SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS' EXPERIENCE OF CITIZENSHIP IN A DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA

by

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Declaration

I declare that *Secondary school learners' experience of citizenship in a democratic South Africa* is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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T.J. TLHAPI **Date**

Student No 2571862

Dedication

Dedicated to my parents,

John and Paulina

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my appreciation and gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Leonie Higgs, for her valuable and sympathetic guidance; to my wife, Magdeline for her constant support; to the principal of the secondary school for allowing me to interview her learners; to the learners for their enthusiasm and patience whilst participating in the interviews and especially the Almighty for enabling me to pursue the research project diligently and successfully.

Summary

The aim of this study was to explore how the newly acquired democratic dispensation in South Africa has affected the lives of secondary school learners. A literature review was undertaken on democracy, democratic citizenship and democratic government. An empirical investigation using a qualitative phenomenological approach examined the situation of secondary school learners using the various agencies of citizenship, namely the family, peer groups, the school and the community. Data was gathered by focus group interviews. It emerged from the examination of the collected data that democratic citizenship has improved the situation of secondary school learners regarding their interpersonal relationships with their families, peer groups, school-mates and other members of the community at large. However, the findings indicated that the democratic dispensation has not yet had a significant impact on the situation of secondary school learners at school and in their communities.

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Chapter 1

ORIENTATION AND INTRODUCTION

1.1   INTRODUCTION

This study is intended to explore how secondary school learners in the North West province experience citizenship in a democratic South Africa. The North West province is one of the nine provinces of South Africa. It is the province in which the researcher resides. According to Helve and Wallace (2001: 11), citizenship is of fundamental importance to every one because it defines the individual's legal, political and social relationship to the society of which he/she belongs to. In addition, Riesenberg (1993: 42) points out that citizenship is enmeshed in the complete system of relationships that constitute public life. Therefore when a political system is transformed, the lives of the citizens are bound to be affected. This was the case with South Africa which, in 1994, was transformed from an apartheid state to a democratic state. This change from one political system to another in South Africa prompted the researcher to explore the effects of transformation in the lives of secondary school learners.

The researcher targeted secondary school learners and not adults as research respondents because, according to Dewey (1998: 60), learners are more sensitive to unfairness than adults. The injustice that prevailed in the pre-democratic South Africa is highlighted by Harvey (2001: 243) who maintains that what really made the difference at the inauguration of Nelson Mandela on 10 May 1994, as State President, was the complete absence of the awesome and prevalent feeling of repression which people experienced in South Africa prior to the country's free and fair elections.

This statement by Harvey (2001: 243) prompted the researcher to establish whether democratic citizenship has also brought the tranquillity that was experienced at the 1994 inauguration ceremony to the lives of secondary school learners in the North West province.

According to Heater (2004: 65), citizenship is not static but dynamic. This means that, as time passes, citizenship changes. Originally in South Africa, unlike the ancient Greek city-state where citizenship was acquired by culture, citizenship was based on ethnicity (Heater 2004: 196). According to Diamond (1992: 2), democratic citizenship in South Africa was ushered in by the democratic trend that began in 1990 with the release of Nelson Mandela and the un-banning of the African National Congress. The African National Congress is at present the ruling political party in South Africa. Formerly, citizenship in South Africa was based upon the assumption of an elite citizenry, small in numbers and virtuous in conduct. Present citizenship on the other hand, is based on the assumption of the masses endowed with democratic rights and owing loyalty to the nation-state (Heater 2004: 65). This change of emphasis, according to the researcher, warrants an inquiry into the effect that it has exerted on the lives of secondary school learners.

According to Diamond (1999: 3), democratic governments, which enable democratic citizenship, offer the best prospect for accountable, responsive, peaceful, predictable and good governance. In addition, Dahl (in Diamond 1999: 3) posits that democratic governments promote freedom as no other feasible alternative can.

In view of what Dahl (in Diamond 1999: 3) says about democratic citizenship the researcher has decided to determine whether or not secondary school learners are experiencing freedom in a democratic South Africa. The researcher has furthermore endeavoured to establish whether secondary school learners agree that democracy is a better form of government. Hereafter, the researcher

discusses the key role played by education agents, such as, the school and family in inculcating democratic citizenship in secondary school learners. The researcher then motivates why he chose philosophy of education as a frame of reference for this study.

According to Osler and Starkey (2003: 244), preparation for democratic citizenship is a key task for education agents, such as, the school and the family. Anderson (in Osler & Starkey 2003: 244) maintains that education also provides socialisation of learners into the community through the curriculum or through specialised programmes.

According to Conrad and Heidin (in Shavers 1976: 53), specialised programmes can be volunteer service and student projects to improve the school and the community. The main objective of education for national citizenship, according to Osler and Starkey (2003: 244), is to ensure that learners understand their present and future roles within the constitutional and legal framework of the state in which they live. In this study the researcher endeavoured to establish the changes that have been brought about by democratic citizenship in the lives of secondary school learners.

According to Schweisfurth, Davies and Harber (2002: 243), democratic citizenship does not come naturally to secondary school learners. Secondary school learners have to learn democratic ways of life. Schweisfurth et al. (ibid.) point out that democratic citizenship is a human invention and therefore requires an effort to learn and to practice.

In this respect Mosher, Kenny and Garrod (1994: 24) maintain that the following core processes of democratic citizenship can be taught:

- an equal dispersion of power so that all people affected by policy decisions have a voice and a vote in their determination

- a way to effect the will and interests of the majority, who freely consent to the purposes and the rules by which the individual or the institution is to live
- adherence to the rule of law and orderly change of the constitution and the laws that implement it.

These points emphasise that democratic citizenship does not come naturally to secondary school learners. Agents of citizenship such as the family, the school and the community have a duty to teach secondary school learners democratic citizenship.

Since educational agents, such as, the school and the family play a crucial role in inculcating democratic citizenship on secondary school learners, the researcher considered that it would be appropriate to use philosophy of education as a frame of reference in this study. According to Dewey (in Archambolt 1974: 12-13), philosophy of education makes the social aim of education its priority. The social aim of education is to equip learners with skills such as respect for the law and for the rights of others so that they can live peacefully in their communities (Mosher et al. 1994: 24).

While Mosher et al. (1994: 24) emphasise democratic citizenship in a national sense, Dewey (in Archambolt 1974: 12-13) emphasises the global aspect of democratic citizenship. This shows that democratic citizenship starts from a national level and then expands to a global level. People will therefore find it easier to practice democratic citizenship at global level after they have achieved it at national level.

The researcher also considered that it was appropriate to use philosophy of education as a frame of reference in this research because education is primarily a social process and, according to Brubacher (1969: 4), a social process constitutes one of the main dimensions of philosophy of education. The

experiences of citizenship by secondary school learners in a democratic South Africa are an educational as well as a social process. The experiences of the learners are educational because they are learning democratic ways of life. Their experiences are also a social process because they utilise what they have learned to adjust to a democratic social order. Furthermore, philosophy of education is appropriate as a frame of reference in this study because its aim is to critically investigate forms of understanding that are relevant to education (Morrow 1989: xiii).

In stressing the importance of philosophy of education in analysing human experience, Bowyer (1970: 13) maintains that it is concerned with all aspects of human experience. Kneller (1971: 13) adds that if educational problems are analysed philosophically, they will be seen in a broader perspective.

In view of the role played by philosophy of education, the researcher believes that such a perspective will enable him to explore the experiences of secondary school learners in a broader perspective. According to Bowyer (1970: 13), philosophy of education is concerned with all aspects of human experience including citizenship. In view of assertions of Bowyer (1970: 13) and others, the researcher believes that philosophy of education can also be utilised to explore issues of citizenship.

1.2   MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The research was motivated by the political change that took place in South Africa in 1994. South Africa was transformed from an oligarchy to a democratic system (Brubacher 1969: 53). According to Brubacher (1969: 53), in an oligarchy the minority rules over the majority. In South Africa prior to 1994 the minority ruled over the majority. The researcher postulates that it is appropriate to explore how secondary school learners experience democratic citizenship since the situation change in 1994.

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Furthermore, the researcher was interested to find out if in our newly democratic system, teachers were encouraging qualities such as initiative, enterprise, self-reliance and perseverance in the learners (Brubacher 1969: 57).

According to Schweisfurth et al. (2002: 34), democracy is important in the lives of all people, especially those of secondary school learners. In support of Schweisfurth et al. (2002: 34), Adelson and O'Neil (Dawson, Prewitt & Dawson 1977: 58), maintain that secondary school learners become interested in politics because they have reached the adolescent stage. Secondary school learners are therefore more likely to follow political events, identify with a certain political party, as well as participate in political elections. In view of the research done by Schweisfurth et al. (2002: 34) and Adelson and O'Neil (Dawson et al. 1977: 58) on the mental development of secondary school learners, the researcher decided to investigate what changes democratic citizenship had brought upon secondary school learners. As far as the researcher is aware, no similar study has ever been undertaken in this regard.

1.2.1   Assumptions

This investigation is based on the following assumptions:

- the learner's life is influenced by his/her family, school, peers, the media, community as well as by the law of the land
- those who are living in a democracy must recognise that they have a duty to maintain and pass democracy on to posterity
- adults should afford secondary school learners the opportunity to practice democratic citizenship
- educational systems are expected to impress upon future citizens some notion of potential participation in the collective decision-making processes

- the school secondary can inculcate democracy in learners by involving learners in decision-making activities
- a person who was part of a decision-making process is more likely to respect that decision than the one who has the decision imposed on him from above.

1.2.2 Limitations

The study envisaged the following limitations:

- respondents could provide inadequate responses because they have no idea of what democratic citizenship means;
- respondents may not be eager to share their experiences with the researcher because he is a stranger to them;
- respondents may try to impress the researcher and so make biased responses;
- respondents may not be willing to share their experiences with the researcher as a result of their fear of victimisation.

However, the researcher endeavoured to overcome these limitations by asking probing questions and by assuring learners that the information they provided would remain confidential.

1.3 DELIMITATION OF STUDY

The study targets the North West Province. This area is convenient to the researcher because he lives there. In the North West Province the researcher did not need to travel far to find a school that can provide two groups of grade twelve learners for focus group interviews. Grade twelve learners fall within the seventeen to nineteen years age group on which the researcher wanted to focus. According to Dawson, Previtt and Dawson (1977: 56-57) secondary school learners

who have attained the seventeen to nineteen years age group, have developed participatory skills and are interested in politics. Secondary school learners from grades below grade twelve might not yet have attained this age group. The researcher thus decided to focus on grade twelve secondary school learners. For this study, the researcher conducted two focus group interviews, one with girls only and the other with boys only, so that each gender could discuss freely without criticism from the other.

1.4   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The main research question for this dissertation of limited scope is:

How do secondary school learners experience citizenship in a democratic South Africa?

1.4.1   Introduction

According to Adelson (Mosher et al. 1994: 54), socialisation of the learner begins in the family. For this study this means that the family should play a crucial role in preparing secondary school learners to lead a democratic way of life. Rowe (Jones & Jones 1992: 52) identifies five important agents of socialisation where secondary school learners can learn democratic citizenship. They are:

- the family
- peer groups
- the school
- the community
- the state.

In this study the researcher explored the changes that were ushered in by the democratic dispensation through these five agents of citizenship.

Adelson (Mosher et al. 1994: 54) argues that democracy begins at home and maintains that the family can contribute to democratic citizenship by inculcating democratic values such as respect, tolerance, liberty and justice in their children. In his endeavour to explore the experiences of secondary school learners in a democratic South Africa the researcher focused on the role played by these agents of socialisation in the lives of secondary school learners.

1.4.2   Problem formulation

The main problem for this dissertation of limited scope is:

What are secondary school learners' experiences of citizenship in a democratic South Africa?

The issue is how are these experiences lived?

Other issues arising are:

- Do secondary school learners understand what citizenship means?
- What does democracy mean to secondary school learners?
- What challenges do secondary school learners face in a democratic state?
- Are secondary school learners interested in participating in civil and political affairs?

1.4.3   Theoretical framework

The researcher approached the study from the phenomenological perspective. The phenomenological perspective focuses on the lived experiences of the learners (Van Manen 1990: 9, 179). As the researcher is interested on how learners experience citizenship in democratic South Africa, he believes that the

phenomenological perspective is appropriate for this study because it is uses the day- to- day experiences of human beings.

