consideration needs to be given to the timing of the interview and the area where it takes place which will make a significant difference to how the interviewee will react.

5. Appropriate conduct of the interview

The interviewer needs to treat the interviewee in an appropriate manner in order to elicit relevant information. By the end of the interview the interviewee should feel good about the interview, comfortable that he had his say and that someone has listened to him.

The method of data analysis will follow in the next section.

### 3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Patton (2002:369) describes qualitative data analysis as follows:

*“The challenge is to make sense of massive amounts of data, reduce the volume of information, identify significant patterns and construct a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal.”*

Miles and Huberman in Wellington (2000:134) suggest the following stages in qualitative data analysis:

- Stage 1:       Data reduction  
Data is selected and condensed. In this stage, data are collected, summarized, coded and sorted out into themes, clusters and categories.
  
- Stage 2:       Data display  
Data is organized and assembled, then displayed in pictorial, diagrammatic or visual form. This ‘display’ allows the researcher to conceptualize the data, leading towards interpretation and conclusion drawing.
  
- Stage 3:       Conclusion drawing  
This stage involves interpreting and giving meaning to data. This process involves searching for themes, patterns and regularities as well as the activity of comparing or contrasting units of data.

In this research the data collection techniques that will be used is the questionnaire, with close- and open-ended questions, and the semi-structured interview. The quantitative data collection method within a qualitative study will be used. The above mentioned way of analysing data by Miles and Huberman will be followed in this research. Data will be organized and displayed visually or diagrammatically. The questionnaires of the 20 respondents will be compared and all answers concerning the different aspects of friendship will be interpreted. The semi-structured interviews will be used to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon and the psychological value of friendship amongst the adolescent. Recurring themes and patterns considering the questionnaires as well as the interviews will be noted and interpreted.

In the next section the ethical principles involved with research will be discussed.

### 3.7 ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

The term ethics comes from the Greek word *ethos*, meaning character. According to Israel and Hay (2006:12) ethics “*is concerned with perspectives on right and proper conduct*”. Sieber (1992:3) refers to ethics as the systematic study of value concepts – good, bad, right, wrong – and the general principles that justify applying these concepts.

The following ethical principles according to Burton and Bartlett (2009) should be applied when doing research:

#### 1. Informed consent

Participants should be informed about the nature of the study and should be given the choice to participate or not. Participation is strictly voluntary. Participants have the right to withdraw from the research if they so decide, even after initially giving consent.

In this research the nature of the study will be explained to each participant and I will also explain to them that they have the right to withdraw at any stage of the research process. I will only begin with data collection in the form of questionnaires and interviews after I received written consent from each participant. In this research the participants are adolescents and therefore the written consent will be given by their parents or guardians. Verbal assent from the adolescents were obtained before the research were conducted. The letter to the parents requesting permission to conduct the proposed research can be viewed in Annexure B of this research.

#### 2. Confidentiality and privacy

Participants have the right to privacy and under no circumstances should the responses or nature and quality of the participant’s performance be revealed. Respondents should be given code numbers and if a particular person’s behaviour is described in depth in the research report, he or she should be given a pseudonym to remain anonymous. In this research I will attend to each participant’s right to privacy. Each participant’s identity will be protected by using code names namely: participant A, B, C and so forth. All responses will be treated confidentially.

#### 3. Honesty and openness

Researchers should at all times report their findings honestly without misinterpretation or misleading others. Credit should at all times be given to others to avoid plagiarism and documentary theft. Without acknowledgement of using other’s ideas is unethical and circumspect. In this research I attend to the principle of honesty and openness. I document and acknowledge all sources and care will be taken to present and analyse data correctly.

#### 4. Access to findings

It is an important principle that any final report or submission of findings is presented to the respondents or at least made accessible to them. In this research I will give feedback to the participants and inform them on where they will be able to find the final report should they have the need to view the final report. Feedback to each of the individual participants parents as well as the adolescent were given after the empirical study. Therapy were recommended to some of the adolescents who were in need of individual therapy.

#### 5. Avoiding harm

Participants should never be exposed to physical- or psychological harm. Participants should know in advance when they might experience any psychological discomfort. Participants exposed to any psychological discomfort should be debriefed or counselled immediately after participation. In this research I will attend to the principle of avoiding harm by informing the participants about the nature of the study before I start with the process of collecting data. The research will not pose any harm to the participants and neither the questionnaire, nor the interview will inflict psychological harm. Should I, however, notice any psychological discomfort during the administering of the questionnaire or the conducting of the interview, I will debrief the participant afterwards.

According to Alston and Bowles (2003) apart from the above restoring of participants and reporting of findings is also of great importance. This was also adhered to in this study as the participants, the adolescents as well as their parents, had the opportunity to talk to me after the interview as well as at any later stage. The reporting of the findings were also adhered to in this research. The findings were reported in a scientific manner and the limitations of were reported. The results were also reported to the adolescents and their parents.

### **3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS**

Field and Behrman (2004) feel that the word “trustworthy” better describes validity and reliability in qualitative research. The criteria for trustworthiness are: Credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Kvale 2002). Credibility refers to the process of internal validity or believable findings, transferability refers to the process where the research is applicable to other contexts and settings, dependability determines whether the results are consistent, reproducible and trustworthy and confirmability refers how neutral or objective the findings are. In this research all these criteria of trustworthiness were taken into account and adhered to. The Friendship Elements Questionnaire was designed based on the literature given in Chapter 2 in order to ensure the trustworthiness of the research.

### **3.9 CONCLUSION**

The focus of this chapter was to provide a detailed description of the empirical investigation which included the research design and method. The research aims were stated and the research style that will be used namely the mixed research style (a quantitative research style within a qualitative research style) was given. The population and sampling were discussed as well as the data collection methods that will be used, namely the questionnaire and interview. Each of the above methods and technique's theoretical background were fully explored. Finally the ethical principles which need to be applied when conducting any research were stated in order to guide correct conduct in the empirical investigation that will follow.

Chapter 4 which follows provides an analysis of the data as well as the presentation, discussion and interpretation of the empirical research results.

## CHAPTER 4

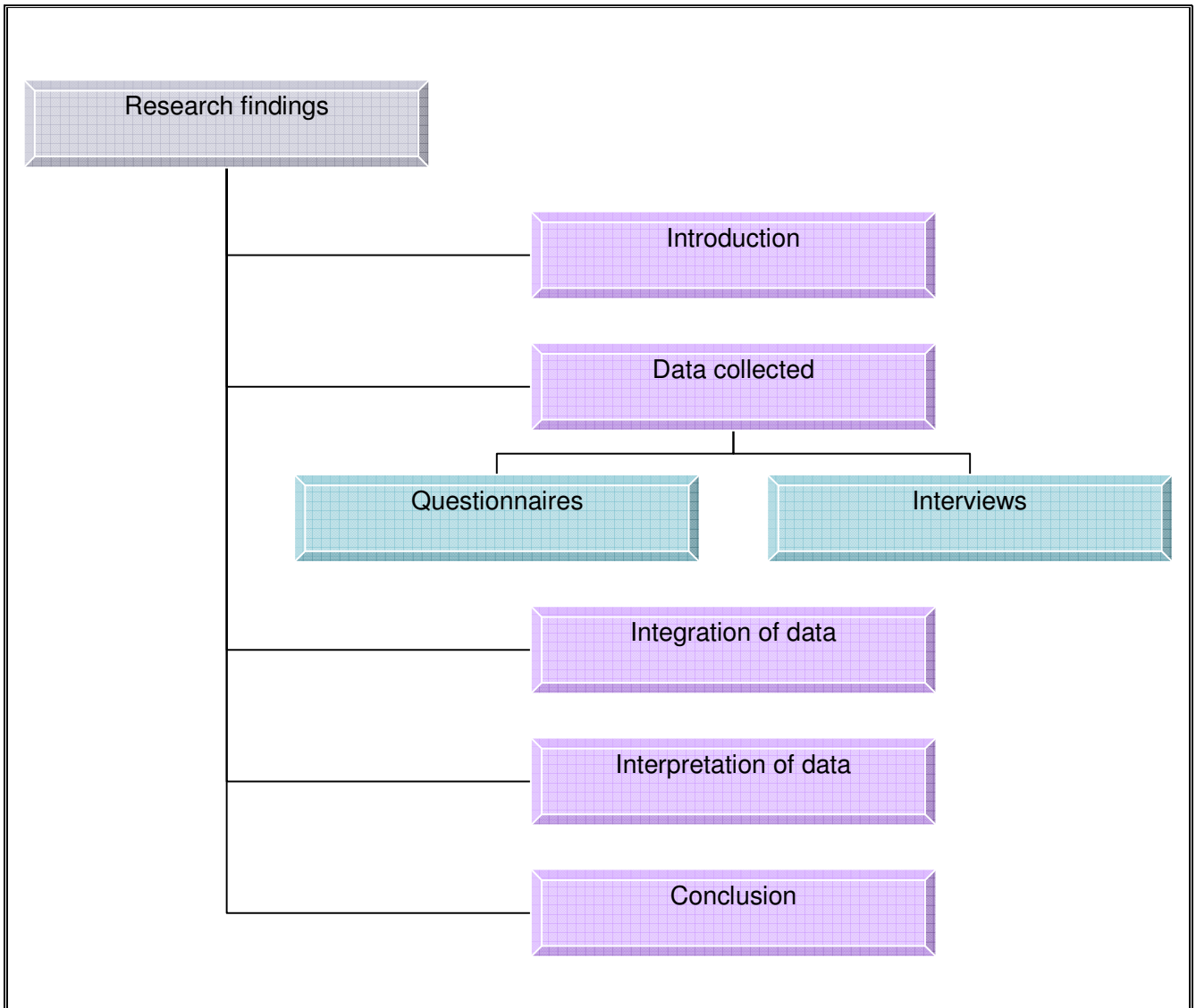
### RESEARCH FINDINGS

*"If all of my friends were  
To jump off a bridge,  
I wouldn't jump with them,  
I'd be at the bottom to  
Catch them."*

(fbru@chevrontexaco.com)

## CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

### Content of chapter



## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 served as an orientation to the research. The research question is stated in this chapter, namely: *“What is the psychological value of friendship amongst adolescents?”*. Furthermore, the chapter lists some assumptions and aims for this research. The demarcation of the research is also given. Lastly the reader is given a preview of the chapters that will follow.

Chapter 2 gave an overview on the literature found on friendship and on the developmental phase of the adolescent. The aim of Chapter 3 was to give an outline of the research process. Furthermore, the chapter focused on the research aims, research style, population and sample, data collection, data analysis and the ethical principles concerning this research. Chapter 4 will give the results of the empirical investigation. The literature given in the previous chapters will serve as a foundation of knowledge on which the empirical research rests.

The next section will show the results of the data collected through the empirical research.

## 4.2 DATA COLLECTED

Chapter 3 focused on the research style that was used in this research on the phenomenon of friendship amongst adolescents and the psychological value that friendship has on the adolescent if any. The research style that was used in this research was a combination of a quantitative research style combined with a qualitative research style. The main style used was however the qualitative research style. Leedy and Ormrod (2005:139) distinguishes quantitative research methodologies as dealing with data that is predominantly numerical and qualitative research methodologies as dealing with data that is predominantly verbal. Cohen and Swerdik (2005:222) confirm that quantitative research methods include techniques of data generation and analysis that rely primarily on mathematical or statistical procedures.

Berg (2007:8) states that qualitative research seeks to answer questions by examining various social settings and the individuals who inhabit these settings. Morse and Richards (2007:47) confirm that the data that qualitative research seeks to understand is complex and can only be approached in context, since it seeks to understand how people make sense of the world and how they experience events. Therefore the decision was made to mainly follow the qualitative research method in combination with the quantitative research method but limiting my use of the quantitative method.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:134) a few advantages of qualitative research are for example that it reveals the nature of certain situations, settings, processes, relationships, systems and people,



it enables a researcher to gain new insights about a particular phenomenon (in this instance friendship), it enables a researcher to develop new concepts or theoretical perspectives about the phenomenon, it enables the researcher to discover the problems that exist within the phenomenon, it allows the researcher to test the validity of certain assumptions, claims, theories or generalizations within real world contexts, it provides a means through which a researcher can judge the effectiveness of particular policies, practices or innovations and qualitative research is conducted within natural contexts and is therefore more “true to life”. Qualitative research has disadvantages however which includes the following: The findings of the research may be so specific to a particular context that they cannot be generalized to other contexts and cause-effect relationships cannot be identified by the researcher.

The aim of the research is not to identify cause-effect relationships but rather to understand the phenomenon of friendship amongst adolescents in more depth and therefore I decided to follow the qualitative research method with limited use of the quantitative research method in order to make it more authentic.

Two types of data collection techniques were used namely the questionnaire and the interview.

#### **4.2.1 The questionnaire**

According to Delport in De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2007:172), the questionnaire is the most commonly used research instrument to collect data. Burton and Bartlett (2009) suggest that researchers should be clear about why they are planning to use a questionnaire to gather data. They state that whether the questionnaire is the most appropriate method or not will depend upon the type of information that needs to be collected to answer the research questions and the respondents it is going to be collected from.

In this research a questionnaire was designed which included the different aspects of the phenomenon of friendship discussed in the literature study in Chapter 2 of this study. The following elements of friendship featured in the questionnaire: Parental relationship styles, attachment styles, friendship needs, loneliness, alternatives to friendship, difficulties with friendship and the general psychological functioning of the adolescent.

The *Friendship Elements Questionnaire*, designed to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon of friendship amongst adolescents, were filled in by 20 respondents. The following principles set by Neuman in Wellington (2000:181) were avoided in the design of the *Friendship Elements Questionnaire*: Jargon, slang, abbreviations, ambiguity, confusion, double-barrelled questions,

leading questions, false premises and double negatives. Wellington (2000:104) emphasizes that a pilot questionnaire is essential in the sense that the printed word raises problems unforeseen in spoken, human contact, even if the questionnaire is developed from prior research methods. He suggests testing it on colleagues, friends and family at every stage to ensure the questionnaire's comprehensibility.

A pilot questionnaire was filled in by colleagues and friends before the 20 respondents mentioned above, completed the questionnaire to ensure the questionnaire's comprehensibility. Changes were made on the pilot questionnaire and the final questionnaire was given to the 20 respondents. From the 20 respondents, five respondents were identified which served as the respondents for this research. The data collected from the *Friendship Elements Questionnaire* will follow in the table below.

**Table 4.1 Biographical data of the research population**

<b>BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION</b>		
<b>Gender:</b>	Male:	9
	Female:	11
<b>Age:</b>	13 years:	7
	14 years:	1
	15 years:	2
	16 years:	4
	17 years:	2
	18 years:	2
	19 years:	2
<b>Home language:</b>	English:	5
	Afrikaans:	14
	Xhosa:	1
<b>Type of school:</b>	Government school:	14
	Private school:	2
	Home schooling:	3
	Tertiary school:	1
<b>Marital status of parents:</b>	Married:	13
	Divorced:	5
	Remarried:	2

<b>Siblings:</b>	Brothers:	9
	Sisters:	3
	Brothers and sisters:	6
	Only child:	2
<b>Primary caregivers:</b>	Parents / stepparents:	18
	Grandparents:	1
	Guardians (parents deceased):	1

The following table gives the data collected from the 20 respondents on each of the different elements of friendship. The table shows how many respondents chose a specific response in the close-ended questions in the Friendship Elements Questionnaire.

**Table 4.2 The responses of the 20 respondents on the close-ended questions in the Friendship Elements Questionnaire**

<b>PARENTAL RELATIONSHIP STYLES</b>					
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
1.	My parents are very strict and I have to obey their orders without asking questions.	7	10	3	0
2.	I am allowed to do what I want to do without restriction from my parents.	2	3	7	8
3.	My parents discuss the reasons around their rules and restrictions in our home.	12	5	2	1
4.	I have to make my own decisions without the support from my parents	5	5	3	7
<b>ATTACHMENT STYLES</b>					
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
6.	Other people can be trusted enough to know that they will be there when you need them.	7	10	3	0
7.	I prefer spending time by myself rather than being with other people.	3	4	4	9
8.	People hurt you when you get too close to them emotionally.	5	3	7	5
9.	It is difficult to trust other people, especially strangers.	7	9	2	2
<b>FRIENDSHIP NEEDS</b>					
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
11.	It is important for me to feel that I am part of a group.	7	7	3	3
12.	It is important for me to know if my friends feel and think the same as I do about things.	9	4	6	1
13.	It is important to me to know that I have someone to talk to about anything.	13	5	1	1

14.	It is important to me to know that I have someone to help me when I am in trouble.	13	5	1	1
15.	It is important to me to have someone in my life to help me to believe in myself.	10	7	2	1
16.	It is important to me to have someone in my life that can show me that I am wrong about something and help me to change for the better.	10	7	2	1
<b>KINDS OF LONELINESS</b>					
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
18.	Sometimes I feel that I don't really know who I am.	4	7	4	5
19.	Sometimes I feel a need for more physical contact from the people I care for.	5	3	7	5
20.	Sometimes I feel sad because I have no-one to share my inner feelings with.	5	4	6	5
21.	Sometimes I feel sad because I don't really belong in a group.	1	1	10	8
22.	Sometimes I feel empty inside because I don't understand the meaning of life.	7	1	7	5
<b>ALTERNATIVES TO FRIENDSHIP</b>					
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
25.	I prefer spending time with a family member rather than a friend.	3	11	5	1
26.	I prefer doing an activity at home by myself than spending time with a friend.	3	6	5	6
<b>FRIENDSHIP DIFFICULTIES</b>					
		<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>
28.	I feel anxious around people.	1	6	5	8
29.	I feel self-conscious of my body.	9	2	4	5
30.	I feel misunderstood when I am around people.	4	1	8	7
31.	Once people get to know me, they might not like me.	3	5	5	7
32.	Sometimes I feel I am different from other people.	9	6	4	1
33.	Other people are dangerous and you can never predict when they will hurt you.	8	6	4	2
34.	It is difficult for me to talk to other people about my inner thoughts and feelings.	10	4	5	1
35.	I feel a need to have people around me at all times.	6	6	6	2
36.	I get annoyed when a friend does something that I would never do as a friend.	10	6	2	2
37.	I find it difficult to say no to my friends' requests.	9	5	5	1

38.	People say I am a cold an unaffectionate person.	2	4	6	8
39.	It is important to me to be friends with the popular crowd.	3	1	9	7
40.	Friends take too much of your privacy and alone time.	4	0	11	5

From the 20 respondents five respondents were identified to be interviewed to explore the phenomenon of friendship amongst adolescents more in depth. In the next section the data obtained from the individual interviews of the five respondents will be given.

#### 4.2.2 The interview

Burton and Bartlett (2009) states that a questionnaire tends to illicit responses that fit into broad categories, with little opportunity for respondents to express complex emotional feelings in response to impersonal questions. With this research I attempted to eliminate this disadvantage by choosing five suitable adolescents after they completed the *Friendship Elements Questionnaire* whom I interviewed. In the interview I dealt with these complex emotional feelings and experiences concerning the phenomenon of friendship.

Denzin and Lincoln (2003) state the following: “Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret phenomenon in terms of the meaning people bring to them.” In this research five respondents were individually interviewed. The semi-structured interview type was used. The adolescents were interviewed in order to give an illustration of their friendships in their own natural settings, and the meanings they give to their friends and friendships. The influence that friendship has on these adolescents’ psychological functioning was also investigated. The literature study in Chapter 2 as well as the *Friendship Elements Questionnaire* filled in by the respondents served as a guide for the interviewing process. Observation during the interview was used to observe the respondents’ general psychological functioning.

The following section gives the data obtained through the interviews conducted on the five respondents.

#### 4.2.2.1 Respondent A

##### **Biographical information**

Name	:	Ivan
Gender	:	Male
Chronological age	:	13 years, 11 months
Home language	:	Afrikaans
Type of school	:	Government school
Grade	:	7
Occupation of father	:	Self employed (family business)
Occupation of mother	:	Secretary
Siblings	:	Brother, age 10 years
Parents' marital status:		Married
Primary caregiver(s)	:	Biological parents

##### **Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire**

Ivan experiences his parents' parental relationship style to be a combination of the authoritarian- and authoritative relationship style. His attachment style, according to his responses, shows to be a combination of the secure-, avoidant (fearful) and anxious attachment style. Ivan's need for friendship includes the following aspects: Sense of belonging, sharing of ourselves, physical support, reassurance of our worth and personality support. Sense of stability is also a need of friendship to Ivan but not as strong as the needs mentioned above. According to his responses he does not experience any form of loneliness. Ivan indicated that he sometimes prefer other relationships, his family in particular, above friends. Alienation, unrealistic expectations and low assertiveness were marked by Ivan as being problems he experiences in his friendships.

##### **Data obtained from the interview**

Ivan presented as being confident, relaxed and very talkative during the interview. He was dressed in his rugby practice clothes as he was going to a rugby practice session afterwards. His appearance was neat and he seems to be a friendly and well-mannered individual.

From the interview it emerged that his life revolves around rugby. He has a positive relationship with his father as well as his mother. He sees them as being very strict but they are always there when he needs someone to talk to or in need of help. He spends a lot of time with his family doing things like going to their farm, riding four-wheelers, doing river-rafting or just wrestling with his father. His mother is his comforter when he is in need of comfort. He has ambivalent feelings towards his younger brother. He fights a lot with him but loves him very much and will protect him whenever necessary.

He enjoys being with his friends and doing things with them. He feels he can trust them with anything. He sees himself as spontaneous and according to him feels relaxed with almost anybody, even people he just met. He does however mention that he is slightly more cautious around people older than thirty years.

Ivan feels that he needs friends in his life because they make life more enjoyable. Rugby is a very important aspect in his life and he states that a rugby team has 15 players who are all friends with each other. To Ivan loneliness is something that is caused by the fact that God made us companions of each other. According to Ivan God placed a need in each of us to have a friend or friends. If this need is not fulfilled the person will feel lonely which will drive him to make friends. Ivan struggles with hyperactivity for which he takes medicine. This, however, does make him feel alone sometimes because he feels that when he took his medicine all the other children are excited but he does not share their excitement the way they do.

The concept *friend* to Ivan means that there is someone who will always be there for you. According to him friendship means that you will never have to be alone. His expectation in friendship is that a friend will do for him whatever he would have done for his friend. He has only battled once to make a friend because the individual he wanted to make friends with was older than him and seemed to think Ivan is inferior to him. He lost friends in the past when they relocated and others when they became friends with individuals who, according to Ivan, negatively influenced others. He states that he has never been rejected by friends. He feels that the most common problem in friendships is when friends quibble about little things which have the tendency to become serious arguments. He feels that his friends make him feel good about himself. They compliment him on his sport and academics which make him feel proud. He states that he will never compromise his values to fit in with his friends. He feels that his friends respect his uniqueness and worthiness as an individual.

According to Ivan his strong points are playing rugby and pool. He excels in mathematics and most of his other subjects. He makes friends easily and he is good with playing card-games and putt-putt. He states that his weaknesses are self control, playing cricket and keeping quiet in class. He feels content about himself and would not want to change anything, except that he would prefer his mother not cutting his hair so short. According to him, his friends will describe him as someone who does not know his end, like a Jack Russell. He thinks they will mention his hyperactivity.

His best moment in his life involves rugby when he got through to play for the Cheetahs as well as when his team won a school who has been unbeaten for six years in a row. According to him he shared this moment with his friends and family. His worst day in his life was when he only needed half

a mark to get full marks for a mathematics exam paper. Ivan is very competitive. He shared this moment with his teacher, friends and family.

Ivan shows self-confidence and a positive self-concept. His self-talk seems to be positive. He shows self-respect and self-knowledge. He is a motivated and competitive individual who actualises his potential. He accepts challenges and responsibilities. He has high norms and values. He seems to be self-assertive. Ivan talks about his emotions and thoughts with ease. He takes medication for his hyperactivity and struggles at times with self-control.

#### *4.2.2.2 Respondent B*

##### **Biographical information**

Name	:	Zizi
Gender	:	Female
Chronological age	:	13 years, 2 months
Home language	:	Xhosa / English
Type of school	:	Private school
Grade	:	7
Occupation of father	:	Self employed
Occupation of mother	:	Owner of McDonalds
Siblings	:	Half brother age 7 years Half sister age 18 years
Parents' marital status:	:	Divorced and remarried
Primary caregiver(s)	:	Mother and stepfather

##### **Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire**

Zizi described her parents' parental relationship style to be characteristic of a combination of the authoritarian- and the negligent parental relationship style. Her attachment style is a combination between the secure- and the anxious attachment style. She shows a strong need for friendship to fulfil the following needs: Sharing of ourselves, physical support, reassurance of our worth and personality support. She also shows a need for a sense of belonging to be fulfilled by friendship but to a lesser degree than the list mentioned above. Zizi experiences the following types of loneliness: Loneliness of inner self, physical loneliness, emotional loneliness and spiritual loneliness. She does not prefer any alternatives to friendship. Zizi experiences the following difficulties in her friendships: Poor body image, poor social skills, low conversational esteem, alienation, mistrust, pacing problems and unrealistic expectations.