1.4.3.1   The phenomenological approach

The researcher's discussion of different phenomenological views endeavoured to show how these views are relevant to the study under discussion.

Phenomenological investigation focuses on lived experience (Pivcevic 1970: 11). In view of his exposition of the phenomenological approach, the researcher postulates that it is an appropriate perspective from which to explore the every day experiences of secondary school learners in a democratic South Africa.

The phenomenological view provided by Husserl, who is reputed to be the founder of twentieth century phenomenology, states that there is a pure consciousness that exists as a non- material subject of knowledge, a faculty of knowing that does nothing but know things (Husserl in Vandenberg 1997: 8). Husserl (ibid.) believed that this pure consciousness could be investigated by what he called pure phenomenology or transcendental phenomenology.

Pivcevic (1970: 64) maintains that Husserl made extensive use of the method of phenomenological reduction in his attempt to develop a pure phenomenology.

Pivcevic (1970: 64) has this to say about phenomenological reduction:

- It is a method that Husserl developed in his lectures in 1907 to clear the last obstacles standing in the way of an adequate philosophical understanding of noetic conditions of knowledge and to lay firm foundations for a pure phenomenology.
- It is a means of detecting what is constitutive and essential in our cognitive relationship with the world.

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- It is a way of discovering the basic phenomenological facts that make knowledge and the world, as we know it possible.

It is clear from Pivcevic's (1970: 64) interpretation that, through his phenomenological reduction Husserl attempted to develop a universal theory of understanding. However, he did not succeed in developing such a theory (Lippitz in Vandenberg 1997: 23).

Furthermore, according to Merleau-Ponty (1962: vii), phenomenology is the study of essences. Examples of essences according to him (1962: vii), are those of perception and consciousness. In this respect Merleau-Ponty (1962: vii) argues that phenomenology is a philosophy which regards the world as already there before reflection begins. All the efforts of phenomenology are therefore concentrated upon re-achieving a direct and primitive contact with the world and endowing that world with a philosophical status. This means that phenomenology endeavours to access the experiences of research respondents with out imposing the views of the researcher on these experiences. When conducting the interviews the researcher took cognisance of Merleau-Ponty's point of view and was aware of the learners' experiences without imposing his opinions on them.

In emphasising that phenomenology concentrates on lived experience, Hegel (1977: 58) maintains that phenomenology is interested in sense-certainty because sense-certainty has not yet omitted anything from the object. In this study therefore the researcher encouraged secondary school learners to relate their authentic experiences in a democratic South Africa.

In concurring with Hegel (1977: 58), Blitz (1981: 42) argues that phenomenology is explicit exhibition and therefore makes thematic what usually lies hidden. For this study this meant that the researcher encouraged the learners to relate their experiences as they were without attempting to embellish them, so that the researcher could get a true picture.

Blitz (1981: 46) emphasises the importance that phenomenology attaches to lived experience by pointing out that phenomenology concentrates on 'everydayness' because 'everydayness' is pre-ontological and has not yet been affected by preconceived ideas.

In this respect the researcher refrained from influencing secondary school learners when they are relating their experiences.

However, Heidegger (1962: 376) points out that the present is never simply the present because we have a past and that it is perhaps only in rare moments that we are fully present in the immediate situation. In this study the researcher took cognisance of the fact that secondary school learners may not provide their authentic experiences and therefore asked probing questions to try to establish the validity of experiences of the learners.

The learners' pasts may have influenced their present experiences.

According to van Manen (in Vandenberg 1977: 52), phenomenology does not produce dogmas or even theories in the strong sense of the term. Phenomenology only shows us various possible human experiences and worlds that people occupy, as well as how these may be described and how language has the power to disclose the world in which we live as mothers, fathers, teachers and learners. In this study the researcher is interested in the lived-world of secondary school learners.

The researcher also endeavours to show the relevance of the contemporary existential phenomenology of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, and Van Manen to the present study but not the transcendental phenomenology of Husserl. The reason for this is that existential phenomenology concentrates on human existence and the everyday lived-world. The researcher considers that existential phenomenology is suitable for this study because this study is interested in

accessing the lived experiences of secondary school learners in a democratic South Africa. Husserl's transcendental phenomenology on the other hand was interested in developing a theory that would enable human beings to understand every thing. Furthermore, Husserl did not succeed in developing such a theory.

In emphasising that existential phenomenology concentrates on human existence and the everyday lived-world Vandenberg (1997: 8-9) posits that there is no hearing that exists apart from sounds in the world. There is no touch without feeling tangible objects in the world. There is no taste without flavour, nor is there smell without the odours, fragrances and aromas of things. There is no consciousness that is not conscious of something in the world. Spiegelberg (1975: 3), on the other hand, maintains that the twentieth century phenomenology concentrates on the day to day experiences of research subjects and endeavours to exclude unexamined preconceptions and presuppositions. It is the everyday lived-world of secondary school learners that the researcher is interested in. Through utilising existential phenomenology the researcher endeavoured to access the lived experiences of secondary school learners. In the next paragraph the researcher will provide an explication of key concepts in the topic.

1.5   EXPLANATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

These key concepts are:

- citizenship
- democracy
- experiences
- secondary school learner

1.5.1 Citizenship

The concept of citizenship was originally developed by the ancient Greeks and the Romans and has undergone some change in meaning over time. The Greeks and the Romans regarded citizenship as a status, accompanied by a set of duties that one had to be proud of. This conception of citizenship did not regard citizenship as something that could be used against the state as is the case today (Jones & Jones 1992: 22).

The idea of citizenship has however changed with the advent of democracy which is practiced in western countries including South Africa (Pinkney 1993: 8). Marshall (1950: 10-11) divided the notion of citizenship under democracy into the following three components:

- the civil component that confers freedoms such as property, speech and justice;
- the political component which provides the right to vote, elect and be elected;
- the social component, which ensures that individuals are afforded the right to live a civilised life according to the standards of society.

In exploring the experiences of secondary school learners in the democratic South Africa the researcher ventured to find out if these learners enjoy the rights integral to democratic citizenship.

1.5.2. Democracy

According to Pinkney (1993: 8), from the time of the ancient Greeks to the present time, there have always been debates about what democracy is. The early democracy of the Greek city-state was based on socially homogeneous communities. In these communities people used to assemble in one place to discuss and reach a political agreement (Phillips 1993: 124). Phillips (ibid.) however points

out that nowadays it is impossible for people of a nation-state to assemble in one place in order to reach a political consensus.

The ancient Greeks regarded democracy as being the work of nature, whereas nowadays democracy is regarded as an artificial product of the human will (Spragens 1990: 181). Spragens (ibid.) maintains that the Greeks saw democracy as being the right to participate directly in decisions, whereas modern democracy focuses on representation and the protection of the rights of citizens. In this study the researcher dealt with liberal democracy. According to Pinkney (1993: 10) liberal democracy, which is practised in western countries such as in South Africa, Western Europe and the United States of America, affords citizens constitutional protection and equality before the law.

1.5.3   Experience

In this study the researcher is interested in the day-to-day lived experiences of secondary school learners in a democratic South Africa.

According to Vandenberg (1997: 10), experience is something that we acquire through our conscious existence in our day-to-day lives. Children acquire ongoing knowledge at school as they continue to learn and adults acquire knowledge in their daily interactions with the youth and other adults. Schutz (1974: 35-36) points out, that in our everyday life-world we interact meaningfully with people and objects through wide-awake bodily activity. It is this activity that enables us to acquire our different experiences. It is this same activity of secondary school learners that the researcher investigates.

1.5.4   Secondary school learners

The secondary school learners who were interviewed ranged in age between seventeen to nineteen years, that is, they were adolescents (Dawson et al. 1977:

56). Dawson et al. (ibid.) maintain that adolescents undergo major physical, psychological and social development that enables them to acquire a wide range of social skills, to form internal standards of judgment and conduct, to develop participatory skills as well as to develop an interest in politics. Mosher, Kenny and Garrod (1994: 39) posit that adolescence is the stage in which to teach learners about citizenship education because they have developed abstract thinking.

As the focus of this study is on secondary school learners' experiences of citizenship in a democratic South Africa, the researcher explored these experiences in the context of their families, their peers, the school and the community. Conrad and Hedin (in Shavers 1976: 50) maintain that in order to learn more about citizenship, secondary school learners should be encouraged to participate in their communities. According to Shavers (1976: 50), when people think of a good citizen they think of a person who acts decently, who knows and cares about the affairs of his or her community and who demonstrates this concern through overt action. It is clear that the family, the school and the community can enable secondary school learners to achieve such participation in order to enable them to learn more about responsible citizenship. The researcher formulated the interview questions to probe the experiences of secondary school learners by using the context of citizenship, the family, the school and the community. In the next paragraph the researcher will discuss the research methodology.

1.6   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher made use of qualitative research methodology. In qualitative research the researcher begins the study by finding out how the respondents see the world and how they define their situation (Neuman 1997: 335). Marshal and Rossman (1999: 46), maintain that the following situations are suitable for qualitative research:

- research that cannot be done experimentally for practical or ethical reasons;
- research that delves deeply into complexities and processes;
- research for which relevant variables have yet to be found;
- research that seeks to explore where and why policy, folk wisdom and practice do not work;
- research on unknown societies or innovative systems;
- research on informal and unstructured linkages and processes in the organisations;
- research on real, as opposed to stated, organisational goals.

In view of what Marshal and Rossman (1999: 46) say about qualitative research, the researcher felt that the qualitative research method was suitable for his study because it enabled him to find out how secondary school learners see the new democratic dispensation in South Africa and how they experience democratic citizenship.

Reid and Smith (in De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport 2002: 80) explain the characteristics of qualitative research in this way:

- the researcher attempts to gain a first-hand holistic undertaking of the phenomena of interest by means of a flexible strategy of problem formulation and data collection;
- the researcher's understanding of the phenomena takes place as the investigation proceeds;
- qualitative methodology rests on the assumption that valid understanding can be gained through accumulated knowledge acquired at first hand by a single researcher.

In taking cognisance of Reid and Smith's (ibid.) advice the researcher endeavoured to be flexible in the interviews by allowing secondary school learners to do most of the talking and by ensuring that they felt at ease.

Furthermore, the researcher undertook an extensive literature study on citizenship, democracy and secondary school learners. After careful consideration of the purpose and objective of the study, the interview schedule was prepared. Information gained from the literature review was also extensively used in the preparation of the interview schedule. Thereafter the researcher utilised focus group interviews in the gathering of data.

According to De Vos et al. (2002: 309), when used alone, focus groups are critical for obtaining insight into the perceptions and attitudes of people in an environment of dynamic group interaction. The researcher opted for focus group interviews because they enabled him to collect sufficient data in a short period of time. Focus group interviews did not cause too much disruption to the school life of the learners.

1.6.1 Research method

Initially the researcher undertook an extensive literature study. Furthermore the researcher only utilised focus group interviews in order to save time.

During interviews the researcher asked open-ended questions in order to encourage secondary school learners to relate their experiences in a democratic state (Patton in Berry 1999: 1). The researcher envisaged that open-ended questions would enable access to the lived experiences of secondary school learners as well as an interpretation of them. Open-ended questions gave free rein to secondary school learners to express themselves. During the interviewing process participants were allowed to do most of the talking.

According to Seidman (in De Vos et al. 2002: 293), the researcher should encourage self-expression while at the same time maintaining control. The researcher should however, avoid asking leading questions. This means that the researcher should not coax the participant to say anything. He should instead listen carefully to what the participant has to say. The researcher also needed to bear in mind that it is important to get permission before conducting interviews. Van der Burgh (1988: 67) stresses the importance of informing and getting the permission of the community or group targeted for research.

The researcher first obtained permission from the principal and then explained to the learners that they were free to refrain from participating in the research if they felt uncomfortable or uneasy.

As the researcher used a tape recorder he had also to discuss this issue with the principal and the learners in order to acquire their permission. At all times the researcher bore in mind that he may not be welcomed at the site of the research.

Rubin and Barbie (1997: 382) draw our attention to the fact that indeed at times the researcher may not be welcome. Whenever the researcher feels that he is not welcome, he must not persist. He will accept it and move on to look for other respondents.

1.7   PROGRAMME OF STUDY

In the programme of study the author outlines the sequence of the study from chapter 1 to chapter 5.

In chapter 1 the study is introduced as well as the motivation for the researcher's decision to undertake this study. Furthermore chapter one discusses the limitations and the delimitation of the study. In this chapter it is mentioned that the study will be confined to secondary school learners in the North West

Province. A discussion of the secondary school learner in relation to citizenship and democracy is also provided. Key concepts, such as, citizenship and democracy are explained.

In chapter 2 citizenship and democracy are discussed with reference to the literature review. Moreover, democratic citizenship, participatory democracy, representative democracy and inclusive democracy are explained.

In chapter 3 data, collected during interviews, was carefully examined, organised and analysed. The researcher attempted this by studying the organised data many times in order to familiarise himself with the data (Marshall & Rossman 1995: 113).

This process assisted the researcher to achieve, as far as possible, a proper analysis of the collected data.

The findings of the focus group interviews were unfolded in chapter 4. The researcher endeavoured to objectively analyse the results of the research.

A summary is provided, conclusions drawn and recommendations made in chapter 5. At this point the researcher attempted to understand the significance of the data.

The researcher explored emerging categories and findings for other possible explanations. The researcher then identified and described the alternative explanations. Thereafter he gave his interpretation and demonstrates how and why he thinks that his explanation 'is the most plausible of all' (Marshall & Rossman 1995: 116-117).

1.8   SUMMARY

In this chapter it was mentioned that South Africa became a democratic state in 1994, and many changes were introduced at schools. Among these changes was the offering of equal citizenship to all South Africans. The researcher also explained that the change from one political system to another in South Africa motivated him to undertake this study. The researcher further explained why the study was done from a philosophy of education viewpoint. Furthermore, he pointed out that he would approach this study from the phenomenological perspective because this study is interested in the day-to-day experiences of secondary school learners. The problem statement and the aims of the research has also been discussed. The key concepts citizenship, democracy, experience and learner were defined.

In chapter 2 citizenship and democracy are discussed.

Chapter 2

CITIZENSHIP AND DEMOCRACY

2.1   INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 dealt with the motivation for the study, the assumptions, limitations, delimitations of the study, statement of the problem, formulation of the problem, theoretical framework of the study namely the phenomenological approach and provided an explication of key concepts of the topic. In chapter2, the researcher discusses the concepts of citizenship and democracy in relation to the literature review.

Citizenship has been understood differently throughout the history of mankind. In ancient Greece Plato regarded citizenship as deriving from having both parents of Hellenic origin and belonging to a particular city-state, such as, Athens. Aristotle, on the other hand, regarded citizenship as being dynamic and susceptible to change with the passing of time. Aristotle also recognised that states differed in their conception of citizenship (Riesenberg 1992: 40-42).

In view of this discussion, the researcher postulates that the apartheid regime adopted the Platonic version of citizenship that is based on cultural origin. The democratic South Africa on the other hand has opted for the Aristotelian conception of citizenship which recognises that citizenship has to change in order to suit particular eras. In this study the researcher will focus on the democratic conception of citizenship, because South Africa has been transformed into a democratic state.

Furthermore, the researcher provides detailed explanation of democratic citizenship because this is the type of citizenship that this study is interested in. The main focus of this study is to establish how secondary school learners, experience citizenship in a democratic South Africa.

2.2   CITIZENSHIP

According to Enslin and White (2003: 111), citizenship is a legal status conferred by the State to its citizens. This view of citizenship is supported by Butts (Reische 1987: 13-14) who argues that citizenship occurs in a political community, which is governed by manmade laws and not by a king, or a religious group or by an elite group of people.

Pinkney (1993: 8-12) maintains that citizenship is not restricted to a democratic system of government. There is citizenship under a democratic government and citizenship under an authoritarian system. The difference is that in a democratic system, citizens have more freedom than in an authoritarian state. The present study focuses on citizenship in a democratic state, concentrating specifically on how democratic citizenship affects secondary school learners of the age group between seventeen to nineteen years because according to Dawson, Previtt and Dawson (1977: 57), youths in this age group are interested in politics.

2.3   DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS OF CITIZENSHIP

Heater (2004: 199) identifies three conceptions of citizenship, namely:

- the liberal conception
- the republican conception
- the commutarian conception

2.3.1 The liberal conception of citizenship

The liberal conception of citizenship is associated with Marshall (1950: 173), who argues that citizenship consists of three sets of component rights namely: civil, political and the social. The civil element is composed of the rights necessary for individual freedom.

These rights are liberty of the person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property, to conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice. The political element entails the right to participate in the exercise of political power. Finally the social element means the right to economic welfare, security and the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being.

The conception of citizenship is, however, always undergoing change in order to suite the contemporary era of a particular nation (Riesenberg 1992: 40-42).

The liberal conception of citizenship is constantly undergoing improvement.

This improvement is demonstrated by Galston (1991: 221-224) who identifies the following four components of liberal citizenship:

- general virtues: courage, law-abidingness and loyalty;
- social virtues: independence and open-mindedness;
- economic virtues: work ethics, capacity to delay self-gratification, adaptability to economic and technological change;
- political virtues: capacity to discern and respect the rights of others;
- willingness to demand only what can be paid for, ability to evaluate the performance of those in office, and willingness to engage in public discourse.

Galston's (1991: 221-224) description of improved citizenship demonstrates the dynamic nature of citizenship. During his exploration of the experiences of secondary school learners the researcher will endeavour to establish what their ideas of good citizenship are and whether they are satisfied with democratic citizenship or not.

2.3.2   The republican conception of citizenship

According to Miller (2000: 82-83), citizenship under the republican conception has the following four components:

- equal rights in terms of free speech and ownership of property
- obligations in terms of respect for law, payment of taxes and so on
- defence of the rights of fellow citizens to promote common interests.
- active in political decision-making such as participating in debate.

The republican conception of citizenship emphasises the duties of the citizen towards the state more than the liberal conception of citizenship. For this study the liberal conception of citizenship applies because South Africa has opted for this type of citizenship (Pinkney 1993: 10)

2.3.3   The commutarian conception of citizenship

According to the commutarian conception of citizenship, citizenship of a state is composed of members associated in different groups (Heater 2004: 199). This conception of citizenship is similar to consociationalism, which also regards citizenship of a state as composed of different groups (Pinkney 1993: 12). Heater (2004: 199) on the other hand argues that the three conception of citizenship, namely liberal, republican and commutarian, do not satisfy the needs of a twenty-first century state. He therefore suggests three options, namely:

- assimilation - where the minority is absorbed by the majority; an example is the United States of America in the nineteenth century.

- marginalisation - where the minority is treated as second- class citizens; an example is the United States of America in the nineteen fifties, where black people were treated as second- class citizens; conversely in South Africa before 1994 it was the black majority that was treated as second- class citizens (Rasheed 1996: 76-77); a recent example of marginalisation according to Heater (2004: 199), is Sudan, where Christians were treated as second-class citizens.

- pluralism or multi-culturalism where multi- ethnicity is practiced; an example according to Heater (ibid.) is Britain.

South Africa has also opted for pluralism or multi-culturalism (Cloete in Vanhanen 1992: 152-153) as it is composed of different racial groups. This system allows these racial groups to preserve their identities while at the same time being loyal to the state.

Stokes (2002: 29-43) also identifies three conceptions of citizenship.

According to Stokes (ibid.), citizenship can be defined according to certain democratic theories such as:

- *liberal democratic citizenship*

  This model stresses the rights of the individual citizen and his/her obligations.

- *republican democratic citizenship*

  In this model the public interests take priority over the private interests of the Individual.

- *deliberative democratic citizenship*

  This is a contemporary improvement of citizenship under the liberal conception because the liberal conception does not address group concerns (Phillips 1993: 132).

According to the deliberative model, the citizen should participate in political activities of the country as well as in non-political activities of civil society (Helve & Wallace 2001: 3-4). Helve and Wallace (ibid.) characterise this type of citizenship as active citizenship. In concurring with Helve and Wallace (2001: 3-4), Stokes (2002: 42) maintains that under deliberative democratic citizenship, citizens are expected to negotiate among themselves in order to reach an informed decision. Negotiation requires good listening skills and the ability to consider new ideas. Negotiations played an important part in transforming South Africa into a democratic state (Vanhanen 1992: 152). Waghid (2003: 159) on the other hand emphasises compassionate citizenship, which is a deeper form of responsible citizenship. According to Waghid (ibid.), compassionate citizenship will enable citizens to sympathise with those citizens who are less fortunate than themselves and that this attitude of citizens will assist in strengthening democracy. In conclusion the researcher postulates that deliberative democratic citizenship and compassionate citizenship can enable secondary school learners to maintain and improve their newly acquired democracy.

2.3.4 Democratic citizenship

According to Schweisfurth et al. (2002: 30), democratic citizenship is a human invention and people learn democratic citizenship by living and practicing it daily. In concurring with Schweisfurth et al. (2002: 30), Vincent and Plant (1984: 150) state that citizenship in a democratic state requires that individuals should be able to act for themselves as effectively as possible, to define their own needs

and to seek to make institutions more responsible. The researcher postulates that secondary school learners have attained the stage where they are able to discern the political transformation that South Africa has undergone.

The fact that secondary school learners are able to discern the political context in which they live is supported by Dawson, Previtt and Dawson (1977: 57) who maintain that the ability of learners to understand and to think about politics develops during adolescence and that by the age of eighteen this ability has been refined. The adolescents that the researcher studied were between the ages of seventeen and nineteen.

Still on the issue of secondary school learners experiences in a democratic state, Scheisfurth et al. (2002: 114) maintain that social learning which is crucial for learning democratic citizenship develops through the following main agents:

- the family, which is the most important contributor of social learning
- peer groups
- the school and
- the local community.

In view of the important role that these agents of social learning play in transmitting democratic citizenship to secondary school learners, the researcher generated interview questions using the context of these agents of social learning.

Rosenstone and Hanson (1993: 1) maintain that in democracies people elect their leaders, assemble to speak and act in concert. They also petition their governors for redress of their grievances. In democracies some people vote while others do not vote. At times people vote, at others they lobby, at other times they petition and at some times they do nothing. Rosenstone and Hansen (ibid.) argue that in the context of what people do in a democratic dispensation, the two important questions to ask are the following:

- What does it mean in a democracy when citizens exercise their right to take part in elections and government?
- What does it mean when people do not vote?

The first question is answered by Dahl (Sorenson 1993: 26) who argues that democratic citizenship is brought about by people who strive for it. This was the case in South Africa where the people had to fight for democratic citizenship. This democratic citizenship was realised in 1994. In view of the arguments presented by Dahl (Sorenson 1993: 26) the researcher concludes that if secondary school learners participate in public affairs democratic citizenship will be strengthened.

In answering the second question, namely what happens when citizens do not exercise their rights, Mills (Spragens 1990: 147) maintains that active participation by the citizenry is essential for the well being of the state. He argues that participation in public affairs is necessary for the following three reasons:

- if citizens do not participate their interests will be neglected;
- it is the duty of every citizen to ensure that his/her own rights and interests are not neglected; the rights of a citizen are only secure from being disregarded when he/she stands up for them;
- government depends on people improving themselves.

By improvement Mills meant the development of intelligence and moral capacities. He believed that political participation was conducive to both. When people participate in politics their intellect will be enhanced as a result of the practical experience they acquire. Moral capacities of individual citizens are enlarged by participation in public affairs because it gives the individual the chance to consider the views of others. Heater (Jones & Jones 1992: 26) also posits that

democratic citizenship involves duties to the state by citizens. He argues that the state benefits from services offered by the citizen body. This means that the state also derives the advantage of cohesion from the integration of the citizenry into public affairs. If citizens do not exercise their rights the state will not benefit from services offered by the citizen body.

On the other hand, Thompson and Verba (in Gross & Dynneson 1991: 44) argue that citizenship involves more than acts of symbolic support for the civic community. Citizenship involves active participation in politics, that is, in the governance of the community. In this study the researcher is interested in finding out if the various agencies of citizenship, namely the family, the peer groups, the school and the community afford secondary school learners the opportunity to exercise their rights. Furthermore, the researcher is interested in exploring if secondary school learners are keen on exercising their rights of participation if they are indeed afforded these rights.