### **Data obtained from the interview**

Zizi presented herself throughout the interview as a spontaneous, talkative and friendly young girl. She seemed to be at ease almost immediately in the interview. She seems confident, shows a positive self-concept and is very enthusiastic. Zizi was comfortably dressed and her hair was neatly tied back. She seems to be a well-mannered girl with very well developed social skills.

Zizi's biological parents got divorced before she was born. Her biological father stays in Port Elizabeth and she has very limited contact with him. Her contact consists mostly of a phone call from him on her birthday and on Christmas day. Zizi's father is remarried and she has a half-sister who is 18 years old whom she does not really know. Zizi stays with her biological mother who has remarried. She has a half-brother who is currently 7 years old.

Zizi is in a private school and next year she is going to boarding school as her mother would like for her to broaden her horizon and meet new people. Zizi is very excited about next year. She sees forward to meeting new friends.

Zizi experiences her relationship with her mother negatively. She feels that her mother does not understand her and does not take the time to know her better. Her mother is the owner of a well-known franchise and has, according to Zizi, very little spare time to spend with her. Zizi is, according to her responses, also not emotionally close to her stepfather. Zizi feels that he is distant and does not help her when she needs help. Zizi feels that she will be happier in the boarding school with her friends, as they understand her better than her family and will be there for her if she needs support. Zizi experiences her relationship with her brother generally negatively. According to her they fight a lot and she feels that they do not fully understand each other because of the age gap. Zizi states that she has no trouble meeting new people and she actually enjoys meeting new people as it will mean that they might become good friends.

Friends are according to Zizi very important in her life as she feels emotionally more connected to her friends as to her family. She needs friends in her life to be able to socialize, enjoy activities with them and to be able to trust someone enough to share her inner feelings and thoughts. She does however mentions later in the interview that her family loves her a lot and that she sometimes prefers spending time with them rather than with her friends.

Zizi feels that people sometimes feel lonely because they have no-one to trust and talk to or nobody to do enjoyable things with. She also feels that people feel lonely when they have nothing to keep themselves busy with. Zizi sometimes feel lonely when she feels her friends are excluding her for some reason and she does not know what is going on. The concept *friend* to Zizi means someone

you can trust. According to Zizi the most significant problem that she experiences with her friendships is that her friends fight with each other because they do not disclose things to each other. She also states that a lot of fights are caused indirectly by the opposite sex. Zizi does not have any preconceived expectations from her friendships. According to Zizi, she has never struggled to make friends or been rejected by a friend because she sees herself as a loving and kind person. She also states that she does not make it difficult for a friend to be friends with her. She has lost friends in the past when they moved away.

Zizi feels that friendship definitely adds value to her life. She states that they add value because she always has someone to share time with; she has someone who she can trust and rely on in times of trouble. She states that her friends make her feel loved and appreciated. According to Zizi her friends will describe her as a fun, loving, honest and caring person. Zizi states that her parents feel that her friends are sometimes a negative influence on her. She explains that her parents feel that her friends cause her to be too relaxed at school and not work so hard academically as they would like her to. She states that her friends will never expect from her to change her values because of them. They will also not exclude her because of something she does not want to do because of her values.

Zizi lists her strong points as hockey, singing, drawing and swimming. Running and spelling are her weaknesses according to her. Zizi would like to change one thing about her, and that is her weight. She feels that she is overweight. Zizi's best moment in her life was when she went to a holiday resort with her friends. Her worst moment in her life was when she got stuck in an elevator in a mall. She shared both these moments with her friends.

Zizi shows self-respect, self knowledge and a positive self concept. She has well developed communication skills. She socializes with ease. She is confident, motivated and enthusiastic. She adapts easily to new situations and is very independent. She accepts responsibility and challenges. She manages conflict and shows emotional control. She has high norms and values and sets emotional boundaries. At this stage she has, according to her, a negative relationship with her mother, stepfather and brother. She has minimal contact with her father. Zizi feels misunderstood by her family which causes her to favour her friends.

#### *4.2.2.3 Respondent C*

##### **Biographical information**

Name	:	Leandra
Gender	:	Female
Chronological age	:	16 years, 9 months

Home language	:	English
Type of school	:	Private school
Grade	:	10
Occupation of father	:	Deceased (2010)
Occupation of mother	:	Deceased (2010)
Siblings	:	Brother – 42 years old Sister – 44 years old Sister – 49 years old Sister – 52 years old
Parents' marital status:		Deceased (were married)
Primary caregiver(s)	:	Older sister and her husband

### **Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire**

The *Friendship Elements Questionnaire* revealed that Leandra experiences her guardians' parental relationship style as a combination of the authoritarian- and authoritative parental relationship style. She also sees their parental style as being negligent but to a lesser degree. Her attachment style shows a combination of the avoidant- (fearful) and anxious attachment style. Leandra also marks the secure attachment style but in a lesser degree. Friendship fulfils the following needs for Leandra: Sense of belonging, personality support and to a lesser degree sharing of ourselves, physical support and reassurance of our worth. Leandra experiences spiritual loneliness. She also experiences loneliness of the inner self and emotional loneliness but to a lesser degree. Leandra prefers other relationships as an alternative to friendships. She lists her guardian (sister) as an alternative to her friends. She experiences the following friendship difficulties: Poor body image, alienation, mistrust, fear of self disclosure and low assertiveness. She also experiences the following difficulties in her friendships but to a lesser degree: low conversational esteem, low close esteem, pacing problems, unrealistic expectations and restriction of affect.

### **Data obtained from the interview**

Leandra is a sixteen year old girl who is in a private school. She stays with her elder sister and her husband after both her parents suddenly passed away a month apart of each other. Leandra's sister and her husband have four children, ages between 18 and 25 years. All of them still stay with their parents. Her sister's husband works abroad and only comes home every three months for ten days. Leandra has another sister who is in her forties and has Down-syndrome. She used to stay with Leandra and her parents in their home. Currently she also stays with Leandra's guardians. She had a stroke recently and does not recognise Leandra at this stage. Leandra's grandmother died in this year

to which she was very close. Since the death of her parents, Leandra receives individual psychotherapy to cope with her tremendous loss.

In the interview Leandra was friendly but initially she seemed tense and only talked when she was asked a question. She relaxed into the interview and was more talkative. With the interview she seemed tired and had trouble concentrating. She does not take care of her physical appearance as she could. Throughout the interview it was evident that she is still in the process of coping with her loss.

Leandra describes her relationship with her guardians as very close. She trusts her sister with everything and is able to talk to her about her inner thoughts and emotions. She almost idealizes her sister. She is also very close to her sister's husband. He is very strict but very loving and understanding. Leandra is starting to accept her sisters' children as her "siblings". She gets along very well with all of them except one of the girls with whom she fights a lot. According to Leandra she currently starting to feel loved and accepted in her new environment. Previously she felt like a burden to the family.

Leandra defines the concept *friend* as someone who is there for support and who you can rely on. Someone who understands you and who will never leave you. She states that she has a positive relationship with her friends and that they have supported her tremendously with her loss. She feels that she needs friends very much in her life for support. She states that she feels more connected to her friends at this stage than to her family. She feels that her friends keep her positive and helps her to remember that she is not alone in the world. They help her to forget her troubles and they make her feel that she has a purpose in this life. According to her people feel alone because they do not have anybody that is close to them. She states that she feels alone all the time because she does not have the people she was familiar to around her like her mother, father, sister (who is around but does not recognise her) and grandmother. Leandra states that she feels that she has to hide her feelings of being lonely because it will make her seem weak and give other people the opportunity to either take advantage of her or to pity her.

Although Leandra feels more connected to her friends, she prefers being with her sister (guardian) rather than spending time with her friends. She also prefers to paint, draw or listen to music than spending time with friends. Leandra states that the most significant problem she experiences with her friends is that problems or fights between them are not properly sorted out. Her friends rather keep the problem to themselves which later creates an explosive situation between the friends.

Leandra has many friends in different grades, but has five best friends. Her expectations from a friendship are understanding and support from the other person. Leandra expects a friend to know when something is emotionally bothering her but to give her space to work it out by herself. According to Leandra she never struggled to make friends because she feels that she is an outgoing person. She has lost friends in the past when they moved away. Leandra states that she has never been rejected by a friend because she feels that it is due to the fact that she is an easy person to get along with. She is also of the opinion that now that her parents died nobody will reject her because they feel sorry for her. Leandra thinks that the most common things friends fight about are the opposite sex, taking friends for granted, not keeping promises and being deceitful with each other. Leandra's guardians approve of her friends, but they do feel that some may influence her negatively in that they pity her too much. According to her guardians her friends pitying her may cause her to pity herself which will hold her back from reaching her full potential. Leandra feels that she has high values and norms which her parents taught her and that her friends know that she will never compromise her values and norms in order to fit in with the group. Leandra feels that her friends comment her positively in order to make her feel good about herself. She does however feel that they are unable to change her own perception of herself which is currently negative. She states that she has a very negative self image of her body.

Leandra states that she behaves in the same manner when she is with friends as when she is with her family because she feels that people need to accept her for who she is. She feels the need to be true to herself. She lists her strong points as swimming, drawing, giving advice and making friends. She states that she does not feel like making new friends recently because she feels that they too will leave her. According to Leandra her weaknesses are the subject Accounting, the feeling of not having a purpose in life and feeling unwanted. When asked what she would like to change about herself, she answers that she does not feel that she is good enough. She would like to change her body, except her eyes and nose because it resembles her father's. She will also not change her values because her parents taught them to her.

Leandra thinks that her friends will describe her as being friendly, trustworthy and strong but recently being emotionally cold at times. Her worst moment in life was when her parents died. Her best friend and her family supported her in this time. Her best moment in life was when she, her sister, mother and father went on holiday for the last time before her parents passed away. She shared the moment with them and recently the memory with her friends.

From the interview I concluded that Leandra used to be a very confident, self assured, enthusiastic, outgoing and motivated young girl. The tremendous loss that she experienced caused her to be currently at a place in her life where she doubts herself, has negative self-talk and feels unwanted.

Throughout the interview Leandra presented emotional maturity and showed emotional control. She did however explain that she hides her true emotions because she feels she might be taken advantage of. Leandra has high norms and values. Even after the trauma she seems to be assertive and sets healthy boundaries. Presently she lacks motivation and a sense of purpose. Currently she has trouble accepting challenges and taking full responsibility for her life. She has a very negative self image. Her life currently revolves around loss. Leandra feels that friends have helped her tremendously with coping with her loss and helping her to stay positive and see the meaning of life.

#### *4.2.2.4 Respondent D*

##### **Biographical information**

Name	:	Charles
Gender	:	Male
Chronological age	:	15 years, 5 months
Home language	:	Afrikaans
Type of school	:	Home schooling (were previously is a government school)
Grade	:	7 (academically)
Occupation of father	:	Safety Officer (Mining)
Occupation of mother	:	House wife
Siblings	:	Brother, age 20 years Sister, age 24 years
Parents' marital status:		Married
Primary caregiver(s)	:	Parents

##### **Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire**

Charles experiences his parents' parental relationship style characteristic to the authoritative parental relationship style. His attachment style is a combination of the avoidant (dismissing and fearful) – and the anxious attachment style. According to Charles's responses no needs are fulfilled for him by friendship. He experiences spiritual loneliness. He also experiences loneliness of the inner self and emotional loneliness but to a lesser degree. Charles prefers alternatives to friendship. He prefers other relationships and non-social activities rather than friends. He experiences the following friendship difficulties: Social anxiety, poor body image, poor social skills, low conversational esteem, low close esteem, alienation, mistrust, fear of self disclosure, pacing problems, low assertiveness, restriction of affect and fear of entrapment.

### **Data obtained from the interview**

Charles is a fifteen year old boy who was in a government school until a few months ago. He had been referred to a medical practitioner by the school because he presented with serious social problems and anxiety at school. The parents took him to a medical practitioner who prescribed medication for his anxiety (after ruling out autism) and recommended that he starts with home schooling. He is presently in a home schooling facility where a retired teacher also facilitates nine other children in the centre.

The interview with Charles took place over two sessions. The first session's purpose was to meet Charles and to show him where the interview would take place. The session was used to make him feel at ease with his environment as well as with me. The second session, which followed the next day, was used for data collection on the phenomenon of friendship.

Charles seemed anxious throughout the interview. He made no eye contact and did not participate in the conversation. He only started to participate in the conversation after I showed him my dogs and talked about them. Charles stumbles over his words and it was difficult to understand him at times. He stated that he has a very good relationship with both his parents. He knows that they will always be there for him. He enjoys spending time with them. His mother is mostly busy with his sister's two children and he helps her with them. He enjoys his brother's company, but states that he sometimes takes his belongings without asking him permission which upsets Charles. Charles states that his brother is very popular at school and that he has lots of girlfriends. Charles states that he, however, has no friends because he is too scared to talk to people outside his family. According to Charles he becomes so anxious that he sometimes feels like running away. In fact he states that he has run away from people on numerous occasions.

Charles experiences the school where he is at presently better than the government school because he states that there are not so many people there. He states that he would like to be like his brother, "carefree" and able to make lots of friends and girlfriends.

Charles feels that a person needs friends to help you not to feel alone. Friends, according to him, can help you to enjoy life. He feels that people might feel alone because they are too scared of communicating to people outside their families. He states that he has felt alone all his life at school. The more alone he felt, he says, the more he felt unable to communicate with the children or teachers at school. He can only remember communicating once at school. This was when a boy wanted to hurt a mouse in class. He shouted to him to stop. Everybody in class was shocked by his reaction. He states that he was shocked as well and left the class. Charles mentions that animals are more

important to him than people. He feels they understand him better than people and that they do not judge him. He has a bearded dragon and says he can spend hours with him.

Charles defines the concept of *friend* as someone who will help you when you need help. He states that his most significant problem in friendships is that he is too scared of making contact, even eye contact, with another person, which makes it impossible for him to initiate a friendship. He has no expectations from friendships and actually has given up on the possibility to ever make friends. Charles states that many children in school have tried to reach out to him and become his friend but that he was unable to return any contact. He states that he cannot really comment on much around friendship because he feels that he has failed to be able to understand how friendship works. He states that he has never been rejected as a friend or lost any friends, as he has never been in a friendship. He does however feel that friendship can add value to his life because he feels a tremendous emptiness inside him, especially when he is not with his family. According to Charles, his parents would like him to have friends and always try to help him with that. He feels that the children in school do not understand him. He states that he felt misunderstood by the other learners and teachers since the time he went to school in Grade one.

Charles lists his strong points as knowledge of animals, especially of reptiles. He also states that he understands bearded-dragons very well. Charles's weaknesses according to him are to talk to people outside his family, to make eye contact, fear of water and cars, being extremely shy and going to school. He would like to change the following about himself: he wants to be able to talk to people outside his family, not be so shy, stop trembling when he is with people and to be normal. He feels that other children will describe him as shy, scared, strange and misunderstood. His best moment in his life was when he got his bearded-dragon. He shared this moment with his parents and brother. His worst moment in life was everyday when he had to go to school. He states that his worst moment is never ending, it is everyday when he needs to be around people outside his family.

Charles is a soft spoken and very anxious boy. He made minimal eye contact in the interview. Charles lacks self confidence and has a very negative self image, especially when he is surrounded by people outside his family. He is unable to actualize his potential because of his fears. Charles has difficulty adapting to unfamiliar situations. He is unable to accept challenges and responsibilities because of his unrealistic fears. He lacks motivation and communication skills. He has very negative thinking patterns and self talk. He does show a need for friendship in his life, but has given up the possibility of making friends.



#### 4.2.2.5 Respondent E

##### **Biographical information**

Name	:	Irene
Gender	:	Female
Chronological age	:	13 years, 7 months
Home language	:	English
Type of school	:	Government school
Grade	:	7
Occupation of father	:	Stagehand (Mining)
Occupation of mother	:	House wife
Siblings	:	None
Parents' marital status:		Divorced but back together
Primary caregiver(s)	:	Parents

##### **Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire**

Irene experiences her parents' parental relationship style as being a combination of the authoritarian- and authoritative parental relationship style. She also experiences them to be negligent but to a lesser degree. Her attachment style characterises the avoidant (fearful) and anxious attachment style. According to her, friendship fulfils the following needs: Sense of belonging, sharing of ourselves, physical support, reassurance of our worth and to a lesser degree personality support. Irene experiences the following types of loneliness: Loneliness of the inner self, emotional loneliness and spiritual loneliness. She does not prefer any alternatives to friendship. Irene experiences the following friendship difficulties: Poor body image, low conversational esteem, mistrust, fear of self disclosure and unrealistic expectations. She also experiences these difficulties in her friendship but to a lesser degree: social anxiety, alienation, pacing problems and low assertiveness.

##### **Data obtained from the interview**

Irene is an only child. Her parents got a divorce two years ago. Irene's father works abroad and Irene sees her father every two months for 10 days at a time. Her mother is a housewife. Irene stayed with her father after the divorce. Irene's father's girlfriend moved in with them. Irene did not get along with her father's girlfriend. Her father arranged for her to stay with a family friend until he got back from abroad. The relationship between Irene's father and girlfriend were ended and Irene's mother and father reconciled. Irene's parents moved in together again. Irene had to change schools in the process of her parent's divorce.

Irene has, according to her, a very good relationship with both her parents. She is emotionally close to both and can share her thoughts and emotions with both parents. Irene states that she relates with ease with people she just met but that she feels more at ease with people she knows well. She feels that it is important to have friends in order to be able to talk to someone. She feels that friends help you not to feel alone. Irene believes that people feel alone because they do not have anybody who loves them or who supports you when you are going through difficult times. She states that she sometimes feels lonely when her parents are not with her. She also felt very lonely during her parents' divorce, especially when her father worked overboard and she had to stay with his girlfriend who she did not really know.

Irene defines the concept *friend* as happiness. Irene believes that friends add value to her life because they make her feel happy. Her friends are always there for her when she needs comfort or someone to talk to. Irene feels that family, particularly her mother and father, are more important to her than friends. Her grandmother died in the previous year and she sometimes wishes that she spent more time with her grandmother, than with her school friends. This makes her want to spend more time with her parents rather than with her friends.

The most significant problems Irene experiences in her friendships are that her friends sometimes tell lies about another friend in order to start a fight between them. She also becomes involved in fights with friends when they say something wrong about her parents. She then stands up for her parents which causes problems in her friendships. Irene's expectations of a friendship are to be truthful and not to be prescribing. Irene states that she has never battled to make friends or been rejected by friends. She feels it is due to the fact that she is always friendly towards others. She has lost a friend when she died of a terminal illness.

Irene states that her parents experience all her friends as having a positive influence in Irene's life. She feels that they like all of them because they are according to her well-mannered and have a positive influence on her. According to Irene her friends will never expect her to do things that do not fit in with her values and norms. Irene feels that her friends have a positive influence on her self image and they cause her to enjoy life. Her friends respect her uniqueness as an individual. They accept her for whom she is. Irene states that she behaves in a different manner when she is around her friends than when she is with her family. She feels more at ease with her mother and father and she trust them more to share her inner thoughts and feelings.

Irene believes that her strong points are: dancing, doing someone's hair, hockey and fashion. Her weaknesses according to her are schoolwork, singing and being able to keep a straight face when she tells a lie. Irene feels that she would like to change her whole life which mostly includes her parents

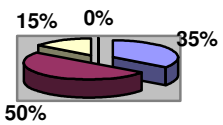
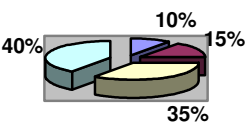

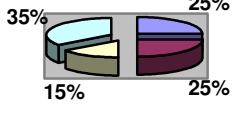
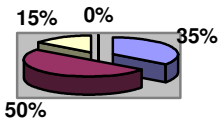
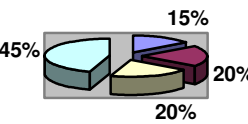
divorce and the fights they had in the house, going to stay with someone she does not really know, changing schools and she would like to spend more time with her grandmother before she died. According to Irene her friends would describe her in the following manner: “Awesome, a very good friend, someone who always tries to help you when you are feeling down”. Irene says that her best moment in her life was when her parents got back together and she could stay with them again. She shared her joy with her family and her best friend. Her worst moment in her life was when one of her friends died. She shared her death with her parents, grandmother and friends.

From the interview Irene seemed to be a self-confident girl. She was talkative and spontaneous during the interview. Irene had to adapt to many new situations in the last few months and although she would have prefer to stay in her familiar environment she tried to adapt to her new environment as best as possible. She seems to have a self-image except for a negative scholastic self-image. She shows self-respect and self-knowledge. Irene has high norms and values. She shows self-assertiveness and motivation. She struggles scholastically but tries to improve her marks since her parents got back together. Irene is not actualising her full potential mostly because of emotional problems like her parents fighting and divorce. Irene feels that her family is more important to her than her friends. This might be because she lost her grandmother who she loved very much and because she had to stay with people she did not really know. In this time she missed her parents very much. Her friends have however supported her in the time her parents got divorced.

### **4.3 INTEGRATION OF DATA**

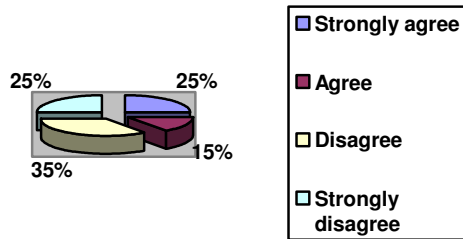
The following table illustrates the 20 respondents’ responses on the *Friendship Elements Questionnaire* given in Table 4.2 according to the percentages ascribed to each rating of the individual questions.

**Table 4.3 Percentages ascribed to each rating of the individual questions of the Friendship Elements Questionnaire.**

<p><b>1.</b></p> <p><b>My parents are very strict and I have to obey their orders without asking questions.</b></p>  <p>15% 0% 35% 50%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strongly agree</li> <li>Agree</li> <li>Disagree</li> <li>Strongly disagree</li> </ul>	<p><b>2.</b></p> <p><b>I am allowed to do what I want without restriction from my parents.</b></p>  <p>40% 10% 15% 35%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strongly agree</li> <li>Agree</li> <li>Disagree</li> <li>Strongly disagree</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>My parents discuss the reasons around their rules and restrictions in our home.</b></p>  <p>10% 5% 25% 60%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strongly agree</li> <li>Agree</li> <li>Disagree</li> <li>Strongly disagree</li> </ul>	<p><b>4.</b></p> <p><b>I have to make my own decisions without the support from my parents.</b></p>  <p>35% 25% 15% 25%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strongly agree</li> <li>Agree</li> <li>Disagree</li> <li>Strongly disagree</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.</b></p> <p><b>Other people can be trusted enough to know that they will be there when you need them.</b></p>  <p>15% 0% 35% 50%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strongly agree</li> <li>Agree</li> <li>Disagree</li> <li>Strongly disagree</li> </ul>	<p><b>6.</b></p> <p><b>I prefer spending time by myself rather than being with other people.</b></p>  <p>45% 15% 20% 20%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strongly agree</li> <li>Agree</li> <li>Disagree</li> <li>Strongly disagree</li> </ul>

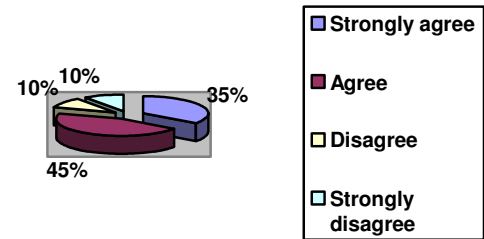
7.

People hurt you when you get too close to them emotionally.



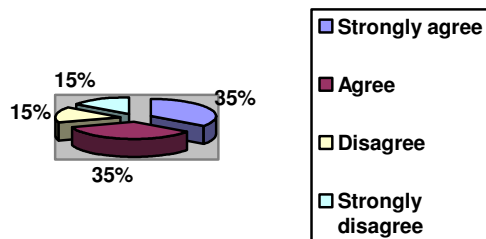
8.

It is difficult to trust people, especially people you've just met.



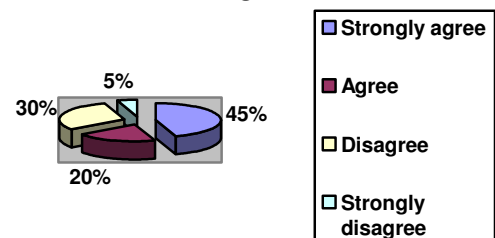
9.

It is important for me to feel that I am part of a group.



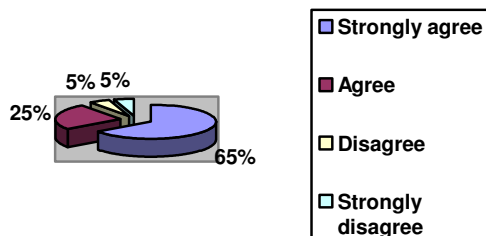
10.