According to Philips (1993: 133), democratic citizenship entails all groups in a national state having the right to sustain their identity as a group. The minority and the majority groups should have a right to retain their linguistic or cultural identity and a right to be equal though different. In this study the researcher will endeavour to establish if secondary school learners from the various cultural groups in South Africa experience democratic citizenship in the same way.

2.3.5 Compassionate citizenship

According to Waghid (2003: 159), compassionate citizenship is a deepened form of responsible citizenship. Mullard (2003: 140) on the other hand refers to compassionate conservatism, by which he means that the poor should be assisted. A compassionate person, according to Waghid (ibid.), is a person who pays greater attention to those who suffer and are oppressed and devotes less attention to his or her self- interests. The researcher noted that both compassionate citizenship

and compassionate conservatism are concerned with assisting those citizens who are less fortunate than others. This assistance can be more effective if these less fortunate citizens could be empowered to manage their own lives. Empowerment can be in the form of providing them with an education so that they can become employable. For this study both compassionate citizenship and compassionate conservatism mean that those secondary school learners who are from needy families should be offered bursaries so that they can further their studies. Waghid (2003: 159) maintains that modern democracies do not only depend on the justice of their institutions for their stability but also on the quality and attitude of their citizens. In support of Waghid (2003: 159), Nussbaum (2001: 299) maintains that citizens should show compassion towards one another in their private life as well as in their public life.

This implies that if secondary school learners can be taught compassionate citizenship they will be able to keep alive their newly found democracy for future generations.

Waghid (2003: 160) who posits that without citizens who possess compassion democracies will become unstable and difficult to maintain, argues that citizens should value the interests of the nation and restrain their self-interests so as to enable the democratic order to function effectively. In view of this advice the researcher suggests that secondary school learners should be taught good values, such as, respect for others and willingness to listen to the opinions of others. These values will enable secondary school learners to become compassionate citizens who will be in a position to assist the authorities to maintain democracy.

Adams, Bell and Griffin (1997: 1), in addition, recommend social justice education for secondary school learners in order to enable them to achieve full and equal participation "in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs". The researcher considers that in such a society compassionate citizenship will be achieved because the resources will be distributed equally. In such a society there

will be no anxiety because citizens will feel that their needs will be justly attended to. The researcher believes that social justice education could assist in the realisation of compassionate citizenship. In this study compassionate citizenship means that secondary school learners from different cultural groups and from different communities should be taught to empathise with one another. Empathising with one another will assist these secondary school learners to recognise that they belong to one nation.

2.3.6   Democratic schooling

According to Thomas (Schweisworth et al. 2002: 243), educators play an important part in laying the foundation for democratic citizenship, and that this foundation acts as a catalyst for democratic citizenship in adulthood. Learners will be able to build a society from a basis of shared values when they are adults. For this study the researcher maintains that educators should include learners in decision-making processes in order to inculcate in them democratic values, such as, fairness and equality.

In support of the concept of democratic schooling Osler and Vincent (2002: 1) argue that teachers should teach their learners equity, justice, and solidarity even where there is inequality and injustice. On the other hand Osler and Starkey (in Osler & Vincent 2002: 2) concur with the concept of democratic schooling by maintaining that democracy is best learned in a democratic setting where participation is encouraged, where views can be expressed openly and discussed, where there is freedom of expression for learners and teachers and where there is fairness and justice. From this discussion it is evident that democratic schooling is the basis of democratic citizenship. Being exposed to democratic schooling will enhance the chances of secondary school learners to acquire democratic citizenship.

Felsenthal and Rubinstein (in Sigel & Hoskins 1991: 91-92) agree with Osler and Vincent (2002: 1) on the important role that democratic schooling plays in preparing secondary school learners for democratic citizenship by pointing out that the school is expected to help learners learn about collective decision-making processes. In view of the arguments presented against the traditional content- based education system, the researcher proposes that secondary school learners should be exposed to outcome-based education, which emphasises co-operation instead of competition.

The importance of schools as the foundations for democratic citizenship is also highlighted by Johnston (in Kennedy, Watts & McDonald 1993: 59) who maintains that every learner is going to become a citizen therefore it is important that they should be taught citizenship. In conjunction with this study the researcher maintains that secondary school learners should be taught citizenship in order to develop them into democratic citizens. On the issue of democratic schooling McPhie (in Reische 1987: 56) suggests that for a school's citizenship program to be complete it must have a three- part effort namely:

- courses that will enable secondary school learners to live and participate in a democracy;
- models of democratically oriented people and processes in every phase of the school operation;
- frequent opportunities for learners to practice responsible democratic behaviour in school and out of school.

The researcher agrees that secondary school learners should be given the opportunity to practice democratic citizenship. Teachers can act as role models in this programme of developing secondary school learners into democratic citizens.

The researcher also believes that if learners are treated equally, they will develop positive identities and as a result the foundation to acquire democratic citizenship would have been laid.

According to Mosher, Kenny and Andrew (1994: 24), the rationale for systematic democratic experiences in school has the following attributes:

- democracy is vitally dependent on a responsive, educated citizenry
- children educated in democratic groups benefit personally as well as in terms of social development
- democratic participation contributes to the growth of the mind
- democracy has to be recreated in the understanding and behaviour of each new generation of citizens or it will be jeopardised.

The researcher maintains that secondary school learners will be able to respond to democratic ways of life only after they have been taught what democratic citizenship entails. Being able to respond to democratic ways of life will improve the social life of secondary school learners because they will be able to treat other citizens with respect. Secondary school learners must be taught listen to other peoples' opinions and if they respect them as this will enrich their minds and their relationships. It is therefore important for educators to develop secondary school learners into democratic citizens so that the democratic way of life can be enhanced.

2.3.7   How secondary school learners can learn democratic citizenship within their communities

The researcher explored the part that the community can play in the democratisation of secondary school learners because the school alone cannot achieve this (Newmann in Mosher et al. 1994: 169).

Mosher et al. (1994: 166) maintain that young people in a democracy need to be taught how to be political because in democracies citizens need to be more, and not less political. The researcher concurs with Mosher et al (ibid.) because if the youth are taught to be political they will participate in the affairs of their communities. Participating in the affairs of their communities will afford them a chance to have a say in the decision-making processes of their communities, and this is what democracy is about. In concurring with Mosher et al. (1994: 166), Osler and Vincent (2002: 28) argue that students should be encouraged to put into practice the learning that takes place in school because schools are part of the communities in which they are situated. Osler and Vincent (ibid.) point out that this will give students the chance to contribute to the development of just, peaceful and democratic communities.

The researcher suggests that the community can inculcate democratic citizenship in secondary school learners by involving them in community projects such as the fight against crime. Secondary school learners can also be encouraged to join youth clubs where they can learn about participation and the sharing of ideas, which are crucial to democratic citizenship. Secondary school learners could also be taught volunteer work such as helping the elderly. These duties will enable secondary school learners to practice responsible citizenry, which will in turn assist them to become responsible adults. This view is supported by Conrad and Hedin (in Shaver 1976: 53) who maintain that secondary school learners should be afforded the opportunity to learn about citizenship through participation in their communities.

2.3.8 Citizenship in a democratic South Africa

Democratic citizenship in South Africa was achieved on 27 April 1994 when the apartheid era was brought to an end and replaced by democracy (Vanhanen 1992: 152). In line with other countries of the world the South African government is endeavouring to inculcate democratic citizenship in secondary school learners

through outcome-based education. Prior to the advent of democracy in South Africa, the school curriculum was planned along racial lines and it was content-based (Hoadley & Jansen 2002: 164). In South Africa outcome-based education is called Curriculum 2005 and it is still in its initial stages. Outcome-based education is a learner centred approach to teaching which unlike the traditional syllabus-oriented, content-based model of teaching concentrates on the outcomes that learners can demonstrate after going through a learning programme (Gultig, Hoadley & Janson 2002: 158). This is the type of education that the democratic South Africa has adopted.

Spady (1994: 21-22), who is reputed to be the founder of outcome-based education, argues that outcome-based education will enable learners to develop into the following:

- implementers and performers and as such will apply the knowledge that they have acquired in their day-to-day lives;
- problem finders and solvers who will be enabled to anticipate, explore, analyse and resolve problems as well as examine the underlying causes from different perspectives and develop potential solutions;
- planners and designers who will develop effective methods and strategies for resolving issues and problems.

According to Spady (1994: 21-22), outcomes-based education is the system of education that broadens learners' minds. In South Africa outcomes-based education was adopted in order to enable learners to participate effectively in nation-building and to redress the imbalances caused by the apartheid regime (Gultig et al. 2002: 4-8). The importance of outcomes-based education for this study is that it will enable secondary school learners to become critical thinkers, who will be able to solve their day-to-day problems. In being able to solve problems, secondary school learners will simultaneously contribute to nation building.

2.4   DEMOCRACY

According to Riesenberg (1992: 40-42), the concept of democracy like that of Citizenship has undergone change.

Aristotle regarded democracy as a perverted form of government and he defined it as government by the poor or needy for the purpose of promoting their own selfish interests and that polity or constitutional government was suitable for his era (Schulz 1977: 1-2). Sorensen (1993: 3) on the other hand defines democracy as a form of government in which the people rule and/or a constitutional government for the benefit of all.

These two different definitions of democracy show that the conception of democracy has undergone change over time.

Aristotle's conception of democracy belonged to the Ancient Greek era, whereas Sorenson's (1993: 3) conception of democracy belongs to the contemporary era. In this study the researcher utilised the contemporary conception of democracy because he explored the experiences of secondary school learners in a modern democratic state.

Luckman and White (1996: 11) point out that democracy was first introduced in the city state of Athens in the sixth century BC to counter tyranny. According to Schulz (1977: 1-2), tyranny is government by one person for his private advantage. According to Luckman and White (ibid.), democracy then reappeared in a modified form in republican Rome. Thereafter democracy disappeared for thousand years and then reappeared again in the city state of central Italy towards the end of the eleventh century. However it was in the seventeenth and eighteen centuries that people started challenging God-given kinship and other forms of unchallenged rule and opted for republican rule instead. Luckman and White (1996: 11) cite as examples of this, the French revolution in 1789 and the American independence

from Britain. Phillips (1993: 124) adds that the concept of democracy, was founded by the Ancient Greeks on the following two principles:

- active citizen participation in the making of laws
- dedication to any unifying common purpose.

Phillips (ibid.) explains that democracy is no longer practiced in its original state because the city-state in which democracy was formulated has been transformed to the nation-state.

This shows that democracy dynamic and is continually being developed and adjusted to suit the needs of a particular nation at a particular time. Nowadays democracy is classified into different models in order to highlight the improvements that it has undergone over time (Phillips 1993: 124).

2.3.1   Different notions of democracy

According to Young (2000: 18), and Cohen (in Elster 1998: 185), there are two contemporary models of democracy namely, the aggregative and the deliberative models.

These two models of democracy emanated from the classical liberal democracy (Phillips 1993: 132). Young (2000: 18) maintains that the aggregative models and the deliberative models of democracy share the following characteristics that are essential in a democratic system:

- obedience to a rule of law
- voting as a means of decision-making when consensus is not possible
- freedom of speech, of assembly as well as freedom of association.

From what has been said about the aggregative and the deliberative models of democracy, it is clear that they have a lot in common because they both emphasise the rule of law and freedom of speech, of assembly and association The researcher provides discussion on these two models in order to illustrate that states modify democracy in order to suit their needs. For this study the relevant type of democracy is the liberal democracy. This is the type of democracy that South Africa has opted for. Waghid (2003: 31), however, contends that the liberal type of democracy is not inclusive hence he recommends deliberative democracy for South Africa because it is more inclusive.

2.4.2 Aggregative democracy

The aggregative notion of democracy emphasises that a good government is based on consent, representation, respect for individual rights and concern for the general good. The important thing for the individual is that his/her rights be protected and his/her interests be represented in the councils of the state (Spragens 1990: 147). In this type of democracy citizens choose legislators to represent them in the governing of their country (Dalton 1988: 205). Dalton (ibid) explains that in an aggregative or representative democracy citizens relinquish their decision-making powers and hand them over to the elected elites. Periodic competitive elections are held to ensure that the elected representatives are responsive and accountable to the public.