It is important for me to know if my friends feel and think the same as I do about things.



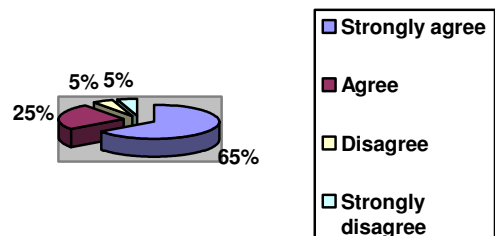
11.

It is important to me that I have someone to talk to about anything.



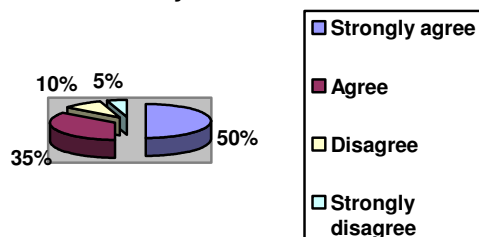
12.

It is important to me to know that I have someone to help me when I am in trouble.



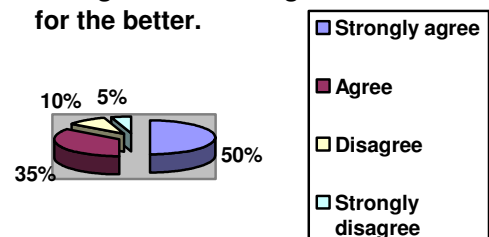
13.

It is important to me to have someone in my life to help me to believe in myself.



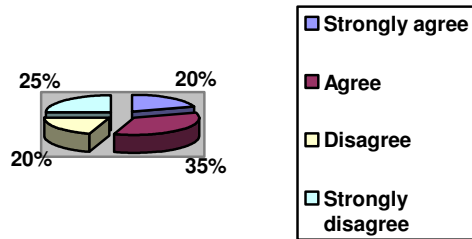
14.

It is important to have someone who can show me when I am wrong so I can change for the better.



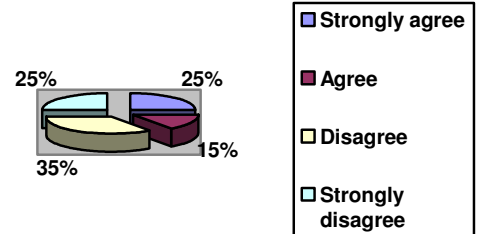
15.

Sometimes I feel that I don't really know who I am.



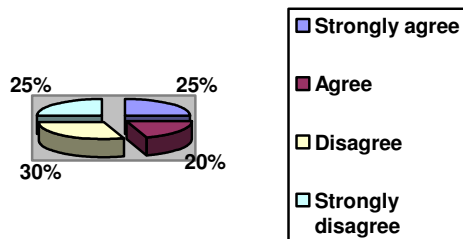
16.

Sometimes I feel the need for more physical contact from the people I care for.



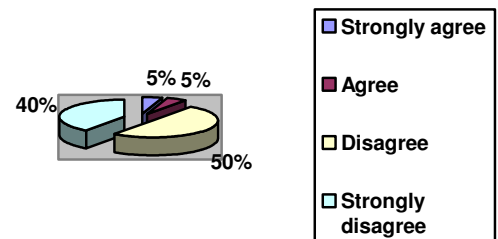
17.

Sometimes I feel sad because I have no-one to share my inner feelings with.



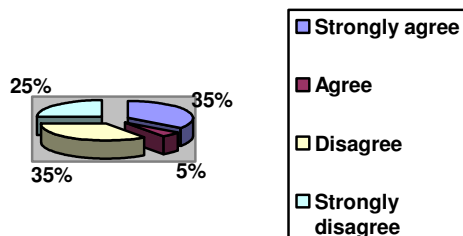
18.

Sometimes I feel sad because I don't really belong in a group.



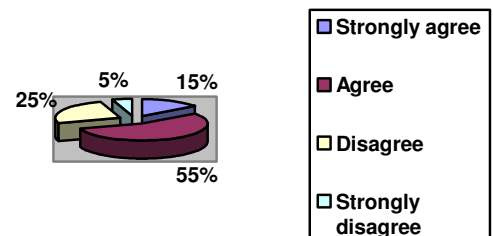
19.

Sometimes I feel empty inside because I don't understand the meaning of life.



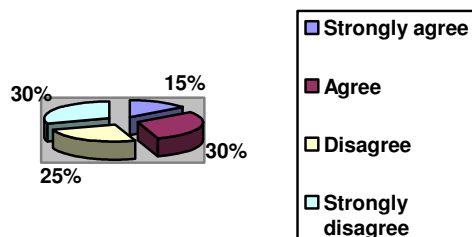
20.

I prefer spending time with a family member rather than a friend.



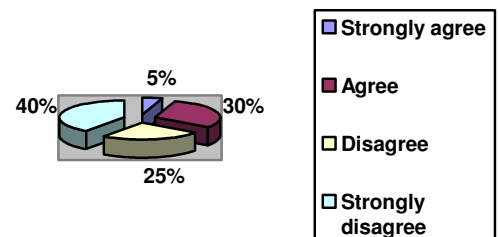
21.

I prefer doing an activity at home by myself than spending time with a friend.



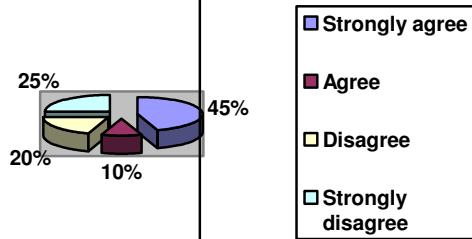
22.

I feel anxious around people



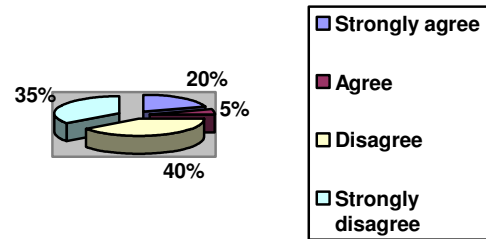
23.

I feel self-conscious of my body.



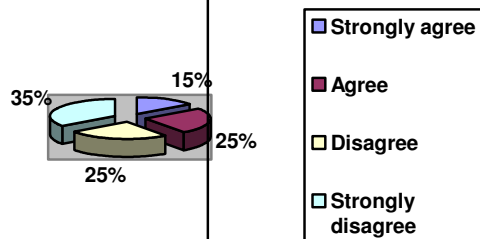
24.

I feel misunderstood when I am around people.



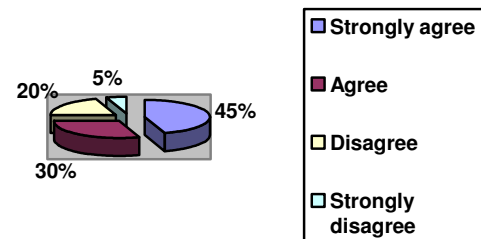
25.

Once people get to know me, they might not like me.



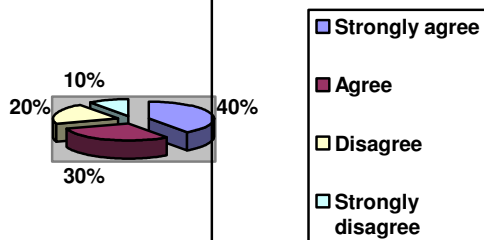
26.

Sometimes I feel I am different from other people.



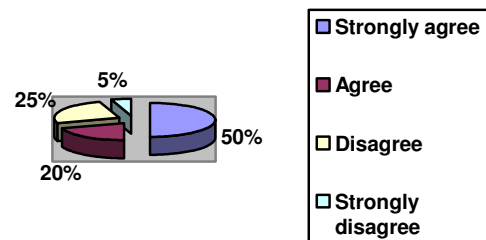
27.

Other people are dangerous and you can never predict when they will hurt you.

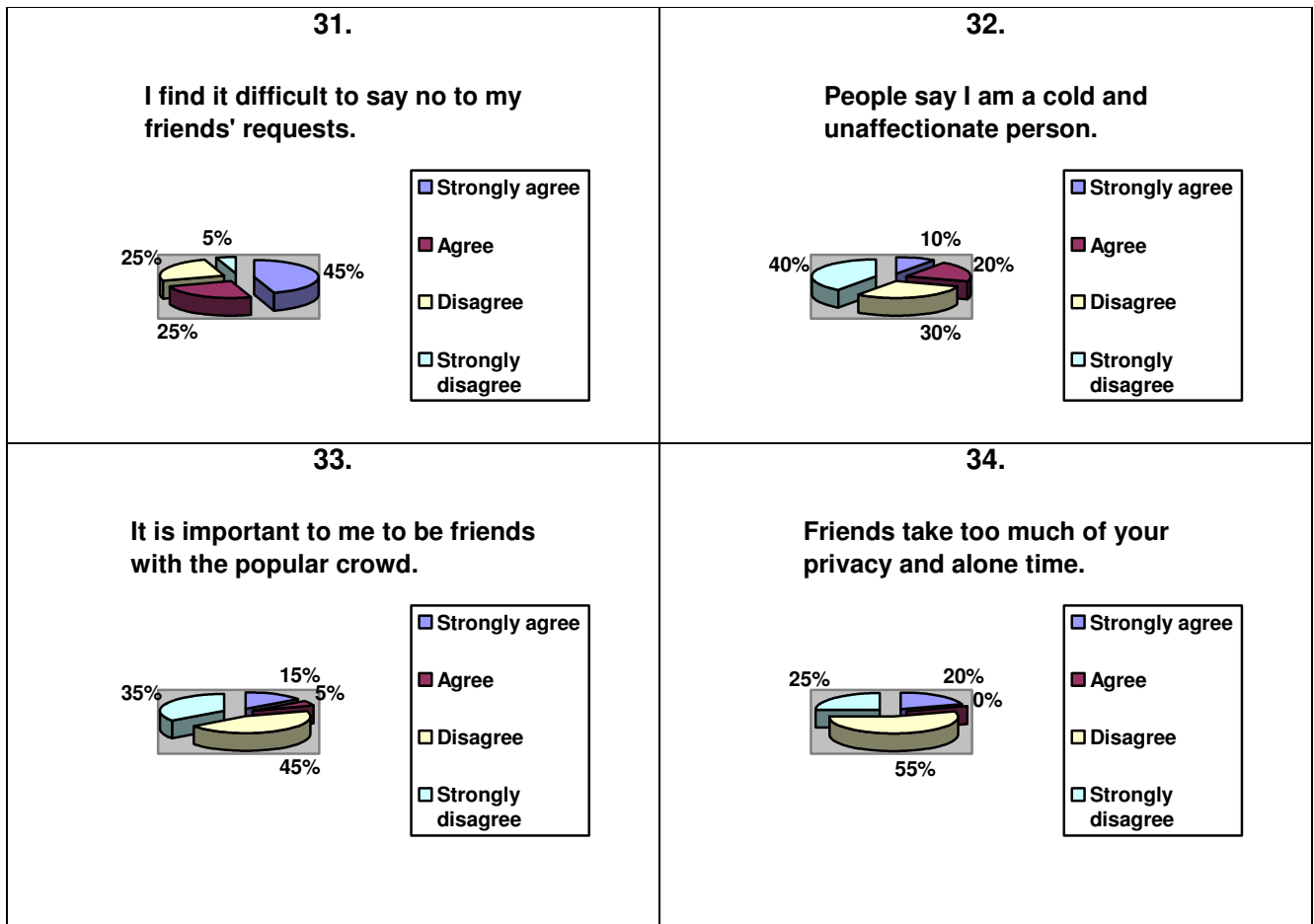


28.

It is difficult for me to talk to people about my inner thoughts and feelings.



29.



According to Berg (2007), the Likert scale needs a minimum of two categories, such as “agree” and “disagree”. Using only two choices creates a crude measure and forces distinctions into only two categories. It is according to Berg better to use four to eight categories. Berg mentions that a researcher can combine or collapse categories after the data are collected, but that data collected with crude categories cannot be made more precise later. In this research four categories were used. In the next section the categories “agree” and “strongly agree” will be combined as well as the two categories “disagree” and “strongly disagree”.

The following table shows the elements of friendship that were investigated and whether the 20 respondents favoured the response or not.



**Table 4.4 A combined list of responses on the friendship elements from the 20 respondents who completed the Friendship Elements Questionnaire**

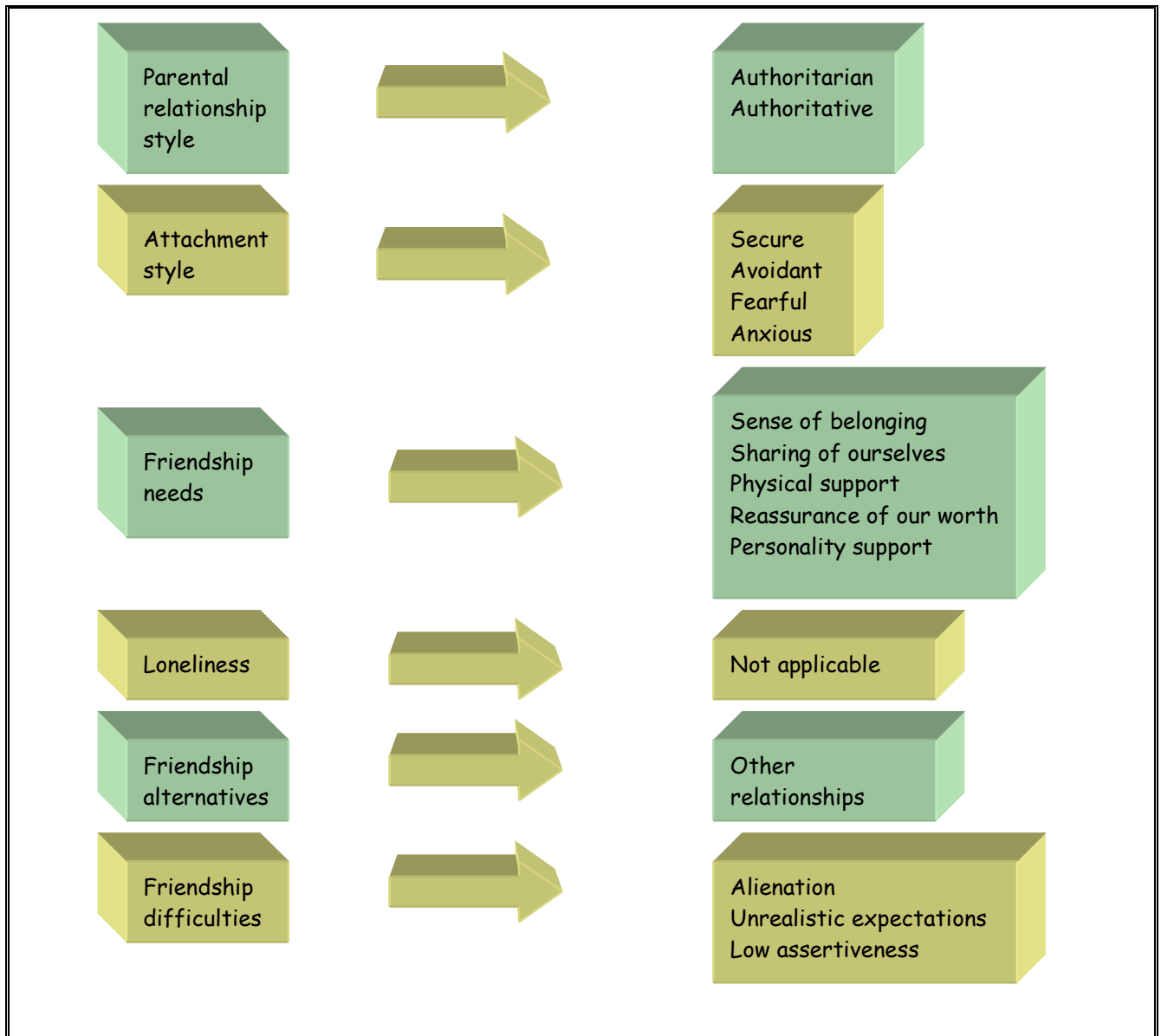
Elements of friendship	Agree	Disagree
<b>PARENTAL RELATIONSHIP STYLES</b>		
Authoritarian style	17	3
Permissive style	5	15
Authoritative style	17	3
Negligent style	10	10
<b>ATTACHMENT STYLES</b>		
Secure style	17	3
Avoidant style: Dismissing	7	13
Avoidant style: Fearful	8	12
Anxious style	16	4
<b>NEEDS FOR FRIENDSHIP</b>		
Sense of belonging	14	6
Sense of stability	13	7
Sharing of ourselves	18	2
Physical support	18	2
Reassurance of our worth	17	3
Personality support	17	3
<b>LONELINESS</b>		
Loneliness of inner self	11	9
Physical loneliness	8	12
Emotional loneliness	9	11
Social loneliness	2	18
Spiritual loneliness	8	12
<b>ALTERNATIVES TO FRIENDSHIP</b>		
Other relationships	14	6
Non-social relationships	9	11
<b>FRIENDSHIP DIFFICULTIES</b>		
<b>Initiating friendships</b>		
• Social anxiety	7	13
• Poor body image	11	9

• Poor social skills	5	15
<b>General problems with friendships</b>		
• Low close esteem	7	13
• Alienation	15	5
• Mistrust	14	6
• Fear of self disclosure	14	6
• Pacing problems	12	8
• Unrealistic expectations	16	4
• Low assertiveness	14	6
• Restriction of affect	6	14
• Friendship selection	4	16
• Fear of entrapment	4	16

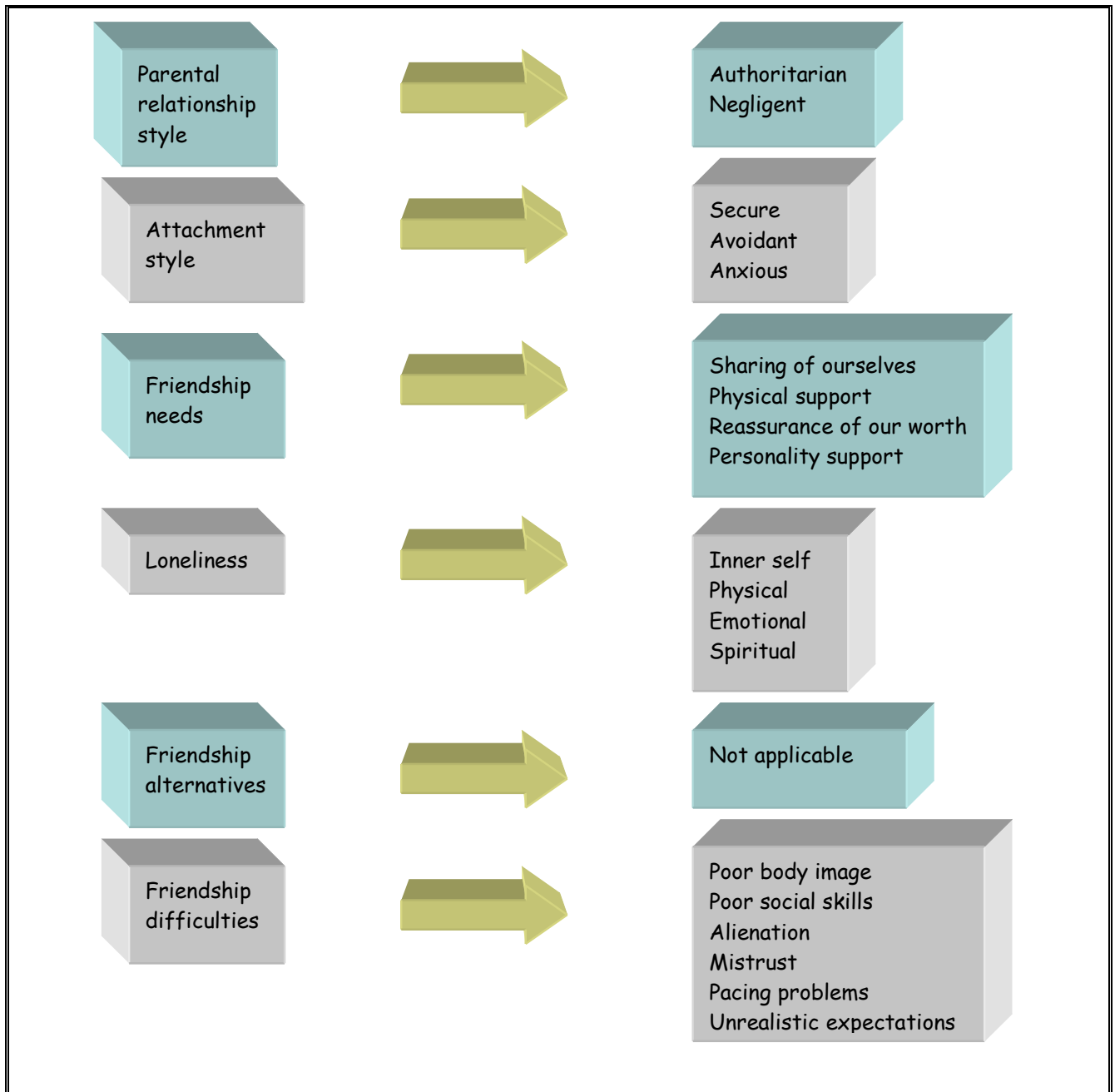
The following section will attempt to give an integration of the data obtained from the interviews conducted on the five respondents.

The figures give representation of the main friendship elements which the respondents favoured.

**Figure 4.1** Integration of data obtained from Respondent A in the individual interview.



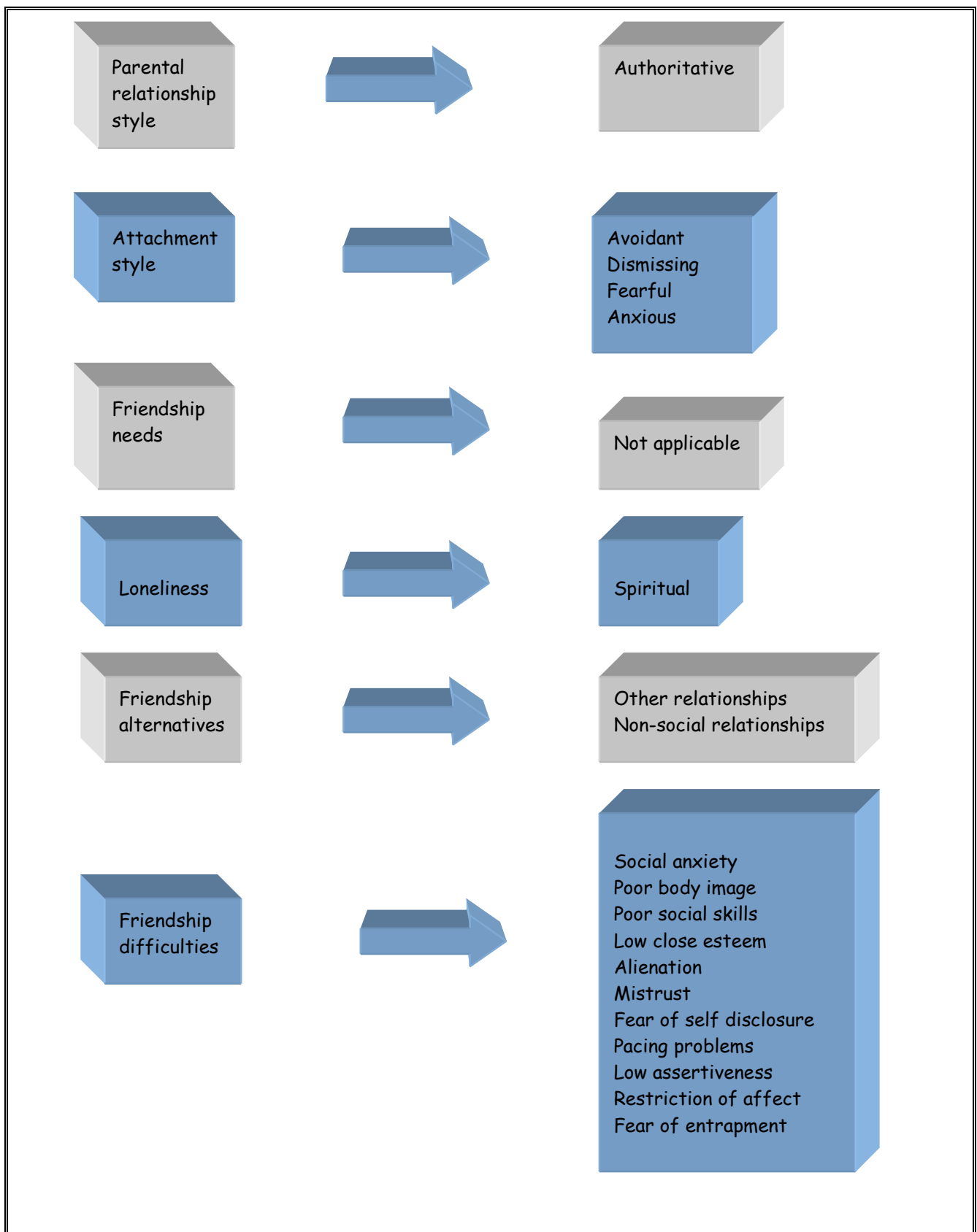
**Figure 4.2** Integration of data obtained from Respondent B in the individual interview.