Criticism has however been raised against representative or aggregative democracy by proponents of deliberative democracy, such as Barber (1984: 146), who maintain that the representative government steals from individuals the ultimate responsibility for their values, believes, and actions. Young (2002: 20) identifies the following weaknesses of aggregative or representative democracy:

- it does not determine why a person voted in a certain way;
- it only counts the votes to decide the winning party;

- the individual vote is private, there is no sharing of ideas before coming to an informed decision as in deliberative democracy;
- it depends on an aggregation of preferences and as such it encourages an individualistic type of rationality.

Criticism of the aggregative model of democracy is based on the belief that it does not encourage people to share their ideas. This model depends on majority decisions that have not been discussed.

2.4.3 Deliberative democracy

The concept of deliberative democracy was formulated by Joseph Bessette who used it as a critique against elitist interpretations of the American Constitution (Waghid 2003: 31).

Proponents of the elitist theory maintain that the survival of democracy depends upon the commitment of elites to democratic ideals rather than upon broad support for democracy by the masses (Dye & Zeigler 1970: 328). According to Waghid (2003: 31), deliberative democracy happens when people or their representatives gather together to discuss laws and policies that will govern them. Decisions taken in deliberative democracy do not rely on the majority only; the views of the minorities are also taken into consideration. Deliberative democracy is therefore inclusive and not exclusive.

Inclusive or deliberative democracy attempts to include all cultural groups in a country in decision-making processes (Osler & Vincent 2002: 94). The aim of inclusive democracy is to ensure that minority groups are represented and that their interests are taken into account. In support of the concept of deliberative democracy Benhabib (1996: 69, 80) explains that the concept of deliberative democracy advocates that citizens of a polity should engage in debates as equals, before making informed decisions.

Barber (in Rimmerman 2001: 22) states that deliberation or participation affords a learning process to all those who participate with and talk to one another in community decision-making processes. As participation offers a learning process it would be fruitful to start encouraging participation at school. The main focus of this study is how secondary school learners have experienced citizenship in a democratic South Africa. The researcher suggests that schools must play their part by inculcating democratic attitudes in secondary school learners and by affording them the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes of the school.

2.5   SUMMARY

In this chapter the researcher discussed citizenship and its different conceptions. The researcher also discussed literature that recommends how agents of citizenship, such as, the school and the community can inculcate citizenship in secondary school learners. Democracy and its different notions, namely, the aggregative and the deliberative notions of democracy, were also discussed. Furthermore an exposition of democratic schooling was provided. It was also pointed out that in participatory democracy people participate directly in decision-making processes, whereas in representative democracy people elect representatives to make decisions for them. Inclusive or deliberative democracy on the other hand advocates the inclusion of minority groups in decision-making processes. The democratisation of the education system in the democratic South Africa was also discussed. In the next chapter the researcher will discuss the research methodology.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher discussed the qualitative research approach, and provided reasons why he chose this approach for this study. An exposition of focus group interviews, which are the main method of interviewing for this study is provided as well as ethical guidelines for conducting his research.

The researcher believes that the qualitative approach is appropriate for this research because it will enable him to access the lived experiences of secondary school learners in a democratic South Africa. In qualitative research the researcher is not restricted by a step-by-step plan that is always provided in quantitative research (De Vos et al. 2002: 272).

In qualitative research the researcher creates a strategy that is appropriate for his research during the research process. In this study the researcher grounded his strategy on the phenomenological approach because this approach aims to understand and interpret the meaning that research subjects give to their everyday lives (De Vos et al. 2002: 273). The phenomenological approach is suitable for this study because the researcher is interested in the day-to-day experiences of secondary school learners in a democratic South Africa.

The researcher did not mention the name of the school or the names of the participants in order to take cognisance of the requirements of anonymity as per research ethics (McMillan & Schumacher 1993: 399). The research problem and site were identified to enable the researcher to engage the problem (Erlandson,

Harris, Skipper & Allen 1993: 53). The research site chosen was a secondary school in the North West province. It was chosen because it is easily accessible to the researcher. When conducting interviews the researcher endeavoured to gain the cooperation of respondents to expedite the acquisition of the necessary information. De Vos et al. (2002: 282) also stress the importance of prior knowledge by the researcher of the site of research so that he/she can foresee problems that might arise during the investigation.

Prior knowledge of the setup in the site of research will enable the researcher to prepare beforehand to deal with such problems that might crop up during the research.

The researcher also addressed the question of gaining entry into the research site. Van der Burgh (1988: 67) stresses that it is important to get permission to enter the site of research in time. In this instance permission was acquired from the headmaster of the chosen secondary school that has been. The learners were informed about the study. This helped them feel comfortable about participating in the study.

3.2   QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Neuman (1997: 328) maintains that the qualitative research approach involves documenting real events, recording what people say (with words, gestures and tone), observing specific behaviour, studying written documents or visual images. In this study the researcher restricted himself to utilising focus group interviews to collect data. The researcher took cognisance of the learners' gestures and tones to see if these correlated with what they were saying.

According to de Vos et al. (2002: 105-106), the qualitative research approach is used by researchers when they aim to understand the day-to-day experiences of

people they are studying. In qualitative research, unlike in quantitative research where data is reduced to numbers, data is reduced to themes and categories.

Qualitative research focuses on description and not on the testing of hypothesis like quantitative researchers. Unlike in quantitative research, where hypotheses are provided at the beginning of the research, qualitative research hypotheses are formulated during the enquiry. Qualitative research is flexible as the researcher commences his research without a fixed agenda. In this study the researcher maintained that it was appropriate to use the qualitative approach because he is interested in the everyday experiences of citizenship by learners in a democratic South Africa.

In support of the qualitative approach Newman (1997: 329) says:

- it captures and discovers meaning once the researcher becomes immersed in the data;
- concepts are in the form of themes, motifs, generalisations, and taxonomies;
- data are in the form of words from documents, observations and transcripts;
- research procedures are particular, and replication is rare;
- analysis starts by extracting themes or generalisations from evidence and organising data to present a coherent, consistent picture.

From these assertions by Newman (1997: 329) it is clear that, in the qualitative research approach, the researcher does not have preconceived ideas about his or her respondents. The researcher enters the research situation with an open mind and allows the respondents to relate their experiences. In this study the researcher allowed the respondents to do most of the talking in order to access their experiences.

Marshall and Rossman (1989: 147-148) recommend that the qualitative researcher can control bias in interpretation by:

- enlisting the assistance of a research partner to critically question the researcher's analyses
- checking and rechecking the data and purposeful testing of possible rival hypotheses.
- following the guidance of previous researchers to control for data quality.
- conducting an audit of the data collection and analytic strategies.

In view of the recommendations made by Marshall and Rossman (1989: 147-148), the researcher guarded against researcher's bias when analysing the data gathered. De Vos et al. (2002: 81) further point out that the qualitative research approach is grounded in phenomenology, its purpose is to construct detailed descriptions of social reality, it uses inductive logic and that its design is flexible and unique and evolves throughout the research. The researcher believes that characteristics of the qualitative approach, such as flexibility and the focus, enabled him to access the experiences of secondary school learners in a democratic South Africa.

Marshall and Rossman (1989: 148) advise qualitative researchers to report their studies with the following in mind:

- to make data collection methods are explicit;
- to display negative instances of the findings and account for them;
- to make their data collection strategies and analysis public;
- to present and discuss competing hypotheses;
- to preserve their data;
- to assess the integrity of participants.

In this study the researcher will explained how he went about collecting data from interviewees. While interviewing secondary school learners the researcher also observed their actions to determine if they were genuine. When reporting his findings the researcher took cognisance of competing theories before coming to an informed conclusion. He also saw to it that his biases did not cloud his interpretations.

3.2.1   Research questions

Prior to fielding the research questions, the researcher explained in simple terms to the respondents the main concepts of the topic, namely, citizenship, democracy, experience and learner.

The five questions asked were:

- How has democratic citizenship impacted on your situation in your family?
- What impact has democratic citizenship brought about on your relations with your peers?
- How has democratic citizenship influenced your situation at school?
- What influence does democratic citizenship have on your life in your community?
- What effect has democratic citizenship brought upon your life in a national context?

3.2.2   Sampling

According to Neuman (1997: 201), sampling is a process whereby a researcher chooses cases for inclusion in a research project. In this study the researcher utilised purposive sampling. According to Singleton, Straits, Straits and McAllister (1988: 153), purposive sampling is dependent on the judgment of the

researcher who chooses a sample that he thinks is the most representative of the population.

The researcher first conducted a focus group interview with six secondary school girls and thereafter with seven secondary school boys. The interviewees were from an urban multicultural secondary school. The researcher informed the learners that they should participate only if they were willing to do so.

3.3   INTERVIEWS

Interviewing is the most commonly used method of data or information collection in qualitative research (De Vos et al. 2002: 292). Marshall and Rossman (1999: 108), however, point out that while in-depth interviews are like conversations, they are not like formal events with predetermined response categories.

The aim of interviews, according to Marshall and Rossman (1999: 108), is to access the participant's view. During the process of interviewing the respondent, the researcher should guard against influencing the participant's view. According to Patton (in Marshall and Rossman, 1999: 108), interviews can be categorised into three types, namely:

- the informal conversational interview
- the general interview guide approach
- the standardised open-ended interview.

During interviewing the researcher used standardised open-ended questions in order to give the respondents free rein to express their views (Seidman 1998: 63-77). According to Newman (1997: 253), face-to-face interviews have strengths and limitations.

3.3.1 Strengths of interviews

Interviews have strengths and weaknesses. According to Baily (1987: 174), the strengths of the interviews lie in the fact that they are flexible in the sense that the interviewer can probe for specific answers, and can repeat a question if the respondent does not understand it. Interviews are suitable because most people are more confident of their speaking ability than their writing ability. Finally, interviews allow the interviewer to compare the non-verbal behaviour of the respondent with what the respondent says.

The flexibility of interviews enabled the researcher to repeat questions when learners did not understand, as well as ascertaining what the learners wanted to say. The researcher was able to encourage learners to respond to all the questions. The interviewer was also in a position to observe the non-verbal behaviour of learners and so compare it with what they said.

Focus group interviews assisted me to assess the veracity of what the learners said. Furthermore the researcher could inform learners to raise their hand when they wanted to speak in order to give each one a chance to relate their experiences.

Marshall and Rossman (1999: 110) highlight the following strengths of interviews:

- allow the researcher to get large amounts of data quickly;
- immediate follow-up and clarification are possible;
- allow the researcher to understand the meanings that people hold for their everyday activities when combined with observation.

These strengths assured the researcher that interviews were appropriate for his research because they enabled him to gather large amounts of reliable data in a short space of time.

3.3.2   Limitations of interviews

According to Newman (1997: 253), face-to-face interviews have the following limitations:

- high costs are incurred during the training, travelling and supervision of interviewers;
- interviewer bias expressed in the appearance, tone of voice and question wording of the interviewer may affect the respondent;
- interviewers work unsupervised and may make mistakes.

However, the researcher endeavoured to minimise the limitations of the interviews by encouraging the respondents to be at ease by informing them that there were no wrong answers to the questions that were being asked. The learners felt free to express their experiences.

3.4   FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

In this research focus group interviews were the main method for gathering information. Two focus groups were interviewed, one composed of boys only and the other one composed only of girls. The two genders were separately consulted in order to make it possible for them to speak freely without fear of criticism from the opposite gender.

The focus groups consisted of seven to ten or four to twelve respondents in order to discuss a research topic. According to Marshall and Rossman (1999: 114), the focus group approach assumes that an individual's attitudes and beliefs do not form in a vacuum. People often need to listen to others' opinions and understandings in order to form their own opinions. One-to-one interviews may be

lacking because the participant does not get the chance to reflect on the topic and feels unprepared to respond.

De Vos et al. (2002: 305-306) add that in focus groups participants are chosen "because they have certain characteristics in common that relate to the focus group". In this study the focus groups were composed of grade twelve learners from the same secondary school. Each focus group was made up of six or more learners. These learners have a lot in common because they belong to the same school and study the same grade ensured.