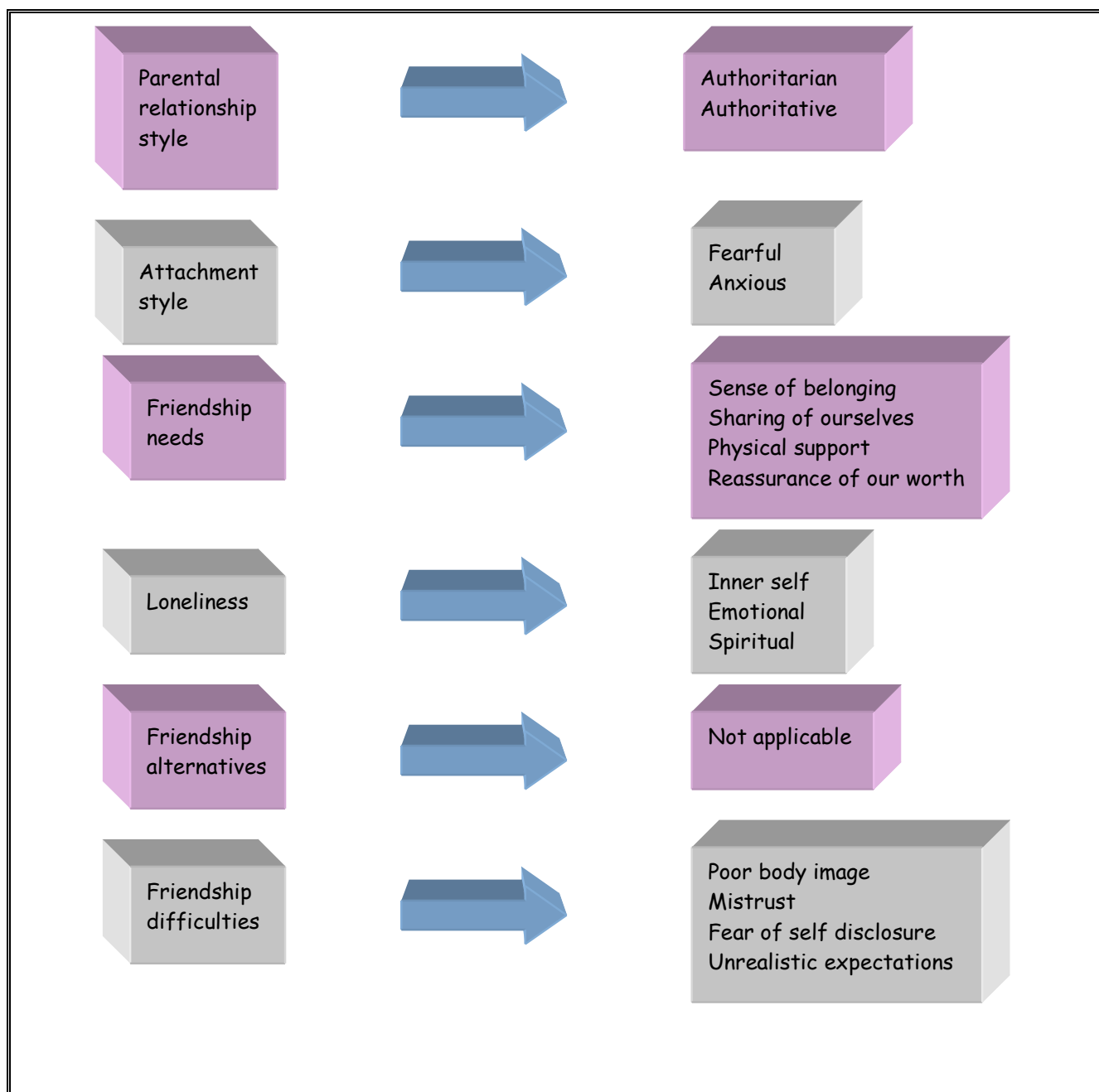
**Figure 4.3** Integration of data obtained from Respondent C in the individual interview.



**Figure 4.4** Integration of data obtained from Respondent D in the individual interview.



**Figure 4.5** Integration of data obtained from Respondent E in the individual interview.



The following table gives a summary of the findings of the 20 respondents that completed the *Friendship Elements Questionnaire* and the five respondents who were interviewed individually. The aspects that are highlighted in each column show the aspect of friendship that was applicable to the specific respondent. The aspects that are highlighted in grey shows the aspects the respondent did favour, but in a lesser degree than the other aspects highlighted.

**Table 4.5 Integration of the data obtained from the 20 respondents who completed the Friendship Elements Questionnaire the 5 respondents identified to be individually interviewed**

	20 respondents	Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
<b>Parental relationship style</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authoritarian</li> <li>• Permissive</li> <li>• Authoritative</li> <li>• Negligent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authoritarian</li> <li>• Permissive</li> <li>• Authoritative</li> <li>• Negligent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authoritarian</li> <li>• Permissive</li> <li>• Authoritative</li> <li>• Negligent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authoritarian</li> <li>• Permissive</li> <li>• Authoritative</li> <li>• Negligent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authoritarian</li> <li>• Permissive</li> <li>• Authoritative</li> <li>• Negligent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authoritarian</li> <li>• Permissive</li> <li>• Authoritative</li> <li>• Negligent</li> </ul>
<b>Attachment style</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure</li> <li>• Avoidant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Dismissing</li> <li>* Fearful</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Anxious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure</li> <li>• Avoidant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Dismissing</li> <li>* Fearful</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Anxious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure</li> <li>• Avoidant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Dismissing</li> <li>* Fearful</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Anxious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure</li> <li>• Avoidant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Dismissing</li> <li>* Fearful</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Anxious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure</li> <li>• Avoidant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Dismissing</li> <li>* Fearful</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Anxious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure</li> <li>• Avoidant: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Dismissing</li> <li>* Fearful</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Anxious</li> </ul>
<b>Needs for friendship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of belonging</li> <li>• Sense of stability</li> <li>• Sharing of ourselves</li> <li>• Physical support</li> <li>• Reassurance of our worth</li> <li>• Personality support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of belonging</li> <li>• Sense of stability</li> <li>• Sharing of ourselves</li> <li>• Physical support</li> <li>• Reassurance of our worth</li> <li>• Personality support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of belonging</li> <li>• Sense of stability</li> <li>• Sharing of ourselves</li> <li>• Physical support</li> <li>• Reassurance of our worth</li> <li>• Personality support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of belonging</li> <li>• Sense of stability</li> <li>• Sharing of ourselves</li> <li>• Physical support</li> <li>• Reassurance of our worth</li> <li>• Personality support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of belonging</li> <li>• Sense of stability</li> <li>• Sharing of ourselves</li> <li>• Physical support</li> <li>• Reassurance of our worth</li> <li>• Personality support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of belonging</li> <li>• Sense of stability</li> <li>• Sharing of ourselves</li> <li>• Physical support</li> <li>• Reassurance of our worth</li> <li>• Personality support</li> </ul>
<b>Loneliness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inner self</li> <li>• Physical</li> <li>• Emotional</li> <li>• Social</li> <li>• Spiritual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inner self</li> <li>• Physical</li> <li>• Emotional</li> <li>• Social</li> <li>• Spiritual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inner self</li> <li>• Physical</li> <li>• Emotional</li> <li>• Social</li> <li>• Spiritual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inner self</li> <li>• Physical</li> <li>• Emotional</li> <li>• Social</li> <li>• Spiritual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inner self</li> <li>• Physical</li> <li>• Emotional</li> <li>• Social</li> <li>• Spiritual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inner self</li> <li>• Physical</li> <li>• Emotional</li> <li>• Social</li> <li>• Spiritual</li> </ul>
<b>Alternatives to friendship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other relationships</li> <li>• Non-social relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other relationships</li> <li>• Non-social relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other relationships</li> <li>• Non-social relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other relationships</li> <li>• Non-social Relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other relationships</li> <li>• Non-social relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other relationships</li> <li>• Non-social Relationships</li> </ul>
<b>Friendship difficulties</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiating friendships</li> <li>• Social anxiety</li> <li>• Poor body image</li> <li>• Poor social</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiating friendships</li> <li>• Social anxiety</li> <li>• Poor body image</li> <li>• Poor social</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiating friendships</li> <li>• Social anxiety</li> <li>• Poor body image</li> <li>• Poor social</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiating friendships</li> <li>• Social anxiety</li> <li>• Poor body image</li> <li>• Poor social</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiating friendships</li> <li>• Social anxiety</li> <li>• Poor body image</li> <li>• Poor social</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiating friendships</li> <li>• Social anxiety</li> <li>• Poor body image</li> <li>• Poor social</li> </ul>



	skills • Low  conversational esteem General problems • Low close esteem • Alienation • Mistrust • Fear of self disclosure • Pacing problems • Unrealistic expectations • Low assertiveness • Restriction of affect • Friendship selection • Fear of entrapment	skills • Low  conversational esteem General problems • Low close esteem • Alienation • Mistrust • Fear of self disclosure • Pacing problems • Unrealistic expectations • Low assertiveness • Restriction of affect • Friendship selection • Fear of entrapment	skills • Low  conversational esteem General problems • Low close esteem • Alienation • Mistrust • Fear of self disclosure • Pacing problems • Unrealistic expectations • Low assertiveness • Restriction of affect • Friendship selection • Fear of entrapment	skills • Low  conversational esteem General problems • Low close esteem • Alienation • Mistrust • Fear of self disclosure • Pacing problems • Unrealistic expectations • Low assertiveness • Restriction of affect • Friendship selection • Fear of Entrapment	skills • Low  conversational esteem General problems • Low close esteem • Alienation • Mistrust • Fear of self disclosure • Pacing problems • Unrealistic expectations • Low assertiveness • Restriction of affect • Friendship selection • Fear of entrapment	skills • Low  conversational esteem General problems • Low close esteem • Alienation • Mistrust • Fear of self disclosure • Pacing problems • Unrealistic expectations • Low assertiveness • Restriction of affect • Friendship selection • Fear of Entrapment
--	---	---	---	---	---	---

#### 4.4 INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The literature research done in Chapter 2 of this research on the phenomenon of friendship will serve as a framework for the interpretation of the empirical research. The data obtained from the data collection techniques namely the questionnaire and the individual interview from the adolescent respondents will be interpreted according to the phenomenon of friendship as well as the effect that friendship has on these adolescents' psychological functioning.

The data collection showed that a majority of the factors of friendship identified in the literature were present in the 20 respondents observed through the *Friendship Elements Questionnaire* and the individual interviews conducted on the five respondents. The following factors were observed: Parental relationship styles, attachment styles, different needs for friendship, types of loneliness, alternatives to friendship and friendship difficulties. Different psychological factors were observed in the respondents during the interview. The psychological factors which are present in any individual

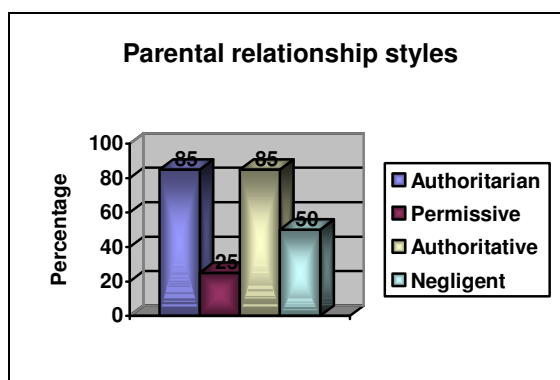
are however too diverse to really go into depth in this type of research. Only a few psychological factors were taken note of and they are as follows: self-concept, self-knowledge, self-respect, self-confidence, assertiveness, motivation, acceptance of challenges and responsibilities, self-actualization, self-talk and inner thoughts, communication skills, body image, scholastic self-image and trust.

#### 4.4.1 Parental relationship styles

Baumrind (Santrock, 2007) proposed in her research that parents fall into one of four categories of parenting styles namely: authoritarian, permissive, authoritative or negligent. According to Santrock Baumrind's research showed that childhood experiences of relationships to parents have strong parallels with the kinds of attachment that persons form as adults and that a parent, through their specific parenting style, sets the frame for the person's subsequent relationships throughout life.

Each of the individual parental relationship styles will be described in the next section with an interpretation of the data obtained in the empirical investigation.

**Figure 4.6** Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire completed by 20 respondents involving the different parental relationship styles.



**Table 4.6** Parental relationship styles of the five respondents' parents collected from the individual interviews.

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authoritarian</li> <li>• Authoritative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authoritarian</li> <li>• Negligent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authoritarian</li> <li>• Authoritative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authoritative</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Authoritarian</li> <li>• Authoritative</li> </ul>

#### *4.4.1.1 Authoritarian parental style*

The empirical investigation indicated that 85% according to the *Friendship Elements Questionnaire*, completed by the 20 respondents, experience their parents' parental relationship style to be authoritarian. This indicates that 85% of the respondents feel that their parents (one of their parents or both) expects conformity and compliance to parental rules and directions, while allowing little open dialogue between parent and child. The authoritarian parent, according to Baumrind (Santrock, 2007), expects much of their child but generally do not explain the reasoning for the rules and boundaries. According to Baumrind this parental relationship style most often lead to over-anxious individuals who are dependant and intimidated by authority, rules and social pressures. This may have a definite influence on the adolescents' abilities to initiate and sustain friendships. The individual interviews were done on the five respondents in order to investigate this element of friendship further.

The interview indicated that the following respondents, namely Respondent A, B, C and E, viewed their parents' parental relationship style to be authoritative. According to the research of Baumrind these individuals should most likely be over-anxious, dependant and easily intimidated by authority, rules and social pressures. The interview indicated that Respondent A experienced his parents' parental relationship style to be a combination of the authoritarian and authoritative style. He indicated in the interview that he felt intimidated in the presence of individuals older than thirty years, which might indicate a feeling of intimidation by authority which may be a cause of his parents' parental relationship style. His attachment style was a combination of secure, avoidant (fearful) and anxious, which might also have been influenced by his parents' parental relationship style.

#### *4.4.1.2 Permissive parental style*

The empirical investigation indicated through the questionnaire that 25% of the respondents viewed their parents to be permissive to a certain degree. This means that according to Baumrind (Santrock, 2007) 25% of the respondents indicated that either both or one of their parents can be characterized as having few behavioural expectations of them. They see their parents' parental style as being non-directive or lenient and that their parents consult them about standards of behaviour. Furthermore these respondents feel that their parents use reason rather than punishment to exercise their parenting duties. They see their parents as being nurturing, accepting and very responsive to their needs and wishes. The interviews conducted indicated that none of the respondents viewed their parents' parental relationship style to be generally permissive.

#### *4.4.1.3 Authoritative parental style*

According to the data obtained from the 20 respondents who completed the questionnaire, 85% indicated that they experience their parents' parental relationship style to be authoritative. This means according to Baumrind (Santrock, 2007) that these respondents' parents have high expectations of maturity from their adolescents. These respondents feel that their parents understand their emotions and they teach them how to regulate emotions. Their parents help them to find appropriate outlets to solve their problems. They experience their parents as being warm, nurturing and being attentive to their needs. They feel that their parents allow them to be independent and to explore freely, making their own decisions based on their own reasoning. These respondents feel that they understand their parents' motives for punishment. They experience their parents' punishment consistent and not harsh. According to Baumrind these adolescents should present with higher self esteem and independence because of the democratic give-and-take nature of the style. This will however only be observed through the interviews conducted on the five respondents.

The interviews conducted on the five respondents indicated that the following respondents viewed their parents to be authoritative namely: Respondent A, C, D and E. The interview indicated that only Respondent A had a positive self-esteem. The other respondents' self-esteem was negative, which might indicate that other factors also play a role in developing a self-esteem. The fact that all the respondents, except for respondent D, viewed their parents' parental style to be a combination of two parental relationship styles might also have played a role in their self-esteem.

#### *4.4.1.4 Negligent parental style*

According to the questionnaire the 20 respondents completed 50% of respondents viewed their parents' parental style to be negligent. This indicates that 50% of the respondents view according to Baumrind (Santrock, 2007) their parents as being low in warmth and control, as being generally not involved in their lives, are disengaged, undemanding, low in responsiveness and do not set limits. These respondents experience their parents to be emotionally unsupportive but who provide for their basic needs.

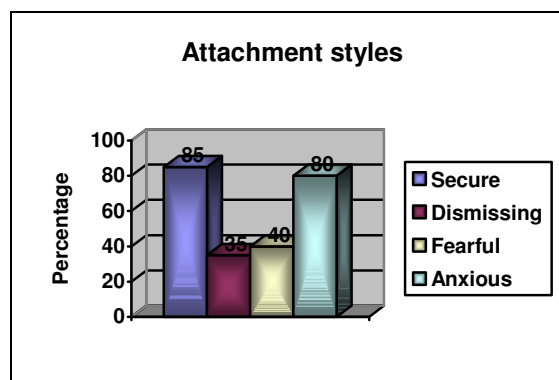
The interviews conducted on the five respondents indicated that only respondent B experienced her parents' parental relationship style to be negligent. She indicated that she feels that her parents are not there for her emotionally due to their career obligations. According to Baumrind's research these respondents usually display contradictory behaviour and are emotionally withdrawn from social situations. She does not show any patterns of truancy or delinquency as sometimes evident in adolescents according to Baumrind.

#### 4.4.2 Attachment styles

Bowlby (1969) has shown in his work in the relationship field that childhood experiences of relationships to parents have strong parallels with the kinds of attachment that individuals form as adults. According to Bowlby (1969) a child's attachment to his/her parents sets the frame of the individual's subsequent relationships throughout life.

Ainsworth (Santrock, 2007) concluded in her research that there were three major styles of attachment: secure, anxious or ambivalent and the avoidant attachment style. Bartholomew (1990) later distinguished between the dismissing- and fearful style within the avoidant attachment style. The different attachment styles will be described with an interpretation of the data obtained from the empirical investigation.

**Figure 4.7 Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire completed by 20 respondents involving the different attachment styles.**



**Table 4.7 Attachment styles of the five respondents' parents collected from the individual interviews.**

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure</li> <li>Avoidant:</li> <li>* Fearful</li> <li>Anxious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure</li> <li>Anxious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoidant:</li> <li>* Fearful</li> <li>Anxious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoidant:</li> <li>* Dismissing</li> <li>* Fearful</li> <li>Anxious</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Fearful</li> <li>Anxious</li> </ul>

#### *4.4.2.1 Secure attachment style*

Ainsworth (Santrock, 2007) describes in her research the characteristics of children with the secure attachment style as children who become visibly upset when their parents leave them and are relieved when they return, they will seek comfort from their parents, contact initiated by a parent is readily accepted, they greet the return of a parent with positive behaviour and while these children can be comforted to some extent by other people in the absence of a parent, they clearly prefer parents to strangers.

The empirical investigation indicated that 85% felt that their attachment style was secure. According to Ainsworth (Santrock, 2007) these respondents viewed their parents as being responsive to their needs. They view themselves as mature, empathetic and less aggressive.

The interviews that were conducted only showed two respondents, Respondent A and B, attachment styles to be secure. Both these respondents show a need to seek out social support, are trusting, have high self esteem, enjoy intimate relationships and share their emotions easily with other people as indicated to be some of the characteristics of an individual with a secure attachment style according to Ainsworth.

#### *4.4.2.2 Avoidant attachment style*

Ainsworth's (Santrock, 2007) describes in her distinction of attachment styles children with avoidant attachment style as children who tend to avoid parents and caregivers. This avoidance often becomes especially pronounced after a period of absence. According to her research children might not reject attention from a parent, but would not seek comfort or contact. Ainsworth suggests that children with an avoidant attachment show no preference between a parent and a complete stranger.

- **Dismissing attachment style**

The empirical investigation indicated that from the 20 respondents who completed the questionnaire 35% indicated that their attachment style is the dismissing attachment style. According to Bartholomew (1990) this means that 35% of the respondents defensively deny the need or the desire for greater social contact. They seem to have a positive view of themselves and play down any distress or social needs they may have. From the individual interviews only one respondent, Respondent D, indicated to have a dismissing attachment style. This particular individual has low self-esteem and struggles to initiate friendships. He shows signs of social anxiety and therefore denies any need for greater social contact.

- **Fearful style**

The empirical investigation's results showed that 40% of the respondents and four of the five respondents who were interviewed (Respondent A, C, C and E) indicated that their attachment style are the fearful style. According to Bartholomew (1990) this means that 40% of the respondents desires contact but is afraid of it and of commitment and its consequences. These individuals see themselves essentially as undeserving of other people's love and affection according to Bartholomew.

#### *4.4.2.3 Anxious or ambivalent attachment style*

Ainsworth's (Santrock, 2007) research suggests that children who are ambivalently attached tend to be extremely suspicious of strangers. They display, according to her research, considerable distress when separated from a parent, but do not seem reassured or comforted by the return of the parent. In some cases, the child might passively reject the parent by refusing comfort or may even openly display direct aggression toward the parent.

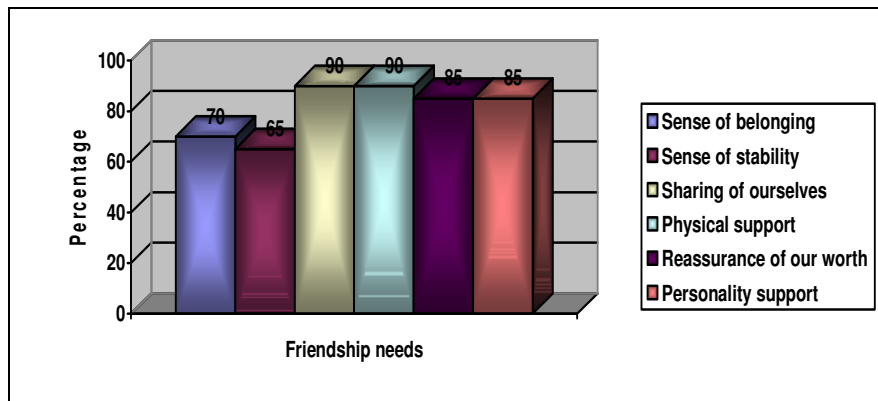
The data obtained from the questionnaire that was completed by the 20 respondents showed that 80% said that their attachment style was characteristic of the anxious or ambivalent style. This means according to Ainsworth that 80% of the respondents feel at times reluctant about becoming close to others which could lead to frequent break-ups, often because the friendship feels cold and distant to them. These 80% of the respondents might feel distraught after the end of a friendship, which might let them feel insecure and making it hard to trust other people.

The interviews with the five respondents showed that all five respondents see themselves as having the anxious attachment style. They might all find it difficult to a certain degree to get close to a friend. Should this friendship end they might all feel distraught, making them feel insecure and reluctant to trust other friends.

There should be taken note of the fact that the respondents chose an attachment style in combination with other attachment styles. None of the respondents only chose one attachment style. These combinations can be due to many factors one might be the fact that many of the respondents also chose more than one parental relationship style for their parents indicating either the mother or the father's parental relationship style separately or in combination. Other factors like primary caretakers in pre-school or the role of teachers might also have played a significant role in their attachment, which due to the limitations of this study will not be investigated further.

#### 4.4.3 Needs for friendship

**Figure 4.8** Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire completed by 20 respondents involving the different needs of friendship.



**Table 4.8** Needs of friendship for the five respondents collected from the individual interviews.

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of belonging</li> <li>• Sharing of ourselves</li> <li>• Physical support</li> <li>• Reassurance of our worth</li> <li>• Personality Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing of ourselves</li> <li>• Physical support</li> <li>• Reassurance of our worth</li> <li>• Personality support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of belonging</li> <li>• Personality support</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of belonging</li> <li>• Sharing of ourselves</li> <li>• Physical support</li> <li>• Reassurance of our worth</li> </ul>

According to research done by Demir and Özdemir (2009:243) friendship quality is an important predictor of happiness. In two separate studies Demir and Özdemir investigated satisfaction of basic psychological needs as a mediator of relationship between friendship quality and happiness. Both Demir's and Özdemir's studies' findings suggest that one reason why the quality of friendships is related to happiness is because friendship experiences provide a context where basic needs are satisfied.



#### *4.4.3.1 Belonging and a sense of reliable alliance.*

The empirical investigation indicated that 70% of the 20 respondents feel that friendship fulfils a need for belonging. This means according to Weiss (Hooyman and Kiyak (2002) that 70% of the respondents feel that friendship make them feel accepted and part of a reliable alliance.

According to the data obtained from the interview, three respondents (Respondent A, C and E) felt that friendship addresses a need for belonging. Respondent B and D did not feel that friendship fulfil a need for belonging. Respondent B has a positive self image but Respondent D has a negative self image. Respondent B might feel that she does not need to feel that she belongs to a group or alliance because she feels independent, while Respondent D feels inferior and does not want to feel part of a group because of fear of rejection.

#### *4.4.3.2 Emotional integration and stability*

The empirical investigation indicated that 65% of the 20 respondents felt that friendship fulfil the need for stability but none of the five respondents who were interviewed individually. According to Weiss (Duck, 1991) this indicates that 65% of the respondents felt that friendship provides them with certain anchor points for their opinions, beliefs and emotional responses. They feel that friends help them to react appropriate and correct or guide their attitudes and beliefs in obvious and subtle ways. It is important for these respondents to share private understandings, jokes and private language with someone they call a friend.

#### *4.4.3.3 Opportunity for communication about ourselves*

From the 20 respondents in the empirical investigation, 90% felt that friendship fulfil a need to share of ourselves or to create opportunities for communication of ourselves. Three of the five respondents (Respondent A, B, and E) interviewed individually felt that sharing of ourselves were an important need that friendship fulfil. This according to Rawlins (2008) indicates that for these adolescents mentioned above a close friendship holds the benefit of somebody to talk to. Rawlins's research proved that communication with friends relieves loneliness and contributes to physical and psychological well-being. Keeping that in mind, we see later that Respondent A, who sees friendship as an opportunity to communicate about ourselves does not experience any form of loneliness in comparison with Respondent C and D who do not experience friendship as a way to fulfil a need to share our thoughts and feelings with another. However, they do experience spiritual loneliness.

#### *4.4.3.4 Provision of assistance and physical support*

The empirical investigation indicated that 90% of the 20 respondents experiences friendship as a way to fulfil the need for provision of assistance and physical support. According to the data obtained from the individual interviews three respondents (Respondent A, B and E) indicated that physical support is one of the needs that friendship addresses. According to Rawlins (2008) one of the benefits of friendship is to depend on and rely on somebody else for instrumental help. These respondents showed that help with day-to-day tasks and psychological support is an important need that needs to be addressed and according to Rawlins fulfilling this need also shows that the other person is appreciated and valued.

#### *4.4.3.5 Reassurance of our worth and the opportunity to help others*

The empirical investigation indicated that 85% of the 20 respondents of which three of the respondents individually interviewed (Respondent A, B and E) felt that friendship fulfil the need to reassure their self-worth and creates an opportunity to help others. According to Gottman and Parker (1987) friendship provides support and encouragement as well as feedback that help develop the person's sense of competency, self-image and self-worth. Gotlib and Hooley (1988) states that one reason for individuals to appreciate friends is because of the contribution friends make to a person's self-evaluation and self-esteem which happen both directly and indirectly. Duck (1991) proved in his research that friends can also increase a person's self-esteem in other ways for example by attending to what he does, listening, asking his advice and generally acting in ways that indicate the value that they place on his friend's opinions. It is worth noticing that respondent D, who has a negative self-image, does not view friendship as a way of reassuring his self-worth. This may be due to his social anxiety and communication difficulties. Contact with his peers may cause a feeling of rejection to him which lowers his self esteem.

#### *4.4.3.6 Personality support*

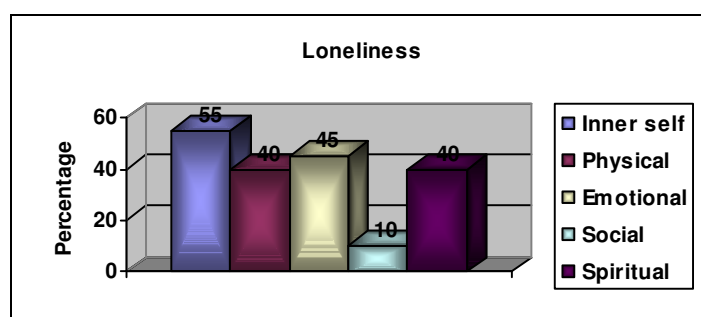
According to Duck and Lea (1982) recent research indicates that each feature mentioned above – sense of community, emotional stability, communication, provision of help, maintenance of self-esteem – in its own way serves to support and integrate the person's personality. The empirical investigation indicated that 85% of the 20 respondents felt that friendship addresses the need for personality support of which three of the respondents who were individually interviewed (Respondent A, B and C) indicated that friendship fulfil the need for personality support. Respondent D, who has difficulty initiating and sustaining friendships, does not feel that friendship fulfil the need for personality support.

Duck (1991) concludes in his research that people who share an individual's way of thinking provide them with the best personality support. The more of these thought-ways the other person shares with someone, the easier it is to communicate with that person. The type of similarity that a person needs to share with someone in order to communicate effectively depends on the stage that the relationship or friendship has reached. This indicates that if Respondent D views the needs that friendship addresses more positive, he may start to share more similar thoughts with individuals who will make it easier to communicate with them and even lead to a friendship later on.

#### 4.4.4 Loneliness

Archibald defines loneliness in Baron and Byrne (1997:283) as following: *"Loneliness is the feeling a person has whenever the quantity and quality of desired relationships is higher than the quantity and quality of actual relationships."* Loneliness refers according to Marangoni and Ickles (1989) to the emotional state that result from desiring close interpersonal relationships but being unable to attain them. Braza et al (1993) propose in their research that loneliness begins in childhood when a child fails to develop appropriate social skills – for whatever reason.

**Figure 4.9** Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire completed by 20 respondents involving loneliness.



**Table 4.9** Data collected from the five respondents in the individual interviews on loneliness.

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inner self</li> <li>• Physical</li> <li>• Emotional</li> <li>• Spiritual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spiritual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spiritual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inner self</li> <li>• Emotional</li> <li>• Spiritual</li> </ul>

#### *4.4.4.1 Loneliness of the inner self*

The empirical investigation indicated that 55% of the 20 respondents experienced loneliness of the inner self and of the five respondents two (Respondent B and E) experience loneliness of the inner self. According to Gaev (1976) this means that 55% might experience a feeling of estrangement from one's own real personality. Gaev states that people who are experiencing this type of loneliness often say they feel they are not real or authentic. These 55% might feel according to Gaev as if they are out of touch with their real feelings and desires and they are not sure who they really are. Respondent E might feel this type of loneliness partly because of the fact that she lacks security. Her parents separated, she had to stay with strangers and for a period of time had emotional feedback and support from people who did not know her true authenticity. It seems interesting that Respondent C who suffered the loss of her significant others does not feel inner loneliness to a greater degree as one would imagine that someone in her situation would start questioning her own authenticity. This might indicate according to me that she shows resilience and that she actually has a strong sense of self.

#### *4.4.4.2 Physical loneliness*

The empirical investigation indicated that 40% of the 20 respondents of which all five of the respondents interviewed individually felt some form of physical loneliness. According to Gaev (1976) this indicates that these 40% of respondents experiences a feeling of frustration and longing due to the fact that their need for physical closeness, contact and touch with significant others are frustrated. Gaev gives the example of people who divorced or widowed after many years of marriage often experience physical loneliness (Gaev 1976).

#### *4.4.4.3 Emotional loneliness*

Emotional loneliness according to Gaev (1976) refers to the general feeling of sadness and longing a person feels when his need for emotional closeness with significant others is frustrated. The empirical investigation indicated that 45% of the 20 respondents experience emotional loneliness. Two of the five respondents interviewed experienced emotional loneliness namely: Respondent B and E. Respondent B experienced her parents' parental relationship style as being negligent which might be a contributing factor for experiencing emotional loneliness. Respondent C, who suffered the loss of her parents, did not indicate serious emotional loneliness which might indicate that she found a substitute for the emotional closeness she felt towards her parents, either in her sister or in her friends.

#### *4.4.4.4 Social loneliness*

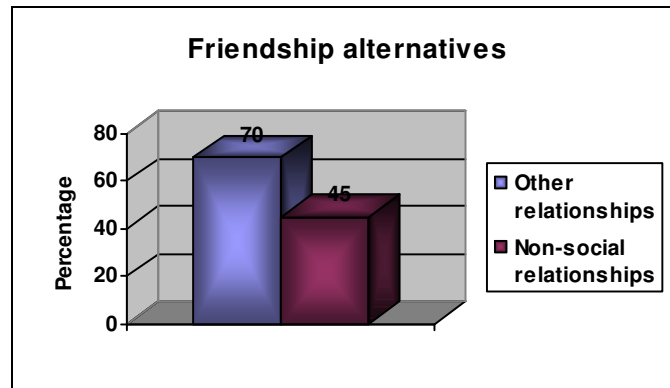
Gaev (1976) refers to social loneliness as the feeling of sadness and longing a person feels when his need to belong is frustrated. Social loneliness according to Gaev may involve both pathological barriers within the person, and social pathology within the structure of society, or even both. Gaev suggests that adolescents are often vulnerable to social loneliness in our society, since peer group ties are especially important to them. According to the empirical investigation only 10% of the 20 respondents of which none of the five respondents who were individually interviewed indicated that they experienced social loneliness. This means that only 10% felt that their need to belong is not being fulfilled. Respondent D, who evidently has trouble in socializing with his peers, did not indicate that he experiences any form of social loneliness. This, according to me, might indicate an attempt to hide his true weaknesses or that he actually feels content with being by himself. This investigation will later show that Respondent D chooses alternatives to friendship, like his family members and non-social activities like spending time with his reptile pets as being more important to him than socializing which could explain the fact that he does not experience social loneliness.

#### *4.4.4.5 Spiritual loneliness*

The empirical investigation showed that 40% of the 20 respondents of which four of the respondents who were individually interviewed, indicated that they experience spiritual loneliness. The respondents who indicated spiritual loneliness were Respondent B, C, D and E. According to Gaev (1976) this means that 40% of the respondents experience a feeling of emptiness and isolation because their need for meaning in life is frustrated. According to Gaev spiritual also refers to that dimension of human personality that seeks meaning, direction and purpose in life, it is the spiritual aspect of the human mind that is not satisfied by food, shelter, or material possessions, but needs in addition a sense of meaning (Gaev 1976:11). Spiritual loneliness seems to be fitting for Respondent C, as she suffered a great loss. It is understandable that she will start to question the meaning of life. This type of loneliness may however be resolved in time for her, as she most probably focuses to a great extent on the meaning of life due to the trauma she suffered.

#### 4.4.5 Alternatives to friendship

**Figure 4.10** Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire completed by 20 respondents surrounding alternatives to friendship.



**Table 4.10** Data collected from the five respondents in the individual interviews surrounding alternatives to friendship.

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other relationships</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other Relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other relationships</li> <li>Non-social Relationships</li> </ul>	

##### 4.4.5.1 Other relationships

Friends can fulfil various needs, according to Demir and Özdemir (2009), but they also state that other types of people can also fulfil these needs friends address. Demir and Özdemir refer in their study to the roles that parents, grandparents, siblings and other family members can fulfil instead of friends. According to Demir and Özdemir these roles can be used interchangeably with friendship because the nature of friendship is not that different from these types of relationships. The empirical investigation indicated that 70% of the 20 respondents of which three of the five respondents who were interviewed individually (Respondent A, C and D) preferred other relationships above friendships. The interview with Respondent A showed that he is very close to his family members and that he like spending time with them. Respondent B, who feels that her parents and brother do not understand her needs, does not prefer any other relationship above her friends. She would rather spend time with them than with somebody else.

Respondent C states that she prefers to spend more time at this stage with other people rather than her friends, particularly her sister, because she explained that she feels a need for emotional support at this stage from someone who knows what she is going through emotionally. Respondent D prefers spending time with other people rather than friends, in particular family members, because he feels comfortable in his home environment where he communicates with ease without anxiety. Respondent E prefers spending time with her friends because she feels they understand her and have been supportive to her.

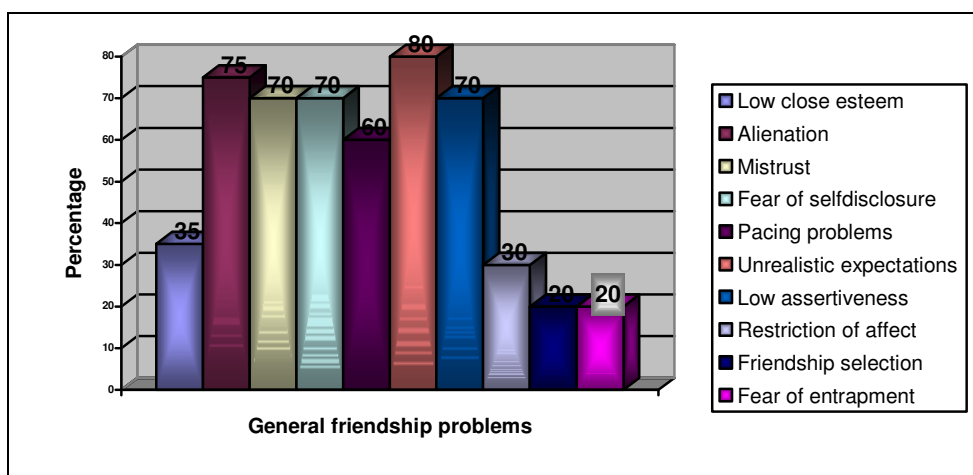
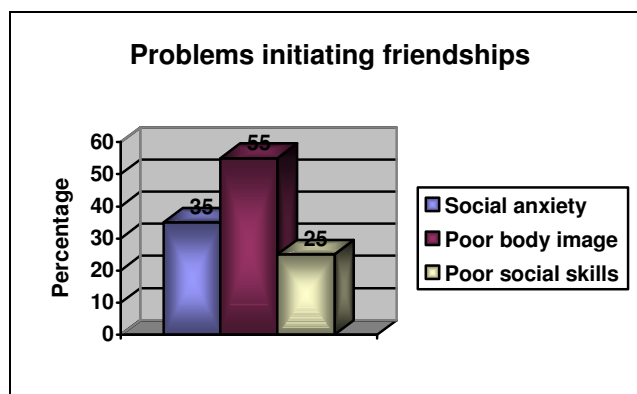
#### *4.4.5.2 Non-social alternatives*

Derlega and Winstead (1986) suggest that people without any form of close relationships have some sort of resources for covering the needs for friendship. According to Derlega & Winstead material goods can function as a cushion for a lack of friendship. They suggest that friends can be important sources in satisfying these needs, but there are also many types of impersonal activities that can also serve these purposes. The empirical investigation indicated that 45% of the 20 respondents preferred non-social relationships rather than spending time with friends. Only Respondent D indicated that he preferred non-social relationships above friendships. On further discussion with him he explained that he preferred spending time with his reptiles (bearded dragons) because they do not make him anxious or expect him to speak to them, although he does talk to them. Without intervention the pattern for Respondent D, which is one of not being able to successfully socialize with his peer group, might carry on into adulthood. He might in adulthood also prefer non-social relationships which might keep him from reaching his full potential in life.

#### **4.4.6 Friendship difficulties**

Young in Peplau and Perlman (1982) made a classification of friendship difficulties in their Cognitive-developmental view of friendships. Young's classification of friendship difficulties include two main types of difficulties a person can experience within friendship namely: Problems with initiating a friendship and general problems with friendship.

**Figure 4.11** Data obtained from the Friendship Elements Questionnaire completed by 20 respondents surrounding friendship difficulties.



**Table 4.11** Data collected from the five respondents in the individual interviews surrounding friendship difficulties.

Respondent A	Respondent B	Respondent C	Respondent D	Respondent E
<u>Initiating friendships</u>	<u>Initiating friendships</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor body image</li> <li>• Poor social skills</li> <li>• Low conversational esteem</li> </ul>	<u>Initiating friendships</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor body image</li> </ul>	<u>Initiating friendships</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social anxiety</li> <li>• Poor body image</li> <li>• Poor social skills</li> <li>• Low conversational esteem</li> </ul>	<u>Initiating friendships</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor body image</li> <li>• Low conversational esteem</li> </ul>



<u>General problems</u>	<u>General problems</u>	<u>General problems</u>	<u>General problems</u>	<u>General problems</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alienation</li> <li>• Unrealistic expectations</li> <li>• Low assertiveness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alienation</li> <li>• Mistrust</li> <li>• Pacing problems</li> <li>• Unrealistic expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alienation</li> <li>• Mistrust</li> <li>• Fear of self disclosure</li> <li>• Low assertiveness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low close esteem</li> <li>• Alienation</li> <li>• Mistrust</li> <li>• Fear of self disclosure</li> <li>• Low assertiveness</li> <li>• Restriction of affect</li> <li>• Fear of Entrapment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mistrust</li> <li>• Fear of self disclosure</li> <li>• Unrealistic expectations</li> </ul>

#### *4.4.6.1 Problems initiating a friendship*

Problems initiating a friendship, according to Young (1982), refer to all difficulties involved in the process of meeting potential new friends, whether in a group setting or one-to-one. Young states that in this stage people are most concerned with how they come across to others at a superficial level. He states that they are especially concerned with physical attractiveness, social confidence and conversational skills. Each of the individual problems initiating a friendship will be discussed in the following section.

#### Social anxiety

The empirical investigation showed that 35% of the 20 respondents experience some degree of social anxiety when initiating a friendship. From the individual interviews only Respondent D indicated that he experiences social anxiety in the phase of initiating a friendship. According to Young (1982) this means that these respondents who experiences social anxiety are so worried about how they appear to others in a new situation that they become extremely anxious, some even develop panic attack symptoms, such as heart pounding, hyperventilating, blushing, sweating and trembling. According to Young the development of anxiety symptoms creates a vicious cycle and these people become so focused on the symptoms that they are unable to concentrate on the conversation. Young states that they become convinced that others will be able to see their anxiety and will view them as unstable, insecure or weak.

The above is particularly true for Respondent D, who admitted running away from situations where he had to face others of his own age group because the fear became too intense. The interview with Respondent D revealed that his parents had strong held schemas they ascribe to him regarding the

fact that he had trouble playing spontaneously with other children when he was younger. These schemas became stronger as his parents, according to Respondent D, enforced this schema when he got older saying that he is unable to communicate to people outside his family making him feel socially inadequate. Young states that these people become oversensitive to any cues that they are making an improper impression on others and that they are also unable to accept any information contrary to their schemas.

### Poor body image

The empirical investigation indicated that 55% of the 20 respondents and four of the five respondents (Respondent B, C, D and E) experience a negative body image as an obstacle in initiating a friendship. According to Ennet and Bauman (2010), the adolescent phase can be characterized by a pre-occupation with physical changes and the adolescent usually is very critical of their appearances. They tend to experience anxieties about their secondary characteristic changes. Adolescents compare themselves with their peers in an attempt to conform to the standard for normal appearance. Respondent A is a very athletic boy who has a positive body image and because of being very athletic he does not experience a poor body image to be an obstacle for him when meeting new potential friends.

### Poor social skills

According to the data obtained from the empirical investigation 25% of the 20 respondents of which two of the respondents (Respondent B and D) who were individually interviewed experienced poor social skills to be an obstacle to them in initiating friendships. Young (1982) states that some adolescents had inadequate role models as children and lack social sensitivity and they are now unable to see how their own behaviour is affecting other people. Young suggests that they might have had grossly impaired relationships with one or both parents in terms of intimacy and communication. Young concluded that they engage in self-defeating behaviour which causes them to become socially isolated, alienating almost all potential friends. The above are relevant in Respondent D. Respondent D has such a strong schema that he has poor social skills that he will presently engage in self-defeating behaviour causing him to be isolated and alienating all potential friends.

The fact that Respondent B experiences herself as having poor social skills does not correlate with her behaviour in the interview. One of the most significant aspects that were immediately noticed in the interview was her well developed social skills. This conflicting information might be due to the fact that she, according to Young, had an impaired relationship with a lack of intimacy and communication with one or both of her parents as she did indicate in the interview. She might have struggled with social

skills, but because she overcompensated for this lack of social skills. She might have developed social skills which are better developed than her peers' social skills or she might just not realise that she has well developed social skills.

#### *4.4.6.2 General problems with friendship*

The following section will discuss the empirical findings surrounding each of the general problems with friendship.

##### Low close esteem

The empirical investigation indicated that 35% of the 20 respondents of which one of the five respondents (Respondent D) had trouble with low close esteem. According to Young (1982) this means that the adolescents believe that they are inherently unworthy, unlovable and inadequate. Young suggests that the closer they get to other, the more certain they are that they will be "found out". The interview with Respondent D revealed that his parents, especially his mother are very over protective. According to Respondent D his mother wants to protect him from rejection and therefore tells people that he does not have the ability to communicate with people outside his family even before he tries. It seems as if his mother has engraved the self-concept schema onto the respondent of: "Once they get to know the real you, they will reject you" and that the respondent has changed the "you" to "me" making it his own reinforced self-concept schema. According to Young this self-image schema is the strongest and very difficult to change. Respondent D is in great need of psychological intervention otherwise he might isolate himself totally from other people.

##### Alienation

The empirical investigation indicated that 75% of the 20 respondents of which four of the five respondents interviewed individually feel different from others mainly because of their interests or values. According to Young (1982) some individuals with friendship problems feel alienated from others around them and have the schema: *"I am basically different from other people"*. Young states that this schema can develop either through feeling left out in one's family or through being excluded by peers. The only respondent from the five respondents interviewed who did not felt alienated was Respondent E. She also was the only one who did not prefer alternatives to friendship, which might indicate that she might even see her friends as a substitute for her family members especially in the time she had to stay with people she did not really know.

## Mistrust

According to the empirical investigation, 70% of the 20 respondents experienced mistrust as one of their general problems in friendship from which four out of the five respondents who were interviewed felt that mistrust is one of the problems they experience with friendship. According to Young (1982) this means that 70% of the respondents have a basic lack of trust in other people. Young states that this mistrust often arises from traumatic experiences with family members or peers. He suggests that as children these people may have been psychologically, sexually or physically abused by parents, siblings or peers. According to Young the perception-of-others schema that develops is predicated on the notion that: *"Other people are dangerous and you can never predict when they will hurt you."*

The only respondent who does not experience problems of mistrust was Respondent A. Thinking of the above mentioned information given by Young, Respondent A is the only respondent who has not gone through some kind of traumatic experience. Respondent B's biological parents are separated and her mother has remarried. She has limited contact with her biological father. Respondent C suffered the loss of both her parents in a very short period. Respondent D has a social phobia and every day at school seems to be a traumatic experience to him. Finally Respondent E's parents separated for a period of time in which she had to move in with people she did not know previously, which also traumatized her to a certain extent. Young's theory on mistrust is visible in the five respondents who were interviewed.

## Fear of self-disclosure

The empirical investigation indicated that 70% of the 20 respondents experience fear of self-disclosure in their friendships. Three of the five respondents who were interviewed (Respondent C, D and E) experience fear of self disclosure. According to Young (1982) problems with self-disclosure are the most frequent cause of difficulty in deepening friendships. The schema most closely linked to this "constriction" is: *"Once people get to know the 'real me', they will reject me."* These people go to extreme lengths to prevent others from finding out too much about them. They may only be comfortable discussing a narrow range of impersonal topics and usually avoid at any mention of private feelings. They sometimes report feeling smothered or trapped by closeness. Respondent A and B were the only two respondents who felt that they could easily self-disclose which might be because they are both extroverts and spontaneous individuals.

### Pacing problems

The empirical investigation indicated that 60% of the 20 respondents of which one of the five respondents (Respondent B) who were interviewed experienced pacing problems in their friendships. According to Young (1982) this means that these respondents have difficulty knowing how fast to pace the relationship. Young states that some individuals come across as “needy” or “clinging”, leading potential friends to back away. Young suggests that they do not realize that developing trust and closeness takes time. The predisposing schema for pacing problems given by Young is often one of dependency: *“I cannot bear to be alone; I need others around me at all times to support me.”* Respondent D was the only respondent interviewed who experienced pacing problems. This need to have people around her all the time might be a way for her to overcompensate for the absence of her biological father or for the lack of emotional support she experiences from her family.

### Unrealistic expectations

The empirical investigation indicated that 80% of the 20 respondents of which three of the respondents who were interviewed stated that they had unrealistic expectations from their friendships. According to Young (1982) this means that these respondents have rigid expectations about what friends should and should not do and if their friends let them down, they become angry and expresses annoyance with them. They lack flexibility, according to Young, and do not allow for the possibility that others may disagree with their standards of friendship. Young concluded that these individuals grew up with parents who were very rigid about the “right” and “wrong” way to behave with others which is true for all three respondents (Respondent A, B and E).