Marshall and Rossman (1999: 114), advise that when conducting focus group interviews the researcher should provide an encouraging environment by asking focused questions. He should encourage discussion and the expression of differing opinions. In focus group interviews the researcher acts as the facilitator. The function of the facilitator is to encourage participants to participate in the discussion. Like one-to-one interviews, focus group interviews have advantages and disadvantages. In the following paragraphs the advantages and disadvantages of focus group interviews will be discussed.

3.4.1 Advantages of focus group interviews

According to De Vos et al. (2002: 319), focus group interviews have the following advantages:

- the ability to produce concentrated amounts of data on precisely the topic of interest;
- a valuable source of insight into complex behaviour and motivation is provided by the comparisons the participants make between each other's experiences and opinions (Morgan, 1997: 13, 15);
- the group provides a stimulating and secure setting for members to express ideas without fear of criticism.

In this study the researcher utilised the advantages that focus group interviews offer to make the learners feel at ease in order to get as much information as possible. The researcher also saw to it that all the learners were given a fair chance to participate. Furthermore, the learners were informed that they were free to relate whatever experience they had undergone.

3.4.2   Disadvantages of focus group interviews

Marshall and Rossman (1999: 115) list the following as disadvantages of focus group interviews:

- the interviewer has less control over a group interview than an individual one, and this can result in lost time while dead-end or irrelevant issues are discussed;
- data are difficult to analyse because context is essential to understanding the participant's comment;
- the method requires the use of special room arrangements and highly trained observer moderators;
- the group can vary a great deal and can be hard to assemble;
- logistical problems arising from the need to manage a conversation while getting good quality data.

The researcher tried to guard against these disadvantages by enlisting the assistance of the principal to assemble the two focus groups. Control was exercised by asking group members to speak out one at a time. Using a tape recorder to capture the data also facilitated control of the group members while at the same time recording all the conversations.

3.5　TAPE RECORDED INTERVIEWS

Tape recorded interviews prevented the loss of important information. Smit (1995: 17) maintain that a tape recorder collects far more information than written notes. A tape recorder also enables the researcher to concentrate on the interview and to decide what to do next. After the interview the recorded data was transcribed by the researcher for better analysis. Before using a tape recorder the researcher requested permission to do so as the participants may not have felt happy about being tape recorded (De Vos et al. 2002: 304).

3.6　ETHICS

Marshall and Rossmann (1999: 90) maintain that the researcher must observe ethical considerations such as informing respondents about the purpose of the research. Singleton (1993: 474) says that ethics is the basis of "right behaviour". Diener and Crandall (Singleton 1993: 475) identify the following four situations where the issue of ethical treatment of human subjects arises:

- where there is potential harm to respondents;
- where there is lack of informed consent;
- where there is deception;
- where there is privacy invasion.

In this study none of the abovementioned methods were utilised; however, ethical guidelines were considered. There was no deception and the researcher obtained informed consent from learners before interviewing them. Mouton (2003: 244) emphasises the following guidelines on ethical considerations:

- obtain approval for the research;
- state clearly what institution you represent;

- explain to the subjects that they will be protected from physical and psychological harm;

- thank respondents for their participation and possibly give them a small reward.

The researcher made every effort to adhere to these ethical considerations. From the beginning he explained what the survey was all about. The respondents were also told the discussions were confidential except for academic purposes as they were being used for a master's degree dissertation.

The researcher also talked about the academic institution at which he is studying. The young people were thanked for their co-operation at the end of each focus group interview.

Neuman (1997: 450) says that a fundamental ethical principle is that a researcher must never coerce any one into participating in a research project. Neuman (ibid.) maintains that it is not enough to get permission from research subjects, but that they also need to know what they are being asked to participate in, so that they can make an informed decision. The present researcher explained to the learners what the research was all about and then requested volunteers.

3.6.1   Researchers role

According to Newman (1997: 254), the role of the interviewer is a difficult one because he/she has to obtain co-operation and built rapport while at the same time remaining neutral and objective. According to Marshall and Rossman (1999: 90), the researcher should understand that when people adjust their priorities to assist them or even tolerate the researcher's presence, they are giving of themselves. The investigator is indebted to them should be sensitive about this. He may reciprocate by helping out, providing informal feedback, making coffee, being a good listener or tutoring. In this study the researcher obtained permission

from the principal of the secondary school concerned to interview the learners. He explained how much time he would spend interviewing and assured those involved that he would endeavour to stick to these time limits.

On completion of the interviews, and after thanking the learners for participating in the study and the principal for allowing him to interview the learners, the researcher left the school premises.

3.7   SUMMARY

It was pointed out that in qualitative research, unlike quantitative research, the research design is not pre-determined. The research design emerges as data is being collected. In qualitative research knowledge is believed to be both time and context dependent. This means that, what is regarded as reality at in certain period of time and place may not be regarded as such at other times. In qualitative research information gathered is not plentiful like in quantitative investigation. Data collected through qualitative research consists of the words or actions of the interviewee. This data is gathered through interviews, observations, documents or diaries (Clark 1999: 531).

For the type of research that the researcher undertook purposive sampling was suitable. Whilst conducting the two interviews the respondents did most of the talking. Sensitive questions, that would unsettle the interviewees, were avoided. Probing questions, to clarify what was said, were asked. The mutually accepted use of the tape recorders ensured that the researcher did not lose data during interviews.

Chapter 4

COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1   INTRODUCTION

In chapter 3 the researcher explained the research design involving secondary school learners for this study. In this chapter the researcher discusses and analyses the data collected from secondary school learners. In this chapter the researcher also explains how the data was collected. He then proceeds with an interpretation of the said data.

4.2   COLLECTION OF DATA

The researcher utilised a tape recorder in order to capture all the discussions that took place during the two focus group interviews. This procedure was explained to both the principal and the learners. He added that the research was for the completion of a dissertation and that the information acquired during the discussions would be kept confidential and that the names of the respondents and the school would not be disclosed.

On the grounds of this, permission to use the tape recorder was obtained from the principal and the learners. Focus group interviews were conducted in the school's conference room. The thirteen learners were interviewed in two separate focus groups. The female focus group consisted of six learners, whereas the male focus group was composed of seven learners. Each focus group was composed of a

single gender in order to enable each gender to freely discuss matters that may be of interest to their particular sex.

At first the learners were apprehensive, but became increasingly relaxed after the researcher explained to them that the interviews were just like a normal discussion and that there were no wrong answers. The learners were requested to volunteer for the focus group interviews. The female focus group was more talkative than the male focus group.

In the female focus group, two learners were a little reserved and did not have much to say. In the male focus group, the discussion was dominated by four learners, while the other three learners were cautious in expressing their views.

The female focus group interview lasted for one hour fifteen minutes. The larger male focus group on the other hand lasted one hour thirty minutes. It took one day to complete the two focus group interviews. The two focus group interviews were conducted towards the end of the school day in order to avoid disturbing learners during lessons and as per the arrangement with the school management.

4.3   ANALYSIS OF DATA

Two transcripts were drawn up from the recorded interviews and these were subsequently analysed. The analysis of the interviews was structured according to the questions asked. Before posing the questions the researcher explained to the learners that citizenship meant being a member of a particular state and that we learn about citizenship in the family, in our peer groups, at school and in our communities and that the questions would make use of these concepts.

4.3.1 Female focus group interviews

Question 1: How has democratic citizenship influenced your situation in your family?

The aim of this question was to establish whether the democratic dispensation has improved communication between parents and their secondary school learners. All the respondents agreed that the new government has given them rights and that they enjoyed such rights in their families. All the thirteen learners stressed that the most important right that they experienced in a democratic South Africa is the right to an education so that they can make a better future for themselves. All the six female learners conceded that democracy has brought about a change in their family experiences. They also felt that children's rights mean that parents should send them to school, respect them, allow them to disagree, not abuse them, protect them and ensure that they lead a happy life.

Three of the six female learners, informed the researcher that both parents listen to their point of view when there is a disagreement between them and their parents. One respondent claimed that her parents do not understand her and they always say that she is wrong. In the case of the other respondent, the father listens to her point of view while the mother does not take it into consideration. The last respondent maintained that it was the father who was reluctant to listen to her point of view while the mother was prepared to consider her point of view. The information provided by the six female learners' shows that the majority of their parents listen to their points of view. Only one learner does not get a hearing from both her parents. In the case of the remaining two girls, one parent gives them a hearing whereas the other parent does not. It is very likely that if these two female learners can reason with both their parents at the same time they may gain a hearing from both their parents. The two learners who each get a hearing from one parent can succeed in getting a hearing from the reluctant parent by persuading the parent who gives them a hearing to reason with the one

who is reluctant to do so. As the aim of democratic citizenship is for the family to inculcate democratic citizenship in secondary school learners, it is important for parents to afford a hearing to these learners.

Question 2: What effect has democratic citizenship brought about in your relations with your peers?

The aim of the question was to establish the impact of democratic citizenship on peer relations, gender equality and race relations as far as secondary school learners are concerned.

All six female learners accepted that although gender equality has been afforded by the democratic dispensation in reality it does not happen. They maintained that at times boys do not treat girls properly and that at times it is the girls who do not treat the boys properly. The six female learners pointed out that it was the boys who were to blame when it came to treating girls equally. All the six female learners further intimated that when they have differences with their peers they prefer to solve such differences peacefully. The six female interviewees maintained that they had cordial relations with other racial groups and that they had friends from other racial groups. This shows that democratic citizenship has exerted a positive influence on peer relations of secondary school learners.

Question 3: How has democratic citizenship influenced your situation at school?

The purpose of this question was to establish to what extent secondary school learners were involved in the decision-making processes of the school.

All the respondents, namely the six female learners, intimated that as far as they were concerned the Learners' Council was effective in solving their problems. They maintained that the Learners' Representative Council always asked for their opinion. All the six learners pointed out that they were treated equally at school

but explained that some teachers gave more attention to those learners who performed well.

Furthermore, the six female learners felt that it was not necessary for them to be included in the decision-making processes of their school. They maintained that the decision-making process was the duty of the teachers because the teachers were at school from seven in the morning to four in the afternoon whilst they, on the other hand, start their school day at eight and go home at two. According to them, the authorities of the school inform them anyway when they are planning a project such as a new playground. The learners felt that was sufficient.

Furthermore, these six female learners pointed out that their school did not offer any subject on citizenship but all the same, attending a multiracial school helps them to come into contact with other racial groups and to learn how to live with them.

The researcher considers that if the school as an agent of citizenship can assist secondary school learners to acquire democratic citizenship, it would be easier for the various racial groups to intermingle with one another.

Question 4: How has democratic citizenship influenced your life in your community?

The aim of this question was to establish whether secondary school learners are included in the decision-making processes of their communities or not and whether secondary school learners have an interest in the affairs of their communities or not.

All of the female focus group said that they would like to be involved in issues that affected their communities but that they were excluded by adults. They pointed out that they were prepared to be involved in community issues such as

the prevention of crime. The six interviewees however complained that democracy had not done enough for them as far as the provision of facilities for teenagers is concerned. All members of the group argued that there were no places for youth to go and relax and have a good time in a safe environment. In view of this , the researcher concluded that the democratic dispensation has not had a significant impact on the community life of secondary school learners.

Question 5: What effect has democratic citizenship brought about for you in a national context?

The intention of this question was to find out from respondents whether democratic citizenship has improved their lives in a national context. For instance, were these secondary school learners proud to be South Africans?

The girls pointed out that where they lived people still stare at them when they are walking in town with learners belonging to different racial groups. Three of the learners maintained that they did not experience the improvements that were brought about by democracy. They argued that they could not distinguish between the apartheid era and the democratic era as they had grown up in the democratic situation only and could therefore not make a comparison. They did confirm though, that their parents had told them that things were different in the past.

The remaining three learners conceded that they had experienced the improvements brought about by democratic citizenship. All the members of the female focus group said that their chances of getting an education were good because they were given bursaries at school which increased their chances of attaining the professions they aspired to.

However, as they pointed out, unemployment was increasing, therefore their chances of getting employment after grade twelve were slim. However, the six learners maintained that if the economy improved so would their chances of

getting employment. This is an indication that female learners are optimistic that the chances of employment will improve.

4.3.2 Male focus group interviews

Question 1: How has democratic citizenship influenced your situation in your family?