These respondents parents’ parental relationship style is authoritarian which might also play a contributing role in their own unrealistic expectations from their friends as their parents lead the example in their relationship with them. Their thinking style is very rigid and is applied to friendship as well. The relationship schema according to Young might be expressed as follows: *“Friends should follow my definition of friendship at all times and forever. Otherwise they are bad and unfair”*. All three of these respondents show to be dominating in certain situations which explain why they express high expectations from their friends and get annoyed when they do not follow their idea of friendship.

### Low assertiveness

According to the data obtained in the empirical investigation 70% of the 20 respondents and three of the respondents interviewed (Respondent A, C and D) experienced low assertiveness as a problem in their friendships. According to Young (1982) this means that these respondents have difficulty asking

to have their needs met in friendships which cause them to frequently feel frustrated and angry because they do not get what they want and feel mistreated by their friends. I am of the opinion that Respondent A is a popular adolescent and that he might feel in order to maintain his popularity he needs to please friends all the time causing him to be non-assertive with his friends. Respondent C feels currently that she might be a burden to others because of the loss of her parents and the fact that she had to move in with her sister's family. She might feel obligated to please others in order to earn the right to stay with them which flow over to her friendships. Respondent D has a lack of self-confidence and low self-worth and therefore feels the need to please others in order to be accepted. He may also fear rejection should he assert himself.

### Restriction of affect

The empirical investigation indicated that 30% of the 20 respondents of which one of the five respondents interviewed individually experienced restriction of affect as a problem in their friendships. According to Young (1982) this means that these respondents have difficulty expressing emotions, especially warmth and affection, they come across as cold and impersonal to others and their friendships are rarely satisfying even to themselves. Respondent D experiences restriction of affect mainly according to me because of low self-esteem and fear of rejection. He has to face his lack of social skills daily and the rejection that goes with that. Being unable to communicate or socialize in any way with his peers make it impossible for him to express any of his true emotions. To his peers he must come across as cold and impersonal. This causes his peers on the other hand to distance them from him causing him to feel more rejected and restrict him from expressing emotions even more.

### Problems in friendship selection

The empirical investigation indicated that 20% of the 20 respondents experience problems in friendship selection. According to Young (1982) these respondents have difficulty in deepening their friendships because of their selection of friends. They seem to select people who are difficult to get close to, mostly to prove their own value by winning over people who seem hard to get. None of the five respondents who were interviewed experienced this problem in their friendships.

### Fear of entrapment

The last problem Young (1982) identified in deepening a friendship is the fear of being entrapped by the demands of others. According to the empirical investigation 20% of the 20 respondents experienced fear of entrapment as a problem in their friendships. One respondent who was

interviewed, Respondent D, experienced this problem. This respondent, according to Young, views close friendships as the potential loss of individuality, self-determination and privacy. I am of the opinion that Respondent D view friendship as a real threat to his emotional safety because of his social phobia. Any form of socialization from his peers will be viewed as a threat to him and he constantly sets up protective barriers when none are needed.

#### **4.4.7 Summary**

In the above section the interpretation of the data obtained in the empirical investigation were given. The results were integrated with the literature study done on the phenomenon of friendship in Chapter 2. The elements of friendship were discussed in relation to the findings in the empirical investigation. The most common parental relationship style observed in the empirical study was a combination of the authoritarian and authoritative parental style. Each respondents' parents' parental style were discussed, giving a description of each of the styles. The most common attachment style that was presented through the empirical study was the secure and anxious style. Each of the styles was discussed. All six of the needs that friendship addresses were observed in the empirical investigation. One of the respondents indicated that none of the needs were being fulfilled in his life which is quite significant.

The most common types of loneliness which were present in the empirical study were loneliness of the inner self and emotional loneliness. One of the respondents experienced none of the types of loneliness which was noted and discussed in the loneliness section. Other relationships were the most common type of alternative to friendships that were observed in the empirical investigation. The most common friendship difficulties that occurred in the empirical investigation were poor body image, alienation, mistrust, fear of self-disclosure, pacing problems, unrealistic expectations and low assertiveness. Each of the problems a person can experience in friendship were discussed and interpreted according to the empirical investigation.

The next section will discuss the data obtained through the interviews conducted on the five as well as the respondents' general psychological functioning.

#### **4.4.8 General psychological functioning**

The empirical investigation indicated through the interview and observation that three of the five respondents (Respondent A, B and E) had a general positive self-concept and self-confidence. Respondent C and D showed to have a negative self-concept and lack self-confidence. Respondent C might only have a negative self-concept because of the loss she suffered which may change over

time to a more positive self-concept as she works through her trauma. Her self-confidence is however fluctuating presently according to her emotional state she finds herself in the particular day. I am of the opinion that Respondent D's negative self-concept might even intensify if he does not receive some kind of therapeutic intervention. Four of the five respondents show to have poor body image which could be because of the changes that occur in their bodies due to the development of the body in puberty. The only respondent with a positive body image was Respondent A which is very athletic and popular in his peer group.

Three of the five respondents have a positive scholastic self-image. Respondent D and E have negative scholastic self-images. Respondent D most probably has a negative school self-image because he has trouble adapting to the social environment of school. Respondent E states that she struggles with school work particularly with reading, spelling and calculations which gives her a negative school self-image.

The empirical investigation indicated that three of the five respondents have positive self-talk and that the other two respondents, Respondent C and D, have negative self-talk. I am of the opinion that Respondent C has negative self-talk because of the fact that she went through a traumatic experience and still tries to cope with the consequences of the loss of her parents. Respondent D has negative self-talk which, according to him, is being reinforced by his mother when she tells other people in his presence that he is unable to talk to strangers or cope without her being with him. I am of the opinion that his self-talk will only become more destructive to his personality development without therapeutic intervention.

The empirical investigation indicated that three of the five respondents (Respondent A, B and E) show to be motivated and they accept challenges and responsibilities. Respondents C and D lack motivation and are unable to accept any challenges or responsibilities. I am of the opinion that Respondent C lacks motivation currently because of the loss she suffered. Her school marks of the past showed that she is actually a very driven and motivated individual with high expectations for herself. I believe that should she work through her trauma she will once again be driven and motivated. Respondent D on the other hand lacks motivation mostly, I believe, because his parents do not expect much from him and neither does he. Without intervention this lack of motivation and inability to accept challenges and responsibilities might increase keeping him from reaching his full potential.

From the five respondents it became evident that only one respondent showed a lack of communication skills. Respondent D showed in the interview an inability to communicate without anxiety. He indicated a definite lack of social- and communication skills that are being enforced



through his behaviour he adapted to as well as the way his mother talks about him enforcing the pattern of inability to communicate to other people outside his family.

The empirical investigation indicated that four of the five respondents experience low assertiveness. Only one respondent (Respondent B) showed to be assertive. Respondent A and E struggle with self-control. Respondent A uses medication for his diagnosed ADHD which might cause him to lose control of his emotions and behaviour at times. Respondent E revealed in the interview that her father sometimes resorted to violence towards her mother when he got frustrated or angry. This might be a cause for her to sometimes lose her self-control.

#### **4.4.9 Meaning of friendship**

The empirical investigation revealed that each of the five respondents interviewed had a different meaning ascribed to friendship. Respondent A experiences friendship as companionship and enjoyment, Respondent B sees friendship as emotional support, socialization, enjoyment and sharing of inner thoughts and feelings. Respondent C feels that friendship is emotional support, a substitute for family and a distraction from troubles and negativity. Respondent D feels that friendship causes an emptiness inside of him, a realization that he has an intense need for friendship, that friendship is a situation which causes him too much anxiety and due to these facts Respondent D has given up on the possibility of having friendship in his life. Respondent E experiences friendship as emotional support and enjoyment.

From the empirical investigation it is evident that Respondent A, B, C and E gives a positive meaning to friendship but that Respondent D views friendship negatively.

#### **4.4.10 Influence friendship has on the respondents' general psychological functioning**

The empirical investigation revealed that friendship generally has a positive influence on the 20 respondents' psycho-social functioning. The research indicated that four of the five respondents (Respondent A, B, C and E) who were interviewed seemed to benefit emotionally from having friendships in their lives. Respondent D showed an intense need for friendship in his life but due to his lack of social skills, anxiety and negative self-talk are unable to even initiate a friendship. This inability to make friends causes an intense emotional emptiness inside of him.

The empirical investigation showed therefore that in these cases that were investigated friendship does play a positive role in the adolescent's psycho-social functioning. The investigation did however reveal that there are certain factors which need to be developed in the adolescent before friendship

can be initiated and sustained in order to be able to benefit psychologically from friendship. These include communication skills, self-confidence, self-talk and so forth.

The research showed a positive relation between the adolescents' parents' parental relationship style and the adolescent's attachment style. Most adolescents favoured two parental relationship styles and two attachment styles. The research did not distinguish between the mother's and the father's parental relationship style. Therefore only a combination of the adolescents' parents' parental relationship style were indicated. I am of the opinion that the adolescent chosen two or more attachment styles, sometimes almost the opposite of each other, because the attachments styles relate to their parents' parental relationship style of either the mother or the father.

Two aspects which the literature investigation noted were that the adolescent in the adolescent phase typically become self-aware of their physical appearance and that they tend to go through a loneliness phase. The problem according to me is that an overly self-awareness of their physical appearance as well as loneliness should be overcome in this phase otherwise the adolescent could stagnate in this phase and carry a poor body image and loneliness over to the young adult phase where intimacy and isolation is the psycho-social crisis that needs to be overcome.

I am of the opinion that this empirical investigation showed that there is a need for Educational Psychologists to be informed on the phenomenon of friendship in order to assist an adolescent who has trouble making friends. The Educational Psychologist should according to me also be informed on the types of loneliness an adolescent can experience as well as the different friendship difficulties in order to assist the adolescent who is in need of therapeutic intervention.

#### **4.5 CONCLUSION**

Chapter 4 included the presentation, integration and interpretation of the empirical research results. A discussion of the qualitative research data was given. The data obtained from the respondents confirmed to me that there is a definite need for Educational Psychologists to be informed about the dynamics of friendship in order to assist the adolescent in need of therapeutic intervention concerning his friendship skills. I am of the opinion that when an Educational Psychologist works with an adolescent on his psychological factors like self-concept, self-knowledge, motivation, self-actualization and so forth that the inclusion of the different aspects of friendship development can benefit the adolescent.

Chapter 5 which follows consists of an evaluation and conclusion of the results of the research done on the psychological value of friendship amongst adolescents. Limitations of the research will also be

given. The chapter will furthermore give some contributions of the study and focus on a few guidelines and strategies which Educational Psychologists may utilise in the domain of friendship development.

## CHAPTER 5

### EVALUATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

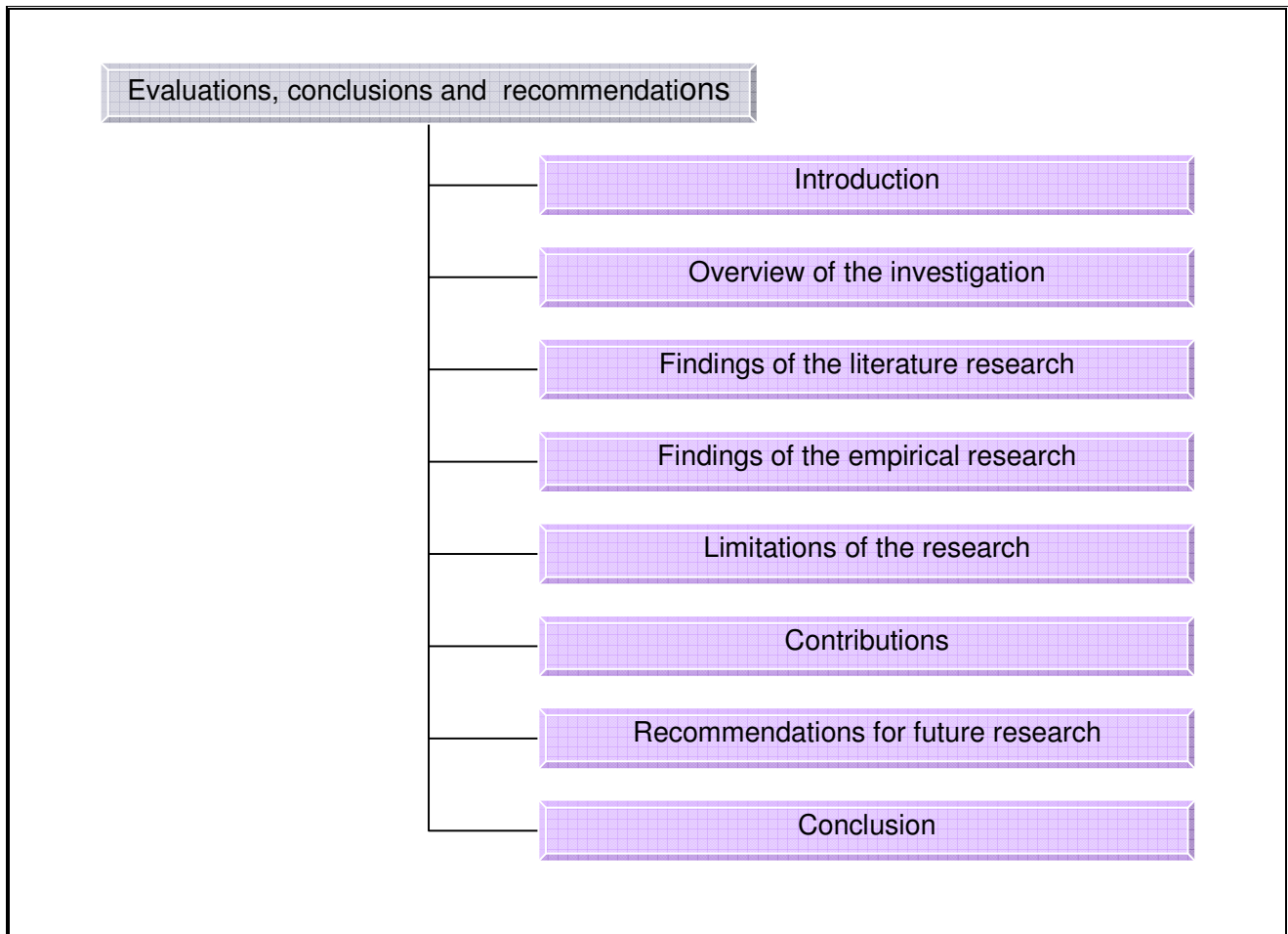
*"If you should die before me,  
Ask if you could bring a friend."*

*"If you live to be a hundred,  
I want to live to be a hundred minus one day,  
So I never have to live  
Without you."*

(fbru@chevrontexaco.com)

## CHAPTER 5: EVALUATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Content of chapter:



## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will present a summary of both the literature and the empirical research followed by conclusions that may be drawn from the qualitative- and quantitative research. This will be followed by a list of some of the limitations experienced while conducting the research. Contributions to the study as well as a few recommendations will be offered prior to the concluding remark.

## 5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE INVESTIGATION

Chapter 1 served as an introduction to the study *The Psycho-Educational value of Friendship amongst Adolescents*. As an educator I became aware of the difficulties some individual adolescents encounter in initiating and sustaining friendships. I noticed that they are not reaching their full potential in most areas of development and that many of them could benefit from psychological intervention. Those individuals who initiated and sustained friendships with ease seemed, in my opinion, to be functioning psychologically better than the individuals who had trouble in initiating and sustaining friendships.

Through a literature overview it appeared to me that there is a variety of literature on friendship during childhood but that there are relatively little written about friendship amongst adolescents. I found that the research on the phenomenon of friendship was also very outdated. Laursen and Zukauskiene (2007) suggested that due to a lack of sufficient theory, the phenomenon of friendship has been neglected. Laursen and Zukauskiene (2007:1) made the following statement: *“Whatever the reason for neglect, efforts to understand close friendship during adolescence are long overdue.”* Furthermore Derlega and Winstead (1986:vi) noted the following on the phenomenon of friendship: *“A neglected topic in the field of personal relationships has been the study of friendships.”* (Cf. 1.2)

A lack of literature on the themes covering the link between friendship and the psychological well-being of an individual, in this instance the adolescent, also became apparent to me. This lack of research lead to the research question:

**What is the psychological value of friendship amongst adolescents?**

Certain aims were identified to give direction to the research (Cf. 1.6). These aims were:

- To do a literature research on the phenomenon of friendship.
- To do a literature research on the adolescent developmental phase.

- To do an empirical research with the aim to determine the psycho-educational value of friendship amongst adolescents.
- Set some recommendations for further study.

Throughout the research each aim was realised. A discussion of the findings of each aim follows.

### **5.3 FINDINGS OF THE LITERATURE RESEARCH**

Literature research was conducted on the phenomenon of friendship as well as the adolescent developmental phase in order to establish a theoretical understanding of both aspects. The findings of each literature research will follow in the next section.

Firstly the phenomenon of friendship was researched in Chapter 2. A summary of the findings of the phenomenon of friendship will be given in the following section.

#### **5.3.1 The phenomenon of friendship**

The following aspects which have an influence on the phenomenon of friendship were included in the information given in the literary investigation: The parental relationship styles, roles of the mother and father, attachment styles, the needs friendship addresses, the opposite pole of friendship namely loneliness, alternatives to friendship as well as general problems one can experience with friendship. A summary of the aspects mentioned above will be given.

##### *5.3.1.1 Parental relationship styles*

In the literature research parental relationship styles were explored as the conclusion was made that parents are the first in the adolescent's life to influence his/her ability to initiate and sustain relationships, in this instance friendships. The decision was made to gather information on one of the best known theories of parenting styles which was developed by Baumrind (Santrock, 2007). In her research she proposed that parents fall into one of four categories of parenting styles namely: authoritarian, permissive, authoritative or negligent. The research showed that childhood experiences of relationships to parents have strong parallels with the kinds of attachment that individuals form as adults. She concluded in her research that a parent, through their specific parenting style, sets the frame for the person's subsequent relationships throughout life. According to Burgess (1981) the parental relationship is an extremely important factor in the adolescent's social development. In his research he concluded that parents are the major agents who turn the child into a social being and

help to develop his social tendencies, skills and understandings. Each of the four relationship styles was explored and the following were concluded. (Cf. 2.2.1)

Baumrind (Santrock, 2007) concluded that the child with an authoritarian parent may have less social competence as the parent generally tells the child what to do instead of allowing him to choose by himself. According to Baumrind's (Santrock, 2007) research this relationship style produces over-anxious children who are dependent and intimidated by authority, rules and social pressures. (Cf. 2.2.1)

Baumrind (Santrock, 2007) described parents of the permissive parental style as being nurturing, accepting and very responsive to the child's needs and wishes but who do not require children to regulate themselves or behave appropriately. Baumrind (Santrock, 2007) concluded that this may result in creating self-indulgent children who show little respect for other people. (Cf. 2.2.1)

Baumrind's (Santrock, 2007) research showed that the authoritative parents are attentive to the child's needs and concerns and will typically forgive and teach instead of punish when the child falls short. Baumrind's (Santrock, 2007) research concluded that the authoritative parental style result in children having higher self-esteem and independence because of the democratic give-and-take nature of the style. (Cf. 2.2.1)

Baumrind's (Santrock, 2007) research found that children whose parents are neglectful develop the sense that other aspects of the parent's lives are more important than they are. The research found that children often display contradictory behaviour and are emotionally withdrawn from social situations. Her research shows that this disturbed attachment also impacts relationships later on in life. The research proved that in adolescence, these adolescents may even show patterns of truancy and delinquency. (Cf. 2.2.1)

The literature investigation concluded that the authoritative parental relationship style is the most recommended style of parenting. (Cf. 2.2.1)

### *5.3.1.2 Attachment styles*

The different attachment styles identified by Ainsworth (1987) in reference to the attachment theory of Bowlby (1969) were investigated in the literature research. Chapter 2 discussed the three main attachment styles that Bowlby identified namely the secure-, avoidant- and anxious attachment style. Bartholomew (1990) later distinguished between the dismissing and fearful style within the avoidant attachment style. In the literature research the attachment theory was included because, according to



Bowlby (1969), a child's attachment to his/her parents sets the frame of the individual's subsequent relationships throughout life, in this instance the adolescent's ability to initiate and sustain a friendship. (Cf. 2.3)

The literature research concluded that as adults, those who are securely attached tend to have trusting, long-term relationships, seem to have high self esteem, enjoy intimate relationships, seek out social support and easily share their emotions with other people. (Cf. 2.3.1)

Individuals with the avoidant attachment style, as adults, tend to have difficulty with intimacy and close relationships. These individuals do not invest much emotion in relationships and experience little distress when a relationship ends. The research concluded, according to Bartholomew (1990), that the person with dismissing style defensively denies the need or the desire for greater social contact and that these individuals have a positive view of them and play down any distress or social needs that they may have. The research showed that the person with the fearful style desires contact and commitment but is afraid of it. These individuals see themselves essentially as undeserving of other people's love and affection. (Cf. 2.3.2)

Ainsworth's (1987) research concluded that as adults, people with an ambivalent attachment style often feel reluctant about becoming close to others which leads to frequent break-ups, often because the relationship feels cold and distant. Her research showed that these people feel especially distraught after the end of a relationship, they are insecure in relationships and find it extremely hard to trust other people. (Cf. 2.3.3)

The literature investigation concluded that the secure attachment style is the most recommended style of attachment (Cf. 2.3).

#### *5.3.1.3 Needs friendship addresses*

According to Demir and Özdemir (2009) one of the reasons why the quality of friendships is related to psychological well-being is because friendship experiences provide a context where basic needs are satisfied. The following needs were explored in the literature study: Sense of belonging, sense of stability, sharing of ourselves, physical support, reassurance of our worth and personality support. (Cf. 2.4)

#### 5.3.1.4 Loneliness

Loneliness was explored as the opposite pole of friendship. Archibald et al. (1982) defined loneliness as following: "*Loneliness is the feeling a person has whenever the quantity and quality of desired relationships is higher than the quantity and quality of actual relationships.*" (Cf. 2.6)

Gaev (1967) listed five kinds of loneliness namely: Loneliness of the inner self, physical loneliness, emotional loneliness, social loneliness and spiritual loneliness. (Cf. 2.6)

According to Gaev (1976) *loneliness of the inner self* can be defined as a feeling of estrangement from one's own real personality. Gaev (1976) described *physical loneliness* as the feeling of frustration and longing a person feels when his need for physical closeness, contact and touch with significant others are frustrated. *Emotional loneliness* according to Gaev (1976) refers to the general feeling of sadness and longing a person feels when his need for closeness with significant others is frustrated. Gaev (1976) referred to *social loneliness* as the feeling of sadness and longing a person feels when his need to belong is frustrated. Lastly the literature research showed that *spiritual loneliness* is the feeling of emptiness and isolation a person feels when his need for meaning in life is frustrated. (Cf. 2.6.2)

#### 5.3.1.5 Alternatives to friendship

It was found that friends can be replaced by two alternatives. The one alternative is other relationships and the other is non-social activities. Friendship can fulfil various needs but according to Demir and Özdemir (2009) *other relationships* can also fulfil these needs friends address. People like parents, grandparents, siblings and other family members can fulfil the needs that friends address. According to Demir and Özdemir, these roles can be used interchangeably with friendship because the nature of friendship is not that different from these types of relationships. *Non-social activities* which are impersonal activities can also address the needs friendship addresses. (Cf. 2.7)

#### 5.3.1.6 Friendship difficulties

Researchers distinguish between two main types of friendship difficulties namely: problems initiating friendships and general problems with friendship. (Cf. 2.8)

- Problems initiating friendships

Problems initiating a friendship are defined by Young (1982) as all difficulties involved in the process of meeting potential new friends, whether in a group setting or one-to-one. Three main difficulties initiating a friendship, as shown in Diagram 5.5, were identified and explored in the literature study namely: Social anxiety, poor body image and poor social skills. (Cf. 2.8.1)

According to Young (1982) the adolescent with *social anxiety* are so concerned about how they appear to others in a new situation that they become extremely anxious, some even develop panic attack symptoms. The development of anxiety symptoms creates a vicious cycle and these adolescents become so focused on the symptoms that they are unable to concentrate on the conversation. (Cf. 2.8.2.1)

Another problem in initiating a friendship is *negative body image*. Young (1982) states that these adolescents are convinced that they are so unattractive that no one would want to be friends with them and therefore discouraging them to initiate a friendship. (Cf. 2.8.2.2)

*Poor social skills* according to Young (1982) are another problem when initiating friendships. Some adolescents had inadequate role models as children and lack social sensitivity and are now unable to see how their own behaviour is affecting other people. Young concluded that these adolescents engage in self-defeating behaviour which causes them to become socially isolated, alienating almost all potential friends. (Cf. 2.8.2.3)

- General problems with friendships

The following general problems with friendships shown in Diagram 5.6 were found: Low close esteem, alienation, mistrust, fear of disclosure, pacing problems, unrealistic expectations, low assertiveness, restriction of affect, friendship selection and fear of entrapment. (Cf. 2.8.2)

The research indicated that adolescents with *low close esteem* believe that they are inherently unworthy, unlovable and inadequate. This conviction is based on an early self-concept schema that, "*Once people get to know the real me, they will reject me*". Adolescents may feel *alienated* from others around them and have the schema: "*I am basically different from other people*". Other adolescents with friendship problems *mistrust* other people which often arise from traumatic experiences with family members or peers. The perception-of-others schema that develops is: "*Other people are dangerous and you can never predict when they will hurt you.*" Problems with *self-disclosure* entails the problem of having private thoughts and feelings bottled up inside. This problem

correlates with the schema mentioned at close self-esteem: *"Once people get to know the 'real me', they will reject me."* (Cf. 2.8.2.1 to 2.8.2.2)

*Pacing problems* involve not knowing how fast to pace the relationship, pressing too quickly to be close. These adolescents do not realize that developing trust and closeness takes time. The predisposing schema for pacing problems given by Young (1982) is often one of dependency: *"I cannot bear to be alone; I need others around me at all times to support me."* Unrealistic expectations according to Young are similar to pacing problems in that both want more from friendship than other people are usually willing to provide. The relationship schema according to (Young, 1982) might be expressed as follows: *"Friends should follow my definition of friendship at all times and forever"*. Problems with *low assertiveness* affect the adolescent's friendships because they have difficulty asking to have their needs met in friendships and then they feel frustrated and angry because they do not get what they want and feel mistreated by friends. (Cf. 2.8.2.5 to 2.8.2.6)

*Restriction of affect* is another problem in friendships. Young (1982) states that these adolescents have difficulty expressing emotions, especially warmth and affection, they come across as cold and impersonal to others and their friendships are rarely satisfying even to themselves. According to Young (1982) they often view friendships as obligations and the schema is: *"I do what I'm supposed to do for friends."* Some adolescents, according to Young (1982), have difficulty in deepening friendships because of their *selection of friends*. They select other adolescents who are difficult to get close to, mostly to prove their own value by winning over people who seem hard to get. The underlying self-schema is based on social inferiority: *"I am not accepted by the people who are popular and successful."* (Cf. 2.8.2.8 to 2.8.2.9)

The last problem identified was the *fear of entrapment* by the demands of other adolescents. These adolescents view close friendships as the potential loss of individuality, self-determination and privacy. The relationship schema can be expressed as follows: *"People will not respect my boundaries; therefore, I must fight hard to maintain them."* (Cf. 2.8.2.10)

Apart from the phenomenon of friendship, the developmental phase of adolescence was also researched. A summary of the findings will be given in the next section.