All members of the male focus group said that democracy had influenced their home lives positively because they could now bring their friends from other racial groups' homes. The seven interviewees pointed out that in now their families they have the right to education and the right to security within their homes. These seven male learners informed the researcher that their parents no longer administer corporal punishment instead their parents speak to them and explain to them what the right thing to do is. The members maintained that when they differ with their parents they can discuss the matter their parents and so arrive at an amicable solution. Both their parents always listen to them. The youths considered that they did demand too much freedom, but nonetheless they felt they had a right to the fair amount of freedom which their parents gave them. These seven interviewees conceded, however, that they sometimes go overboard with the freedom they get but then their parents justifiably reprimand them.

In view of the information provided by the male focus group the researcher concluded that male secondary school learners are listened to more by their parents than female learners.

Question 2: What effect has democratic citizenship brought about on your relations with your peers?

In reply to this question one respondent maintained that he did not accept girls as his equal. He based his argument on the Bible which, he claims, says that a woman should be subservient to a man. He lamented that the democratic government had made it possible for women to become priests as this according to him, was against the instructions of the Bible. Six of the seven interviewees accepted gender equality, but maintained that there was more respect for men when women were under the rule of men. Six of the male focus group members stated that when they have problems with their peers they solve them peacefully. One said that he often becomes involved in a physical brawl with his friend because his friend is stubborn. However, he conceded that fighting does not help solve the problem.

All the seven members of the male focus group maintained that they experienced equality in their peer group. These seven also pointed out that they treat other racial groups as their equal and that in return other racial groups treat them the same. All the seven interviewees emphasised that the main issue is respect for other people and that respect should come from both parties that engage in dialogue.

The information provided by the male focus group shows that secondary school learners realise that democratic citizenship entails respect for one another.

Question 3: How has democratic citizenship influenced your situation at school?

All members of the male focus group, indicated that the Learners Representative Council was trying to do a good job, but that it did not take everything said by the learners seriously. For example, the respondents claimed that the Learners Representative Council gave them forms to fill in connection with the development of a new sports-field but that they were never given feedback.

Concerning their participation in decision-making processes of the school all the seven male learners maintained that the authorities do not approach them in this regard. All of them said that they did not have a particular subject that taught them about citizenship, but that they learn about citizenship when they observe their teachers catering successfully for learners of different racial groups. Furthermore, they pointed out that they learned about citizenship at middle school when they were studying a subject called Life Orientation.

The researcher believes that citizenship education should continue at secondary school because secondary school learners are still in the process of learning about citizenship.

Question 4: How has democratic citizenship influenced your life in your community?

All the seven male participants maintained that adults did not invite them to participate in community affairs. Asked by the researcher if they would like to participate, they answered that they would. These seven young men pointed out that they were treated equally in their various communities regardless of their racial differences. The seven male learners complained about the lack of facilities for the youth in their various communities. They claimed that the authorities had not provided them with facilities where they could relax and enjoy themselves. All felt that this contributed to juvenile delinquency and substance abuse. There appears to be a need for the provision of more facilities in order to assist secondary school learners to abstain from substance abuse and other delinquent activities.

Question 5: What effect has democratic citizenship brought about for you in a national context?

All the members of the group agreed that, in a national context, democracy has improved their lives. According to these seven male learners, democracy has enabled them to make new friends, learn more about other cultures and to learn how other races live. Furthermore the seven male participants further pointed out that democracy has given them freedom of movement and the freedom to make their own choices. One respondent stressed that democracy has placed him on par with his white colleagues and that he was no longer expected to regard them as belonging to a superior race. With regard to opportunities for employment the interviewees had different views. Two of the male learners maintained that they want to work overseas after completing their studies because South Africa was a country where blacks were given jobs, while whites were not given jobs. The two male interviewees regarded Black Economic Empowerment, as reverse discrimination. The remaining five male learners, however, maintained that Black Economic Empowerment was the right thing to do. They argued that whites had discriminated against blacks in the past and it was now their duty to help develop blacks, but not over the interests of whites. Three of the participants pointed out that as job opportunities were very scarce in South Africa, the youth should concentrate on creating their own small businesses. This shows that secondary school learners have creative ways of assisting to alleviate unemployment.

4.4   INTERPRETATION OF DATA

The influence of democratic citizenship on the family life of secondary school learners.

All the seven male learners intimated that they approach their parents when they have problems and that their parents do listen to them. It would appear therefore that they do not experience problems in approaching their parents to

discuss matters that are of importance to them. The male learners also maintained that when they want to talk to their parents they talk to their parents on equal footing and if what they are saying or asking is reasonable their parents agree with them. According to the male learners, there is good communication between them and their parents. Their parents always give them advice when they have done something wrong. The male learners ask for and get a fair amount of freedom from their parents. Their parents no longer administer corporal.

In the case of the six female learners, half informed the researcher that their parents listen to their point of view. One female interviewee claimed that her parents did not listen to her point of view. In the case of another it was her father who did not listen to her point of view. As far as the sixth female interviewee was concerned it was the mother who did not listen to her point of view. Only half the female learners enjoy the freedom that the male learners enjoy. Half the female learners have restrictions imposed on them by either both or one of their parents.

No learners are subjected to corporal punishment and this is a direct result of democratic citizenship, which brought an end to that form of punishment. All male and female interviewees conceded that democracy had brought about a positive change in their family lives. All the interviewees emphasised the right to an education as the most important aspect experienced in a newly democratic South Africa. Another positive experience is that they are now able to invite their friends from other racial groups to their homes. One male interviewee pointed out that he was happy because he can now invite his friends from other racial groups to his home and that during the apartheid era people in his community did not appreciate what he was doing.

Ten out of thirteen learners are enjoying the changes to family life that are a direct result of democratic citizenship. All the thirteen learners are no longer subjected to corporal punishment in their families and this is also a direct result

of democratic citizenship. It was the new democratic government that banned the administering of corporal punishment to children. In view of the gains made in their families, the researcher agreed with them that democratic citizenship has brought positive change to their family lives.

The effect of democratic citizenship on the peer relations of secondary school learners.

As far as peer relations are concerned all the female learners maintained that they settled their differences with their peers peacefully, while six male learners informed the researcher that they settle their differences peacefully. The remaining one male learner pointed out that fighting was sometimes necessary to solve differences and that he does at times exchange blows with his stubborn male friend. He, however, conceded that fighting did not always solve differences and that it is better to solve problems peacefully. The fact that twelve out of thirteen secondary school learners believe that problems should be solved peacefully means that they have adopted a democratic way of doing things. A democratic way of doing things entails listening to the view of others and being tolerant.

From this information provided by the learners it can be said that democratic citizenship is having a positive effect on peer relations of secondary school learners.

As far as gender equality is concerned all the six female learners accepted gender equality while six of the seven males accepted gender equality. The one remaining male learner did not accept gender equality. It is understandable why all female learners accept gender equality. Female learners accept gender equality because as the previously disadvantaged group gender equality places them on an equal footing with their male counterpart. Male learners on the other hand may feel a loss of the superior status that they enjoyed as males in the apartheid era.

Interestingly, only one out of the seven male participants does not accept gender equality. This shows that democratic citizenship has made remarkable strides in this regard.

The one male learner who does not accept gender equality bases his argument on the Bible. He is therefore using his religious beliefs to qualify his intolerance of gender equality. All the male interviewees argued that before the advent of gender equality there was more respect between the two genders. The concern of the male participants can be attributed to the fact that they are used to being the dominant gender hence they interpret gender equality as threatening. All female respondents on the other hand pointed out that in reality boys do not yet accept females as their equal. It will take time for males to accept females as their equal because they have enjoyed superiority over females for a long time. This study however shows that secondary school male learners are fast accepting female learners as their equal because only one out of seven males does not accept gender equality.

In reply to the question on race relations all the female and male participants maintained that they did not experience discrimination and that they regarded other racial groups as the same. In view of this information, it is clear that democratic citizenship is rendering racial discrimination a thing of the past. All the participants in this study accept and experience racial equality. All female interviewees however drew the attention of the researcher to the detail that in their area people still stare at them when they are walking in town with peers from other racial groups. This can be attributed to the conservative nature of the place in which they reside. As a result of the conservative nature of this place, people will take some time to get used to the integration of the formerly segregated cultural groups.

The effect exerted by democratic citizenship on the situation of secondary school learners at school.

All the thirteen learners, female and male, pointed out that there were no learners in the School governing body. This means that they do not have much say in the running of the school. All the male and female participants agreed that the Learners Representative Council it was effective in solving the learners' problems. All male interviewees, however, said that the Learners Representative Council did not give them adequate feedback. It seems then that the Learners Representative Council is effective in some issues and not in others.

All the learners stated that the school authorities do not approach them as far as decision-making processes were concerned. The girls maintained that it was the duty of the teachers to run the school and so did not mind if they are not approached, but the boys felt that they should be invited to participate in the running of the school. As learners are not invited to participate in decision-making processes of the school, the researcher concludes that democratic citizenship has not yet had an effect on the total situation of secondary school learners at school. The significant difference is that there is no longer corporal punishment at school. The school does not yet play an active role in inculcating democratic citizenship into secondary school learners. This statement is supported by the assertion by all male and female learners that they learn to be democratic citizens only by interacting with learners from different racial groups and by observing how teachers successfully handle different cultural groups.

Moreover all participants maintained that no subject deals with citizenship at their school. Learners were only taught citizenship up to middle school. According to the six female respondents, boys and girls are treated equally at school, but learners who perform well are given more attention. This shows that teachers are encouraging the acceptance of gender equality by secondary school learners.

Nonetheless, the school has not become democratic enough because it does not include learners in decision-making processes.

As the school is one of the agencies of democratic citizenship, it should therefore assume an active role in inculcating democratic values.

The effect exerted by democratic citizenship on the situation of secondary school learners in their communities.

Concerning their inclusion in decision-making processes of their communities all the interviewees maintained that adults were reluctant to include them in the decision-making processes. If they were invited to participate in the affairs of their communities they were prepared to do so. It seems then that democratic citizenship has not yet fully realised in the situation of secondary school learners participating in their communities as decision-makers. The community still regards secondary school learners as not being qualified to be included in their decision-making processes. Furthermore, democratic citizenship has not improved the quality of community life for the secondary school learners as there appears to be a lack of facilities for them. Democratic citizenship has however succeeded in reducing discrimination in the communities where the learners reside as according to them, they do not experience racial discrimination in their communities.

The influence brought about by democratic citizenship on the lives of secondary school learners in a national context.

Three female learners claimed that they could not experience the difference brought by democratic citizenship after the apartheid era because they were young when it was introduced and did not know much about the apartheid era. They could not therefore make a comparison between the two eras. They did say, however, that their parents had told them that the apartheid era was very different from the democratic era. On the other hand, the other three female

participants were positive that democratic citizenship had improved their lives in a national context.

As far as the male respondents were concerned, all of them agreed that democratic citizenship has affected their lives positively in a national context. They now have freedom of movement in South Africa as well as having a choice of schools to attend.

They also felt democratic citizenship had brought an end to racial discrimination. The fact that ten out of thirteen participants acknowledge that democratic citizenship has improved their lives is a testimony that, in a national context, secondary school learners experience democratic citizenship in a positive way. All male and female participants maintained that employment was very scarce and that their chances of getting employment after completing grade twelve were slim. This shows that while learners appreciate democratic citizenship they are also aware of the problems that have emerged such as wide spread unemployment. In addition, two male interviewees complained that the new democratic dispensation favours black citizens when it came to employment opportunities. According to these two male participants, the policy of black economic empowerment is discrimination in reverse.

These two male participants hinted that they would seek employment overseas after completing their studies. Five male learners however regard the policy of black economic empowerment as justified as long as it does not place white citizens at a disadvantage. All female participants however did not have a problem with the policy of black economic empowerment. The fact that eleven out of thirteen participants do not have a problem with the policy of black economic empowerment shows that the majority of the participants are in favour of the upliftment of previously disadvantaged groups. Three male participants intimated that they would attempt to create their own businesses. This is a good sign that citizens are willing to meet the authorities half-way in creating jobs. The two

remaining male participants were optimistic that employment opportunities would improve.

Such learners are more likely to pursue their studies vigorously so that when employment conditions improve they should be in a position to acquire good occupations. All female respondents were also optimistic that employment opportunities would improve. In this study female participants were more optimistic about employment opportunities than male participants.