### **5.3.2 The adolescent developmental phase**

The developmental phase of the adolescent was researched in Chapter 2 as the study involved friendship amongst adolescents. The physical, cognitive, affective and social development was explored within the age range of 13 to 19 years. Erikson's stages of psycho-social development

suggested that the development of a healthy identity is the most important psycho-social task an individual has to accomplish in this developmental stage. The opposite of a healthy identity according to Erikson is role confusion. Throughout the research it was noted that an individual is more likely to develop a healthy identity when he/she initiates and sustains friendships with ease. Role confusion, however, may develop when an adolescent has trouble initiating and sustaining a friendship.

The following diagram outlines the most significant aspects of each of the areas of development in the adolescent's developmental phase.

#### *5.3.2.1 Physical development*

The adolescent phase is characterized as a period of rapid growth. Secondary sexual characteristics appear and advance. The adult reaches 95% of his adult height. At the end of the adolescent phase physical maturity and reproduction levels off and end. (Cf. 2.5.2)

#### *5.3.2.2 Cognitive development*

In early adolescence concrete thoughts dominates the "here and now", cause-effect relationships are still underdeveloped and the self is still stronger than social awareness. The adolescent can reason abstractly but under stress reverts to concrete thoughts. Cause-effect relationships are better understood. The adolescent is very self-absorbed but more future oriented, able to understand, plan and pursue long term goals. (Cf. 2.5.2)

#### *5.3.2.3 Social development*

During the early adolescent phase the adolescent has intense same sex friendships and contact with the opposite sex is mainly in groups. In the late adolescent phase strong peer allegiance starts to develop. Sexual drives emerge and adolescents explore the ability to attract and date a partner. The adolescent's decisions and values are less influenced by their peers. They start to relate to individuals more than their peer group. Selection of a partner is done on individual preferences. (Cf. 2.5.2)

#### *5.3.2.4 Affective development*

The early adolescent phase is characterized by emerging sexual feelings and sexual exploration. Daydreaming occurs more frequently and vocational goals changes easily. The adolescent begins to develop his own value system and a desire for privacy develops. They tend to magnify their problems and feels that no-one understands them. They reject the things of childhood, challenge authority and may become argumentative and disobedient. Wide mood swings and loneliness can occur. In the late adolescent phase experimentation with sex, drugs, friends, jobs and other risk-taking behaviour occur. Conflict with the family continues in a struggle to become independent. The adolescent relates to his family as an adult and realistic vocational goals are pursued. The realization of his own

limitations and mortality develops. A sexual identity is established and sexual activity is more common. An ethical and moral value system is developed. Finally emancipation into the workplace and adult lifestyle takes place. (Cf. 2.5.2)

In the next section the findings of the empirical research will be discussed.

#### **5.4 FINDINGS OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH**

The research method chosen for this study was the generic qualitative research style where the quantitative data collection method is used within a qualitative study. (Cf. 3.2 and 3.3). The population in this research included adolescents in the age range of 13 to 19 years of age. A sample was identified after a questionnaire on the relevant aspects surrounding the phenomenon of friendship has been answered by 20 adolescents in the above mentioned age range. From the 20 participants five adolescents were identified for further individual interviews. Both male and female adolescents took part in the research. Academic performance and intelligence were not criteria taken into consideration in selecting the respondents. English, Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking adolescents were included (Cf. 3.3).

Throughout the empirical investigation I adhered to all the ethical principles listed in Chapter 3 namely: informed consent, confidentiality and privacy, honesty and being open, access to findings and avoiding harm (Cf. 3.6).

The data was collected by means of a questionnaire and individual interviews (Cf. 3.4). The questionnaire and interviews served as a viewpoint into the phenomenon of friendship amongst adolescents. The *Friendship Elements Questionnaire* was designed which used the Likert-scale of the aggregate scaling method with four options (Cf. Annexure A). The questionnaire also had open-ended questions. The data obtained from the questionnaire included information on all the different aspects of friendship discussed in the literature research in Chapter 2. The semi-structured interview type was used to conduct the individual interviews on the five respondents.

Data was analysed quantitatively as well as qualitatively, but predominantly qualitatively, in order to get a better understanding of the phenomenon of friendship and the psychological value of friendship amongst adolescents.

The research indicated that the adolescents' parents' parental relationship style does have an influence on their attachment style which in turn affects the adolescent's ability to initiate and sustain a friendship. The needs of friendship discussed in the literature study were present and observed in

most of the respondents. The different types of loneliness were present in the adolescents and could most of the time be linked to their circumstances and background. Alternatives to friendship were present. Alternatives to friendship were observed especially when the respondent had to go through an emotional traumatic event, may it be a divorce or the loss of parents. Alternatives to friendship occurred with the adolescent who had difficulty initiating and sustaining a friendship due to a lack of social- and communication skills. The different problems with friendship were observed and could also be linked to the adolescent's unique circumstances, background, relationship with their parents and their attachment styles. The developmental phase of the adolescent was taken into consideration and two aspects that were significantly observed were the adolescent's poor body image as well as some type of loneliness that had to be overcome.

The general psychological functioning of the adolescents was investigated. The conclusion was made that friendship does have a positive influence on the adolescent's psychological functioning. However, friendship requires a certain extent of psychological well-being in order to be able to participate in friendship. A lack of social- and communication skills can hinder an adolescent to even initiate a friendship. In this instance where an adolescent has trouble initiating a friendship the phenomenon of friendship can actually reinforce his feelings of inferiority, lack of social skills, self-esteem, self-confidence and social inadequacy. Therefore communication skills and social skills are some of the prerequisites for friendship to have a positive influence on an adolescent's general psychological functioning. The specific results of the empirical investigation can be viewed in Chapter 4. The following section gives a summary of the empirical investigation's findings.

#### **5.4.1 Parental relationship styles**

According to the *Friendship Elements Questionnaire*, completed by the 20 respondents, 85% experience their parents' parental relationship style to be authoritarian. This indicates that 85% of the respondents feel that their parents (one of their parents or both) expects conformity and compliance to parental rules and directions, while allowing little open dialogue between parent and child. The interview indicated that the following respondents, namely Respondent A, B, C and E, viewed their parents' parental relationship style to be authoritative. (Cf. 4.3)

The responses on the questionnaire showed that 25% of the respondents viewed their parents to be permissive to a certain degree. This means that according to Baumrind (Santrock, 2007) 25% of the respondents indicated that either both or one of their parents can be characterized as having few behavioural expectations of them. The interviews conducted indicated that none of the respondents viewed their parents' parental relationship style to be generally permissive. (Cf. 4.3)

According to the data 85% indicated that they experience their parents' parental relationship style to be authoritative. This means according to Baumrind (Santrock, 2007) that these respondents' parents have high expectations of maturity from their adolescents. The interviews conducted on the five respondents indicated that the following respondents viewed their parents to be authoritative namely: Respondent A, C, D and E. (Cf. 4.3)

Lastly 50% of respondents viewed their parents' parental style to be negligent. This indicates that 50% of the respondents view according to Baumrind (Santrock, 2007) their parents as being low in warmth and control, as being generally not involved in their lives, are disengaged, undemanding, low in responsiveness and do not set limits. The interviews conducted on the five respondents indicated that only respondent B experienced her parents' parental relationship style to be negligent. (Cf. 4.3)

#### **5.4.2 Attachment styles**

The amount of respondents who felt that their attachment style was secure was 85%. According to Ainsworth (1987) these respondents viewed their parents as being responsive to their needs. They view themselves as mature, empathetic and less aggressive. The interviews that were conducted only showed two respondents' (Respondent A and B) attachment styles to be secure. (Cf. 4.3)

From the 20 respondents who completed the questionnaire 35% indicated that their attachment style is the dismissing attachment style. According to Bartholomew (1990) this means that 35% of the respondents defensively deny the need or the desire for greater social contact. From the individual interviews only one respondent, Respondent D, indicated to have a dismissing attachment style. (Cf. 4.3)

A percentage of 40% of the respondents and four of the five respondents who were interviewed (Respondent A, C, C and E) indicated that their attachment style are the fearful style. According to Bartholomew (1990) this means that 40% of the respondents desires contact but is afraid of it and of commitment and its consequences. (Cf. 4.3)

It showed that 80% experience their attachment style to be characteristic of the anxious or ambivalent style. This means according to Ainsworth (1987) that 80% of the respondents feel at times reluctant about becoming close to others which could lead to frequent break-ups, often because the friendship feels cold and distant to them. The interviews with the five respondents showed that all five respondents see themselves as having the anxious attachment style. (Cf. 4.3)



### 5.4.3 Needs for friendship

The data obtained showed that 70% of the 20 respondents feel that friendship fulfils a need for belonging. This means according to Weiss (Duck, 1991) that 70% of the respondents feel that friendship make them feel accepted and part of a reliable alliance. According to the data obtained from the interview, three respondents (Respondent A, C and E) felt that friendship addresses a need for belonging. (Cf. 4.3)

Of the 20 respondents 65% felt that friendship fulfils the need for stability but none of the five respondents who were interviewed individually felt it fulfil this need. According to Weiss (Duck, 1991) this indicates that 65% of the respondents felt that friendship provides them with certain anchor points for their opinions, beliefs and emotional responses. (Cf. 4.3)

From the 20 respondents, 90% felt that friendship fulfil a need to share of themselves or to create opportunities for communication of themselves. Three of the five respondents (Respondent A, B, and E) interviewed individually felt that sharing of themselves were an important need that friendship fulfil. This according to Rawlins (2008) indicates that for these adolescents mentioned above a close friendship holds the benefit of somebody to talk to. (Cf. 4.3)

Friendship as a way to fulfil the need for provision of assistance and physical support was experienced by 90% of the 20 respondents. According to the data obtained from the individual interviews three respondents (Respondent A, B and E) indicated that physical support is one of the needs that friendship addresses. According to Rawlins (2008) one of the benefits of friendship is to depend on and rely on somebody else for instrumental help. (Cf. 4.3)

From the 20 respondents 85%, of which three of the respondents individually interviewed (Respondent A, B and E), felt that friendship fulfil the need to reassure their self-worth and creates an opportunity to help others. According to Gottman and Parker (1987) friendship provides support and encouragement as well as feedback that help develop the person's sense of competency, self-image and self-worth. (Cf. 4.3)

Friendship addresses the need for personality support for 85% of the 20 respondents, of which three of the respondents who were individually interviewed (Respondent A, B and C) indicated that friendship fulfil the need for personality support. Respondent D, who has difficulty initiating and sustaining friendships, does not feel that friendship fulfil the need for personality support. (Cf. 4.3)

#### **5.4.4 Loneliness**

From the 20 respondents, 55% experienced loneliness of the inner self and of the five respondents two (Respondent B and E) experience loneliness of the inner self. According to Gaev (1976) this means that 55% might experience a feeling of estrangement from one's own real personality. (Cf. 4.3)

The percentage of 40% of the 20 respondents of which all five of the respondents interviewed individually felt some form of physical loneliness. According to Gaev (1976) this indicates that these 40% of respondents experience a feeling of frustration and longing due to the fact that their need for physical closeness, contact and touch with significant others are frustrated. (Cf. 4.3)

Emotional loneliness (according to Gaev, 1976) refers to the general feeling of sadness and longing a person feels when his need for emotional closeness with significant others is frustrated and 45% of the 20 respondents experience emotional loneliness. Two of the five respondents interviewed experienced emotional loneliness namely: Respondent B and E. (Cf. 4.3)

Only 10% of the 20 respondents of which none of the five respondents who were individually interviewed indicated that they experienced social loneliness. This means that only 10% felt that their need to belong is not being fulfilled. (Cf. 4.3)

Concerning spiritual loneliness, 40% of the 20 respondents of which four of the respondents who were individually interviewed, indicated that they experience spiritual loneliness. The respondents who indicated spiritual loneliness were Respondent B, C, D and E. According to Gaev (1976) this means that 40% of the respondents experience a feeling of emptiness and isolation because their need for meaning in life is frustrated. (Cf. 4.3)

#### **5.4.5 Alternatives to friendship**

Friends can fulfil various needs, according to Demir and Özdemir (2009), but they also state that other types of people can also fulfil these needs friends address. From the 20 respondents 70%, of which three of the five respondents who were interviewed individually (Respondent A, C and D) preferred other relationships above friendships. (Cf. 4.3)

Derlega and Winstead (1986) suggest that people without any form of close relationships have some sort of resources for covering the needs for friendship. According to Derlega & Winstead (1986) material goods can function as a cushion for a lack of friendship. They suggest that friends can be important sources in satisfying these needs, but there are also many types of impersonal activities that

can also serve these purposes. Of the 20 respondents 45% preferred non-social relationships rather than spending time with friends. Only Respondent D indicated that he preferred non-social relationships above friendships. (Cf. 4.3)

#### **5.4.6 Friendship difficulties**

The amount of respondents who experiences some degree of social anxiety when initiating a friendship was 35%. From the individual interviews only Respondent D indicated that he experiences social anxiety in the phase of initiating a friendship. According to Young (1982) this means that these respondents who experiences social anxiety are so worried about how they appear to others in a new situation that they become extremely anxious. (Cf. 4.3)

From the 20 respondents 55% and four of the five respondents (Respondent B, C, D and E) experience a negative body image as an obstacle in initiating a friendship. According to Ennet and Bauman (2010), the adolescent phase can be characterized by a pre-occupation with physical changes and the adolescent usually is very critical of their appearances. They tend to experience anxieties about their secondary characteristic changes. (Cf. 4.3)

According to the data obtained 25% of the 20 respondents of which two of the respondents (Respondent B and D) who were individually interviewed experienced poor social skills to be an obstacle to them in initiating friendships. (Cf. 4.3)

It was indicated that 35% of the 20 respondents of which one of the five respondents (Respondent D) had trouble with low close esteem. According to Young (1982) this means that these adolescents believe that they are inherently unworthy, unlovable and inadequate. (Cf. 4.3)

According to Young (1982) some individuals with friendship problems feel alienated from others around them and have the schema: *"I am basically different from other people"*. From the 20 respondents 75%, of which four of the five respondents interviewed individually, feel different from others mainly because of their interests or values. (Cf. 4.3)

Of the 20 respondents 70% experienced mistrust as one of their general problems in friendship from which four out of the five respondents who were interviewed felt that mistrust is one of the problems they experience with friendship. According to Young (1982) this means that 70% of the respondents have a basic lack of trust in other people. (Cf. 4.3)

Three of the five respondents who were interviewed (Respondent C, D and E) and 70% of the 20 respondents experience fear of self disclosure. According to Young (1982) problems with self-disclosure are the most frequent cause of difficulty in deepening friendships. The schema most closely linked to this constriction is: *"Once people get to know the 'real me', they will reject me."* (Cf. 4.3)

One of the five respondents (Respondent B) who were interviewed and 60% of the 20 respondents experienced pacing problems in their friendships. According to Young (1982) this means that these respondents have difficulty knowing how fast to pace the relationship. Young states that some individuals come across as "needy" or "clinging", leading potential friends to back away. Young (1982) suggests that they do not realize that developing trust and closeness takes time. The predisposing schema for pacing problems is often one of dependency: *"I cannot bear to be alone; I need others around me at all times to support me."* (Cf. 4.3)

From the 20 respondents 80% of which three of the respondents who were interviewed stated that they had unrealistic expectations from their friendships. According to Young (1982) this means that these respondents have rigid expectations about what friends should and should not do and if their friends let them down, they become angry and expresses annoyance with them. They lack flexibility and do not allow for the possibility that others may disagree with their standards of friendship. Young (1982) concluded that these individuals grew up with parents who were very rigid about the "right" and "wrong" way to behave with others which is true for all three respondents (Respondent A, B and E). (Cf. 4.3)

The data indicated that 70% of the 20 respondents and three of the respondents interviewed (Respondent A, C and D) experienced low assertiveness as a problem in their friendships. According to Young (1982) this means that these respondents have difficulty asking to have their needs met in friendships which cause them to frequently feel frustrated and angry because they do not get what they want and feel mistreated by their friends. (Cf. 4.3)

From the 20 respondents 30%, of which one of the five respondents interviewed individually, experienced restriction of affect as a problem in their friendships. According to Young (1982) this means that these respondents have difficulty expressing emotions, especially warmth and affection, they come across as cold and impersonal to others and their friendships are rarely satisfying even to themselves. (Cf. 4.3)

The data indicated that 20% of the 20 respondents experience problems in friendship selection. According to Young (1982) these respondents have difficulty in deepening their friendships because of

their selection of friends. They seem to select people who are difficult to get close to, mostly to prove their own value by winning over people who seem hard to get. None of the five respondents who were interviewed experienced this problem in their friendships. (Cf. 4.3)

The last problem Young (1982) identified in deepening a friendship is the fear of being entrapped by the demands of others. From the 20 respondents 20% experienced fear of entrapment as a problem in their friendships. One respondent who was interviewed, Respondent D, experienced this problem. This respondent, according to Young (1982), views close friendships as the potential loss of individuality, self-determination and privacy. (Cf. 4.3)

#### **5.4.7 Meaning of friendship**

Each of the five respondents interviewed had a different meaning ascribed to friendship. Respondent A experiences friendship as companionship and enjoyment, Respondent B sees friendship as emotional support, socialization, enjoyment and sharing of inner thoughts and feelings. Respondent C feels that friendship is emotional support, a substitute for family and a distraction from troubles and negativity. Respondent D feels that friendship causes an emptiness inside of him, a realization that he has an intense need for friendship, that friendship is a situation which causes him too much anxiety and due to these facts Respondent D has given up on the possibility of having friendship in his life. Respondent E experiences friendship as emotional support and enjoyment. It is evident that Respondent A, B, C and E give a positive meaning to friendship but that Respondent D views friendship negatively. (Cf. 4.3)

#### **5.4.8 Influence friendship has on the respondents' general psychological functioning**

It was found that friendship generally has a positive influence on the 20 respondents' psycho-social functioning. Four of the five respondents (Respondent A, B, C and E) who were interviewed seemed to benefit emotionally from having friendships in their lives. Respondent D showed an intense need for friendship in his life but due to his lack of social skills, anxiety and negative self-talk is unable to even initiate a friendship. This inability to make friends causes an intense emotional emptiness inside of him. (Cf. 4.3)

Friendship therefore did play a positive role in the adolescent's psycho-social functioning. However, it was revealed that there are certain factors which need to be developed in the adolescent before friendship can be initiated and sustained in order to be able to benefit psychologically from friendship. These include communication skills, self-confidence, positive self-talk and developed social skills. (Cf. 4.4)

A positive relation between the adolescents' parents' parental relationship style and the adolescent's attachment style was seen. Most adolescents favoured two parental relationship styles and two attachment styles. The research did not distinguish between the mother's and the father's parental relationship style. Therefore only a combination of the adolescents' parents' parental relationship style were indicated. I am of the opinion that the adolescent chose two or more attachment styles, sometimes almost the opposite of each other, because the attachments styles relate to their parents' parental relationship style of either the mother or the father. (Cf. 4.4)

Two aspects which were noted were that the adolescent in the adolescent phase typically become self-aware of their physical appearance and that they tend to go through a loneliness phase. The problem according to me is that an overly self-awareness of their physical appearance as well as loneliness should be overcome in this phase otherwise the adolescent could stagnate in this phase and carry a poor body image and loneliness over to the young adult phase where intimacy and isolation is the psycho-social crisis that needs to be overcome. (Cf. 4.4)

## **5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

A limitation of the investigation was that it was conducted among a small sample of adolescents of a particular socio-economic group in a specific geographical area within South Africa. Therefore, these factors limit the ability to generalise the research findings.

Throughout the research certain areas of the investigation was limited. Some limitations came about due to the capacity of this dissertation as a dissertation of limited scope making further investigation impossible for now. Other limitations were found due to a limit in literature as some of the literature sources were old and little new research was done on the phenomenon of friendship, especially amongst adolescents.

In the research a mixed method was used. The qualitative method was used during the interviews and different psychological factors were observed. The psychological factors which are present in any individual are however too diverse to really go into depth in this type of research, namely a dissertation of limited scope. The limitation in this investigation therefore was that only a few psychological factors could be noted which limited the research.

Certain risk factors exist which can influence an adolescent's ability to initiate and sustain a friendship for example: birth order, chronic illness, socio-economical status, changing schools or being raised by drug dependant parents or parents who are suffering from a mental illness like depression. These

risk-factors were not investigated in this research due to the type of research, namely a dissertation of limited scope.

Another limitation of the research is due to the fact that in the use of a mixed research method, the qualitative research method was used predominantly. Therefore cause-effect relationships cannot be identified as well as the fact that the findings of this research may be so specific to the individual adolescents that the findings cannot be generalized to other individuals.

The limitations mentioned above, namely the limitation on psychological factors which were observed in the adolescent as well as the risk factors involved in the adolescent's ability to initiate and sustain a friendship can be addressed in future research.

## **5.6 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this research was not merely to research the phenomenon of friendship amongst adolescents but also to make a contribution to the psycho-educational field of study, to the practice of educational psychologists, educators and to parents. The literature relevant to this research on the phenomenon of friendship as well as the developmental phase of adolescence was synthesised. New relationships were made in the literature on the phenomenon of friendship, attachment styles, parental relationship styles, loneliness, alternatives to friendship and friendship difficulties. New diagrams and tables were made regarding the information gathered.

This research has also brought new information on the phenomenon of friendship to the existing information, combining it and drawing conclusions after the completion of the empirical investigation.

A questionnaire was designed in the research on the phenomenon of friendship which can be used as a therapeutic tool to identify adolescents with friendship difficulties or to identify the area of difficulty with an adolescent with friendship difficulties (Cf. Annexure A).

The research also opened areas for future research.

## 5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The findings of the literature study and the empirical investigation have provided a basis from which the following recommendations are proposed to parents, educators, as well as the therapist working in the area of educational psychology. These recommendations will be very general as I hope further study in this area will give detailed guidelines to the adolescent's significant others.

- Inform parents of the adolescents on the different parental relationship styles as well as the different attachment styles discussed in the literature study in order to assist parents to re-evaluate their parenting skills helping their adolescent to reach his/her full potential.
- Inform parents and educators on the difficulties an adolescent can experience with initiating and sustaining of a friendship in order to identify and assist the adolescent who has difficulty initiating or sustaining friendships.
- Inform educators in the process of identification of an adolescent with difficulty initiating and sustaining friendships or the adolescent who has problems with communication- and social skills. Further assist the educators to be able to refer these identified adolescents to an educational psychologist who can assist the adolescent with his difficulties in the area of friendship or communication- and social skills.
- Incorporate communication- and social skills training as well as friendship training in the school's life skills curriculum.
- Offer parent guidance evenings or workshops in order to provide parents with parenting skills and approaches to guide their adolescents with friendship difficulties or to guide the parents in their parenting skills.

The research showed a definite need for more in-depth research in the phenomenon of friendship and the psychological value of friendship amongst adolescents.

This research has aimed to achieve its intended objectives; however it has also opened up a number of areas and avenues for further research which are identified below:

- Further study can be conducted with regards to the *Friendship Elements Questionnaire* as a therapeutic medium in practice and/or the reliable and valid measurement of friendship and the psychological functioning of the adolescent.
- Guidelines for teachers in identifying and referring an adolescent with friendship difficulties to a practitioner for psychological intervention.



- Guidelines for guidance teachers in enhancing friendship skills and psychological well-being amongst adolescents in their guidance classes.
- Guidelines for practitioners can be constructed with regards to therapeutic intervention for adolescents struggling to initiate and sustain friendships.
- Guidelines for parents to enhance healthy friendship development in their own adolescents.

## 5.8 CONCLUSION

Friendship is a phenomenon that occurs in every race, culture and religion. Within friendship there are some universal aspects that were investigated in this research. This research attempted to understand the phenomenon of friendship amongst the developmental phase of the adolescent. Furthermore, the effect of friendship on the adolescent's general psychological functioning had been investigated. The research came to the conclusion that friendship does have a positive influence on an adolescent's general psychological functioning but that some psychological factors, such as communication skills, social skills and self confidence need to be developed to a certain extent in order for friendship to have a positive influence on the adolescent's psychological functioning. If these psychological factors are however not in place, friendship may to a certain extent highlight an adolescent's weaknesses and reinforce his/her social inadequacy, inferiority, lack of self confidence and negative self talk.

I believe that friendship in the adolescent phase is the beginning of a series of future relationships which the adult has to function in, like the relationship with his employer, neighbour, colleague, marriage partner and even his own children one day.

My hope with this research done is that a complete guide with guidelines for parents, teachers and educational psychologists will be designed for the benefit of the adolescent with friendship difficulties as well as the adolescent who wants to develop his friendship skills to full potential.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

*"We all take different  
Paths in life,  
But no matter where we go,  
We take a little of each  
Other everywhere."*

(fbru@chevrontexaco.com)

- Ainsworth, M, Blehar, M, Waters, E and Wall, S. 1987. *Patterns of attachment*. Hillsdale: Erlbaum.
- Alanen, L and Mayall, B. 2001. *Conceptualizing child-adult relations*. London: Ashgate.
- Allan, G. 1989. *Friendship: developing a sociological perspective*. Great Britain: Billings and Sons Ltd.
- Alston, M and Bowles, W. 2003. *Research for social workers: an introduction to methods*. Oxford: Routledge.
- Anderson, J. 1990. *Cognitive psychology and its implications*. San Francisco: Freeman.
- Baron, RA and Byrne, D. 1997. *Social psychology*. Massachusetts: Library of Congress Cataloguing-Publication Data.
- Bartholomew, K. 1990. Avoidance of intimacy: An attachment perspective. *Journal of social and personal relationships*. (7): 147-178.
- Bass, L. 2005. Sociological studies of children and youth. *Journal of marriage and family*. (10): 51.
- Baumrind, D. 1971. Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental psychology*. (4): 1-103. [http://www.brainy\\_child.com/article/parenting-styles.shtml](http://www.brainy_child.com/article/parenting-styles.shtml) (accessed on 17 June 2010).
- Berg, BL. 2007. *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Berg, J and McQuinn, R. 1989. Loneliness and aspects of social support networks. *Journal of social and personal relationships*. (6): 359-372.
- Best, JW and Kahn, JV. 1993. *Research in education*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Blokland, A and Nieuwbeerta, P. 2006. *Developmental and life course studies in delinquency and crime: a review of contemporary Dutch research*. Hague: BJU Legal Publishers.
- Bodenstein, HCA, Landman, WA and Van Rensburg, CJJ. 1994. *Basic concepts in education*. Doornfontein: Perskor Boekdrukkers.

- Booth, R. 1997. Existential loneliness: The other side of the void. *The international journal of interpersonal studies*. 16(1): 23-32.
- Braza, P, Braza, F, Carreras, MR and Munoz, JM. 1993. Measuring the social ability of preschool children. *Social behaviour and personality*. (21): 145-158.
- Bowlby, J. 1969. *Attachment and Loss*. New York: Basic Books.
- Burgess, BL. 1981. Relationships in marriage and the family, in Duck, SW and Gilmour, R. *Personal relationships 1: Studying personal relationships*. London: Academic Press.
- Bukowski, WM, Hoza, B and Boivin, M. 1993. Popularity, friendship and emotional adjustment during early adolescence, in Laursen, B. *Close friendships in adolescence*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Burton, D. and Bartlett, S. 2009. *Key issues for Education researcher*. London: Sage Publishers.
- Cassidy, J and Shaver, PR. 2008. *Attachment Theory, research and clinical applications*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Christakis, NA and Fowler, JH. 2009. *Connected: The surprising power of our social networks and how they shape our lives*. New York: Little Brown Company.
- Clarke-Stewart, A and Dunn, J. 2006. *Families count – effects on child and adolescent development*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Cohen, RJ and Swerdik, ME. 2005. *Psychological testing and assessment: An introduction to tests and measurement*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Colman, AM. 2009. *Oxford Dictionary of Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Corsano, W. 2005. *The sociology of childhood*. Thousand Oaks: Forge Press.
- Creswell, JW and Garrett, AL. 2008. The “movement” of mixed methods research and the role of educators. *South African journal of education*. 28(3): 321-333.
- Darlon, EB. 2007. *Adolescent behaviour research advances*. Lancaster: Gazelle Drake Academic.

Delpont, CSL. 2007. *Quantitative data collection methods*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Demer, M and Özdemir, M. 2009. Friendship, need satisfaction and happiness. *Journal of happiness studies*. (11)2: 243-259.

Derlega, VJ and Winstead, BA. 1986. *Friendship and social interaction*. New York: Springer-Verlag.

Donahue, M and Wong, YL. 2002. *The social dimensions of learning disabilities: Essays in honour of Tanis Bryan*. Mahwah: Erlbaum Associates.

Douvan, E and Adelson, J. 1966. *The Adolescent Experience*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Cresswell, JW. 2009. *Research design: qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. Calif: Thousand Oaks.

De Vos, AS, Fouché, CB and Strydom, H. 2005. *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions*. Pretoria: Van Schaick.

Duck, S. 1991. *Understanding relationships*. New York: Guilford Press.

Duck, SW and Lea, M. 1982. *Breakdown of relationships as a threat to personal identity*. Chichester: Wiley.

Duggan, ES and Brennan, KA. 1994. Social avoidance and its relation to Bartholomew's adult attachment typology. *Journal of social and personal relationships*. (11): 147-153.

Dunn, J. 2004. *Children's friendships: The beginnings of intimacy*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Engels, CM, Kerr, M and Stattin, H. 2008. *Friends, lovers and groups: key relationships as a threat to personal identity*. Chichester: Wiley.

Engstrom, TW. 1985. *The fine art of friendship*. New York: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Ennett, ST. and Bauman, KE. 1993. Peer group structure and adolescent cigarette smoking: a social network analysis. *Journal of health and social behaviour*. (34): 226-236.

Erikson, EH. 1968. *Identity youth and crisis*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Erwin, P. 1998. *Friendship in childhood and adolescence*. New York: Routledge.

Feeney, JA and Noller, P. 2006. *Close relationships: Functions, forms and processes*. New York: Psychology Press.

Feinstein, D and Krippner, S. 1988. Personal mythology. *New realities*. (November/December) 15-18, 52-55.

Field, MJ and Behrman, RE. 2004. *Ethical conduct of clinical research involving children*. Washington: National Academic Press.

Finkel, JE and Vohs, KD. 2006. *Self and relationships, connecting intrapersonal and interpersonal processes*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Fromm-Reichmann, F. 1959. Loneliness. *Psychiatry*. (February 22) (1-15).

Gaev, DM. 1976. *The psychology of loneliness*. Chicago: Adams Press.

Gall MD, Gall JP. and Borg W. 2007. *Educational research: An introduction*. Pearson: Alan and Bacon.

Gelatt, HB. 1989. Positive uncertainty: A new decision making framework for counselling. *Journal of Counselling Psychology*. (36): 252-256.

Goodwin, CJ. 2008. *Research in Psychology: Methods and design*. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons.

Gotlib, IH and Hooley, JM. 1988. *Depression and marital distress: Current and future directions*, in Duck, S.W. Handbook of personal relationships. Chichester: Wiley.

Gottman, JM and Parker, JG. 1987. *Conversations of friends: Speculations on affective development*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Guerrero, LK, Andersen, PA and Afifi, WA. 2010. *Close encounters: Communication in relationships*. California: Sage Publishers.

Hanish, LD and Rodkin, PC. 2007. *Social network analysis and children's peer relationships*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Havighurst, RJ. 1952. *Developmental tasks and education*. New York: David McKay.

Hartup, WW, Laursen, B, Stewart, MI, and Estensen, A. 1988. Conflict and the friendship relations of young children. *Child Development*. (59): 1590-1600.

<http://psychology.about.com/od/loveandattraction/ss/attachmentstyle.htm> (accessed on 29 September 2011).

Hauser, ST. 1991. *Adolescents and their families: Paths of ego development*. New York: Macmillan Publishers.

Hazan, C and Shaver, PR. 1987. Romantic love conceptualised as an attachment process. *Journal of personality and social psychology*. (52): 511-24.

Hibbs, DE and Jensen, PS. 2005. *Psychosocial treatments for child and adolescent disorders: empirically based strategies for clinical practice*. Washington D.C: American Psychological Association.

Hendrick, C and Hendrick, S. 2000. *Close relationships: a sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publishers.

Hooyman, NA and Kiyak, HA. 2002. *Social gerontology*. Boston: Allan and Bacon.

Horney, K. 1939. *New ways in psycho-analysis*. New York: Norton.

Israel, M and Hay, I. 2006. *Research ethics for social scientists: Between ethical conduct and regulation*. London: Sage Publishers.

Ivankova, NV, Creswell, JW and Clark, VLP. 2007. *Foundations and approaches to mixed methods research*. (In Maree, K. 2007. First steps in research. Pretoria: Van Schaick).

Jenks, C. 2005. *Childhood*. New York: Basic Books.

Jensen, AL and Larson, RW. 2005. *New horizons in developmental theory and research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Keenan, T. 2002. *An introduction to child development*. London: Sage Publishers.

Kvale, S. 2002. *The social construction of validity*. London: Sage Publishers.

La Gaipa, JJ. 1993. Friendship expectations and friendship evaluations reciprocity and gender effects. *Youth and Society*. March (24): 299-313.

Laursen, B and Zukauskienė, R. 2007. *Interpersonal development*. England: Ashgate.

Leedy, PD and Ormrod, C. 2005. *Practical research: planning and design*. New York: Oxford.

Levinson, D. 1978. *The seasons of a man's life*. New York: Ballantine.

Lewis, M and Rosenblum, LA. 1975. *Friendship and peer relations*. New York: Wiley.

Linwood, AS. 2004. Parenting. *Parent child relationship website*.  
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/parenting.htm>. (accessed on 20 October 2010).

Louw, DA. 1998. *Menslike ontwikkeling*. Kaapstad: ABC Boekdrukkers (Edms) Bpk.

Lynch, JJ. 1977. *The broken heart: The medical consequences of loneliness*. New York: Basic Books.

Marangoni, C. and Ickles, W. 1989. Loneliness: A theoretical review with implications for measurement. *Journal of social and personal relationships*. (6): 93-128.

McConnon, S. 1989a. *The skills of friendship*. London: MacMillan Education Ltd.

McConnon, S. 1989b. *The nature of friendship*. London: MacMillan Education Ltd.

McCormick, C and Pressley, M. 2007. *Child and adolescent development for educators*. New York: Guilford Press.

McGinnis, AL. 1998. *Die vriendskapsfaktor*. Vereeniging: Christelike Uitgewersmaatskappy.



- McKay, M. 2006. Parenting practices in emerging adulthood. Development of a new measure. MEd dissertation, Brigham Young University.  
<http://www.kidsgrowth.com/resources/article/detail.cfm?id=1140>. (accessed on 14 May 2010)
- McMillan, JH and Schumacher, F. 2006. *Research in education: a conceptual introduction*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Meyer, WF, Moore, C, and Viljoen, HG. 1994. *Persoonlikheidsteorieë – van Freud tot Frankl*. Johannesburg: Lexicon uitgewers.
- Moore, D and Schultz, N. 1983. Loneliness at adolescence: Correlates, attributions and coping. *Journal of youth and adolescence*. (12): 95-108.
- Monsour, K. 2002. *Friendship: Friendship throughout adolescence*.  
[http://www.childdevelopmentinfo.com/development/teens\\_stages.shtml](http://www.childdevelopmentinfo.com/development/teens_stages.shtml) (accessed 13 May 2010).
- Morse JM and Richards L. 2007. *Read me first for a user's guide to qualitative methods*. London: Sage Publishers.
- Moshman, D. 2005. *Adolescent psychological development – rationality, morality and identity*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Moustakas, C. 1972. *Loneliness and love*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
- Norberg, P. 2004. *Essays and poems by Ralph Waldo Emerson*. New York: Barnes and Noble Classics.
- Paloutzian, R and Ellison, C. 1977. *Loneliness, spiritual well-being and the quality of life*. New York: Wiley Interscience.
- Patton, M. 2002. *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Calif: Sage Publishers.
- Phelan, T. 2007. *Do you know your parenting style?* Brainy Child Website. ([http://en.brainychild.org/wiki/Attachment\\_theory#Attachment\\_in\\_adults](http://en.brainychild.org/wiki/Attachment_theory#Attachment_in_adults) (accessed on 26 April 2010)).

Post, B and Bryan, E. 2003. *For all things a season. An essential guide to a peaceful parent-child relationship*. Mountain View: Brynn Publishing.

Prout, A. 2004. *The future of childhood. Towards the interdisciplinary study of children*. London: Sage Publishers.

Prout, A and Hullet, C. 2003. *Hearing the voices of children: Social policy for a new century*. London: Sage Publishers.

Rawlins, KW. 2008. *The compass of friendship: Narratives, identities and dialogues*. London: Sage Publishers.

Rotenberg, KJ and Hymel, S. 1999. *Loneliness in childhood and adolescence*. London: Sage Publishers.

Sandelowski, M. 1999. The call to experts in qualitative research. *Research in nursing and health*. (5): 467-471.

Santrock, JW. 2007. *A topical approach to life-span development*. New York: McGraw-Hill.  
[http://www.essortment.com/all/authoritativepa\\_tvxe.htm](http://www.essortment.com/all/authoritativepa_tvxe.htm) (accessed on 24 April 2010)

Schneider, BH, Atili, G, Nadel, J and Weissberg, RP. 1989. *Social competence in communication and relationship development*. New York. Guilford Press.

Schultz, H, Selman, L and Watts, C. 1997. *Fostering friendship: pair therapy for treatment and prevention*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter Press.

Sieber, J. 1992. *Planning ethically responsible research: A guide for students and internal review boards*. London: Sage Publishers.

Smoller, J and Youniss, J. 1985. *Adolescent relations with mothers, fathers and friends*. London: University of Chicago Press.

Solano, C, Batten, P and Parish, E. 1982. Loneliness and patterns of self-disclosure. *Journal of personality and social psychology*. (43): 524-531.

- Steyn, ST. 2006. *Resilience in adolescents: A psycho-educational perspective*. MEd Dissertation, University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Storr, A. 1988. *Solitude: A return to the self*. New York: Ballantine.
- Strydom, H. 2007. *Ethical aspects of research in the social sciences and human service professions*. Pretoria: Van Schaick Publishers.
- Sullivan, HS. 1953. *The interpersonal theory of psychiatry*. New York: Norton.
- Super, DE. 1963. *Career development: Essays in vocational development*. New York: College Entrance Examination Board.
- Swoszowski, S and Van House, L. 1993. *Teen self-esteem: A common sense path to a happy and successful life*. Buford: Life Line Press.
- Wapner, W. 2000. *Theoretical perspectives in environment-behaviour research: underlying assumptions, research problems and methodologies*. New York: Plenum Publishers.
- Wellington, J. 2000. *Educational research: Contemporary issues and practical approaches*. Great Britain: Briddles Ltd.
- Willmott, P. 1987. *Friendship networks and social support*. London: Policy Studies Institute.
- Wiseman, JP. 1986. Friendship: Bonds and binds in a voluntary relationship. *Journal of social and personal relationships*. (3):191-211.
- Young, D. 1982. *Loneliness: A sourcebook of current theory, research and therapy*. New York: Wiley.

## Annexure

*“True friendship is like sound health:  
The value of it is seldom known  
Until it is lost.”*

*“Hold a true friend  
With both your hands.”*

(fbru@chevrontexaco.com)

## **ANNEXURE A: FRIENDSHIP ELEMENTS QUESTIONNAIRE**

## FRIENDSHIP ELEMENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

The general aim of the questionnaire is to collect data about adolescents between the ages of 13 and 19 years.

<b>A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION</b>	
Date:	
Age:	
Gender:	
Home language:	
Type of school:	Government school / Private school / Home schooling
Occupation of father:	
Occupation of mother:	
Number and age of siblings:	Brothers:                      Ages:
	Sisters:                      Ages:
Marital status of parents:	Married / Divorced / Other (specify):
Primary caregiver(s):	

### DIRECTIONS

A number of questions are asked. You are expected, for each question, to give an answer which suits you best. This is a questionnaire not a test. There is no right or wrong answer, because each person has his or her own opinion. Consider each question on its own and answer it according to your immediate reaction.

Each item makes a statement, for example:

***I like doing homework.***

You need to answer each item on your answer sheet as follows:

- If you strongly agree with the statement that you like doing homework – mark strongly agree (3).
- If you only agree that you like doing homework – mark agree (2).
- If you disagree with the statement that you like doing homework – mark disagree (1).
- If you strongly disagree that you like doing homework – mark strongly disagree (0).

Should there be any uncertainty with a question; feel free to ask for assistance.

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Ex.	<i>I like doing homework.</i>	(3)	(2)	(1)	(0)
<b>B. PARENTAL RELATIONSHIP STYLES</b>					
		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	My parents are very strict and I have to obey their orders without asking questions.	3	2	1	0
2.	I am allowed to do what I want to do without restriction from my parents.	3	2	1	0
3.	My parents discuss the reasons around their rules and restrictions in our home.	3	2	1	0
4.	I have to make my own decisions without the support from my parents	3	2	1	0
5. Describe your relationship with your parents.					
<b>C. ATTACHMENT STYLES</b>					
		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
6.	Other people can be trusted enough to know that they will be there when you need them.	3	2	1	0
7.	I prefer spending time by myself rather than being with other people.	3	2	1	0
8.	People hurt you when you get too close to them emotionally.	3	2	1	0
9.	It is difficult to trust other people, especially strangers.	3	2	1	0

10. Describe how you relate with the following people in your life:

- Brothers/sisters:
- Friends:
- People you have just met:

- | D. FRIENDSHIP NEEDS                       |   |                |       |          |                   |
|---|---|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
|   |   | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
| 11.                                       | It is important for me to feel that I am part of a group.   | 3              | 2     | 1        | 0                 |
| 12.                                       | It is important for me to know if my friends feel and think the same as I do about things.  | 3              | 2     | 1        | 0                 |
| 13.                                       | It is important to me to know that I have someone to talk to about anything.  | 3              | 2     | 1        | 0                 |
| 14.                                       | It is important to me to know that I have someone to help me when I am in trouble.  | 3              | 2     | 1        | 0                 |
| 15.                                       | It is important to me to have someone in my life to help me to believe in myself.   | 3              | 2     | 1        | 0                 |
| 16.                                       | It is important to me to have someone in my life that can show me that I am wrong about something and help me to change for the better. | 3              | 2     | 1        | 0                 |
| 17. Why do you need friends in your life? |   |                |       |          |                   |

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
11.	It is important for me to feel that I am part of a group.	3	2	1	0
12.	It is important for me to know if my friends feel and think the same as I do about things.	3	2	1	0
13.	It is important to me to know that I have someone to talk to about anything.	3	2	1	0
14.	It is important to me to know that I have someone to help me when I am in trouble.	3	2	1	0
15.	It is important to me to have someone in my life to help me to believe in myself.	3	2	1	0
16.	It is important to me to have someone in my life that can show me that I am wrong about something and help me to change for the better.	3	2	1	0

17. Why do you need friends in your life?



E. KINDS OF LONELINESS					
		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
18.	Sometimes I feel that I don't really know who I am.	3	2	1	0
19.	Sometimes I feel a need for more physical contact from the people I care for.	3	2	1	0
20.	Sometimes I feel sad because I have no-one to share my inner feelings with.	3	2	1	0
21.	Sometimes I feel sad because I don't really belong in a group.	3	2	1	0
22.	Sometimes I feel empty inside because I don't understand the meaning of life.	3	2	1	0
23. Why do you think people sometimes might feel alone?					
24. Do you sometimes feel lonely? Please explain.					
F. ALTERNATIVES TO FRIENDSHIP					
		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
25.	I prefer spending time with a family member rather than a friend.	3	2	1	0
26.	I prefer doing an activity at home by myself than spending time with a friend.	3	2	1	0
27. Are there people or things in your life that are more important to you than friends? Name them and explain.					

G. FRIENDSHIP DIFFICULTIES					
		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
28.	I feel anxious around people.	3	2	1	0
29.	I feel self-conscious of my body.	3	2	1	0
30.	I feel misunderstood when I am around people.	3	2	1	0
31.	Once people get to know me, they might not like me.	3	2	1	0
32.	Sometimes I feel I am different from other people.	3	2	1	0
33.	Other people are dangerous and you can never predict when they will hurt you.	3	2	1	0
34.	It is difficult for me to talk to other people about my inner thoughts and feelings.	3	2	1	0
35.	I feel a need to have people around me at all times.	3	2	1	0
36.	I get annoyed when a friend does something that I would never do as a friend.	3	2	1	0
37.	I find it difficult to say no to my friends' requests.	3	2	1	0
38.	People say I am a cold an unaffectionate person.	3	2	1	0
39.	It is important to me to be friends with the popular crowd.	3	2	1	0
40.	Friends take too much of your privacy and alone time.	3	2	1	0
41. What problems do you experience in your friendships? Explain.					
42. What does the concept <i>friend</i> mean to you?					

43. How many friends do you have?
44. What are your expectations in friendship?
45. Have you ever battled to make friends? Explain.
46. Have you ever lost a friend(s)? Explain.
47. Have you ever been rejected by a friend(s)? Explain.
48. What are the most common problems in friendship, according to you?
49. Do you think friends add value to your life? Explain.
50. How do your parents feel about your friends? Explain.

51. How many hours a week do you spend with your friends?
52. How do your friends make you feel about yourself? Explain.
53. Do you sometimes feel you have to do things with your friends that do not fit in with your own values?  Explain.
54. Do you feel your friends respect your uniqueness and worthiness as an individual? Explain.
55. Do you behave the same or in a different manner when you are around your friends than when you are with your family? Explain.
56. What are your strong points? Explain.
57. What are your weaknesses? Explain.

58. What would you like to change about yourself if you could? Explain.

59. Give a description of how you think your friends would describe you?

60. Give your best moment or day in your life. With whom did you share this day?

61. Give your worst day or moment in your life. Who gave you support in this situation?

## **ANNEXURE B: LETTER OF CONSENT**

Correspondence with parents/guardians requesting permission to conduct the proposed research.

## LETTER OF CONSENT

C.M. Burton  
Cell phone: 072 2491204  
Intern Educational Psychologist

April / May 2011

Dear Parent / Guardian

### **Request for Permission for Your Child to Participate in Research**

Your permission is kindly requested for your child to participate in a study regarding the topic of friendship among adolescents. The aim of the research is to investigate the psychological value of friendship amongst adolescents, as well as to propose some recommendations to professionals working in the field of Educational Psychology.

Please be assured that the identifying information of your child will be kept confidential. Under no circumstances will your child's responses or nature and quality of his/her performance be revealed. Participation is strictly voluntary. Please note that your child has the right to withdraw from the research, even after initially giving consent. Your child will be protected from any form of physical- or psychological harm. The research findings will be published. These findings will be accessible to you, should you have the need to view the final report.

We / I ..... grant permission for my child ..... to participate in the research. This will include approximately one or two sessions with your child who will be arranged at a time that is convenient to yourself and your child.

Thank you for giving this matter your immediate attention. It is much appreciated. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

Yours faithfully,

---

Colleen Burton  
Intern Educational Psychologist