4.5   SUMMARY

In this chapter the researcher explained how he collected the data as well as providing an analysis of the collected data. The findings indicated that democratic citizenship has afforded male secondary learners more gains in their family life than their female counterparts. Furthermore, it emerged that democratic citizenship has influenced secondary school learners to be more tolerant within their peer groups. On the other hand, democratic citizenship has not brought about any significant change in the situation of secondary school learners at school or in their community. In a national context the situation of learners has changed quite dramatically because they have freedom of movement, freedom of association and freedom of speech. In the next chapter the researcher will provide conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher embarks on a discussion of what the relevant literature has to say about the experiences of secondary school learners in a democratic state. Thereafter, the researcher compares the views of literature on democratic citizenship with the data collected during the research project. The researcher then gives his recommendations.

5.2   CONCLUSIONS

5.2.1   Conclusions from literature study

The focus of this study is on secondary school learners' experience of citizenship in a democratic South Africa. The aim of the present study was therefore an exploration of the experiences of citizenship by secondary school learners in a democratic state. Citizenship in a democratic state is called democratic citizenship, because citizens have freedom of movement, freedom of association as well as freedom of speech.

Democratic citizenship, which emanates from a democratic political system is inculcated in secondary school learners by agents of citizenship namely, the family, the peer groups, the school, the community and the state.

According to Martinez (1998: 56), secondary school learners should be offered the opportunity to express themselves so that adults can access their views and their experiences. The experiences of secondary school learners are important because they reflect how they understand the world. It is when adults understand how secondary school learners view the world that they can address their needs. Alcoff (1991/92: 9), on the other hand, points out that in attempting to interpret the views of secondary school learners, adults run the risk of distorting what the learners say.

In support of Alcoff (1991/92: 9), Fielding (1998: 5) maintains that we cannot speak for other people because we lack the means to understand their interest. Secondary school learners should therefore be offered the opportunity to explain what their experiences are by being allowed to participate in decision-making processes.

In emphasising the importance of the experiences of secondary school learners by the agents of citizenship Rudduck, Wallace, and Day (1997: 3) argue that secondary school learners do not yet think like adults and that in order for adults to understand the experiences of secondary school learners, adults have to provide these learners with the opportunity to express their views. Giroux (1993: 188) reminds adults that they should not deny secondary school learners the opportunity to participate as a result of fear that they will lose control of them.

In supporting the participation of secondary school learners the researcher maintains that in a democratic system the agents of citizenship, namely the family, the peer groups, the community and the state, should include secondary school learners in their decision-making processes. According to Schweisfurth et al. (2002: 30), as democracy is constructed by living and practicing it secondary school learners should be included in the democratic processes so that they can learn democratic citizenship.

Osler and Vincent (2002: 124) reinforce the view of Schweisfurth et al. (2002: 30) who maintain that citizenship is a lifelong process and they point out that education for citizenship extends beyond the school into the community and that learners should be encouraged to make connections between their experiences and learning in the school and in the community. This connection can be made if secondary school learners encountered democratic practices at school and in the community.

Hansen (in Schweisfurth et al. 2002: 109-116) argues that democratic skills are learned better where there is no conflict among the agents of democratic citizenship namely the family, the peer groups, the school, the community and the state. This means that these agents of teaching democracy need to re-enforce one another in inculcating democratic processes on secondary school learners. According to Osler and Vincent (2002: 124), encouraging secondary school learners to practice the democratic experiences that they learned at school will give them the opportunity to contribute to the development of just, peaceful and democratic communities.

In view of Schweisfurth et al. (2002: 30) and Osler and Vincent's (2002: 124) assertions, the researcher considers that teaching secondary school learners democratic ways of life enables them to contribute to the further development of democratic citizenship. In support of democratic practices, Dayton (1995: 153) maintains that the perpetuation of democratic communities depends on the willingness of citizens to transfer democratic values to future generations. For secondary school learners to be able to transfer democratic values to their children they need to be exposed to such values by adults.

In advocating for the inclusion of learners in decision-making processes, Solmitz (2001: 45) maintains that learners should be included in the management of the school so that they can develop into socially responsible, caring, and active citizens.

In view of the arguments presented for the participation of secondary school learners in decision-making processes the researcher supposes that youth participation is essential. Youth participation is indispensable to integrating secondary school learners into the community. Furthermore, participation is important in preparing secondary school learners to assume an active role in the society. When secondary school learners participate they will become more civic conscious.

In addition, Janowitz (Ichilov 1998: 15) maintains that civic consciousness is important for collective problem solving in a democratic society. According to Janowitz (ibid.), civic consciousness is required for national responsibilities and obligations. National responsibilities are voting and serving in national structures such as the police or the military. When secondary school learners are allowed to participate they will develop civic consciousness.

Concerning youth participation, Conrad and Heidin (Shavers, 1976) argue that when people think of a good citizen they think of a person who acts decently, who knows and cares about the affairs of his or her community. Conrad and Heidin (ibid.) recommend that secondary school learners should be allowed to get out of school and to become directly involved in their community, such as, with business persons, the aged, and the handicapped. In other words the youth should not just talk about public issues, they should do something about these issues. It is therefore necessary that secondary school learners are given the opportunity to participate in their communities in order to become good citizens.

According to Pratte (1988: 81), the ideal citizen of a true democratic community is the one who has a clear sense of identity and who recognises that his or her interests are entwined with those of other members of the community. Such a person treats others warmly, caringly, sympathetically, fairly and justly. Pratte (ibid.) argues that self-development based on the principle of human dignity and mutual respect endeavours to achieve a sense of solidarity within the community.

According to Pratte (1988: 81), civic education in a democracy is education for the self-development of a good person whose attitudes rest on the principles of human dignity and mutual respect and who exhibits a sense of solidarity within the community. In this study the researcher indicates that secondary school learners can undergo self-development if they are afforded the opportunity to participate by the agents of citizenship, namely the family, the peer groups, the school, the community and the state.

Moreover, the researcher maintains that the newly acquired democratic dispensation should allow secondary school learners' participation at all levels of the family, the school and the community. When learners are afforded the opportunity to do volunteer work in the community they will get practical experience of what being a member of that community entails. Allowing learners to help organise and monitor the new school program will assist them to develop a sense of responsibility.

Morrow (1989: 114) affirms this by saying that it is only by participating in decisions that people become educated for participatory democracy. The fundamental idea concerning the development democratic citizenship through participation is that it is not possible to first educate someone for participation and then allow him or her to participate in decision-making. Morrow (1989: 114) says that participation and decision-making cannot be separated therefore the researcher states that it is important to afford secondary school learners the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes.

In support of secondary school learners' participation in decision-making processes, Dewey (1998: 58) argues that co-operative activities in which all members of a group take part will, for example, in well ordered family life in which there is mutual confidence, demonstrate that it is not the will or desire of any one person which establishes order but the moving spirit of the whole group. The traditional school, according to Dewey (1998: 60), is not a community because it is

not a group or community held together by participation in common activities. The control of learners in the traditional school is imposed on learners by the teacher because learners have no say in decision-making processes. Because of Dewey's (1998: 60) point of view, on the old and the new school, the researcher concurs that it is important that secondary school learners are allowed to participate.

5.2.2 Conclusions from data

The researcher structured his conclusions according to the themes that arose from the two focus group interviews.

The effect exerted by democratic citizenship on the family life of secondary school learners.

Democratic citizenship has improved the situation of secondary school learners in their families because the majority of the interviewees, namely ten learners out of thirteen learners are content with the changes that have been brought about by the democratic dispensation. According to the data provided by the two focus group interviews, male learners appear to have gained more, namely being given a hearing in their families and being allowed to act independently, than their female counterparts. The researcher bases this conclusion on the fact that all the male interviewees indicated that they were satisfied with the democratic changes that have taken place in their families, whereas only half the female interviewees, that is three of them, were satisfied with these changes. These three are not satisfied because there are still restrictions that are imposed on them in their families. These restrictions also take the form of their parents being reluctant to listen to their point of view.

The reason that most of the secondary school learners are satisfied with the changes brought into their homes by democratic citizenship can be attributed to the fact that the new government has banned corporal punishment of children.

This gives them confidence to express their own ideas at home because they know that parents will not discourage them by subjecting them to corporal punishment. In turn this development has encouraged parents to reason with their secondary school learners instead of being impatient and punitive. The fact that more boys than girls claim that their parents listen to them could be attributed to the belief by parents that girls need more protection than boys.

The influence exerted by democratic citizenship on the peer relations of secondary school learners.

Peer relations appear to be good among both male and female secondary school learners because all the thirteen interviewees maintain that they do not have problems with peers from their racial group or with those peers from other racial groups. Secondary school learners are aware that it is important to solve their differences peacefully. The researcher assumes this because all the thirteen interviewees acknowledge that a peaceful approach to the solution of differences is an effective method of solving problems. It seems that female secondary learners are more inclined to opt for a peaceful solution than male secondary school learners. One of the seven male respondents intimated that at times it may be necessary to resort to violence in order to solve differences whereas no one from the female group referred to resorting to violence in order to solve differences. As six of the seven male participants also believe in a peaceful solution of differences the researcher considers that democratic citizenship is succeeding to imbue peaceful attitudes in secondary school learners.

Concerning gender equality, female secondary school learners appear to be more accommodating than male secondary school learners. The researcher came to this conclusion because all the female interviewees accepted the equality of boys and girls. This is understandable because previously women were disadvantaged. It is therefore easy for them to accept the favourable situation created by democratic citizenship. Six out of seven male interviewees accepted equality of boys and girls

and only one male participant did not do this. From this information the researcher concludes that there is only a small percentage of secondary school learners who do not yet accept equality between boys and girls.

This can be attributed to the fact that the favourable status that was previously enjoyed by males has been ended by the democratic dispensation. Some males, it seems are still finding it difficult to accept equality between the sexes.

The effect brought about by democratic citizenship on the situation of secondary school learners at school.

At school democratic citizenship has not brought about a significant change in the situation of secondary school learners. This is evidenced by the fact that all the thirteen participants maintain that secondary school learners are not represented on the School Governing Body, although its decisions affect them. Secondary school learners believe that the Learners Representative Council is not effective in solving all their problems. The thirteen participants did not agree on the effectiveness of the Learners Representative Council is. Three of the male participants however believed that the Learners Representative Council could do better if it gave learners adequate feedback. All the seven male learners maintain that the Learners Representative Council does not take the advice of secondary school learners seriously. The six female learners maintain that the Learners Representative Council is doing a good job but were vague about its activities. From these findings the researcher concluded that the Learners Representative Council is not effective.

Secondary school learners are excluded from decision-making processes of the school. The researcher bases this assumption on the fact that all the male and female participants maintain that they are excluded from decision-making processes of the school although female interviewees claimed that it was not necessary for them to participate. Nonetheless, the male respondents maintained

the opposite. However, the researcher believes that learners should be invited to participate in decision-making processes of the school because these decisions affect them and they need to develop these skills to develop as democratically-minded citizens. There is no effort taken by the school to teach learners about democratic citizenship. At present it would seem that learners only learn about democratic citizenship by observing how teachers handle learners from different cultural backgrounds. This is not adequate.

The effect exerted by democratic citizenship on the lives of secondary school learners in their communities.

The democratic dispensation has not changed the situation of secondary school learners in their communities. These learners were also not satisfied with the fact that adults exclude them from decision-making processes and other community meetings. They were also not satisfied with the services and facilities provided by the local authorities for young people. These learners blamed juvenile delinquency on this lack of facilities for youth to relax and enjoy themselves in a safe environment. The secondary school learners were, however, satisfied that democratic citizenship has improved racial relations in their communities. The researcher comes to this conclusion because all seven male and six female interviewees maintain that they do not have problems of racial discrimination in their various communities.

The effect brought about by democratic citizenship on the lives of secondary school learners in a national context.

In the national context democratic citizenship has improved the lives of secondary school learners. The researcher bases his assertion on the fact that eleven out of thirteen participants maintained that they were satisfied with the changes that the democratic order has brought about in terms of improving their lives. Two of the female respondents did not dismiss the changes brought about

by democratic citizenship but pointed out that they could not make a comparison between the apartheid era and the democratic era because they have only experienced the democratic era, although they did acknowledge that their parents had told them about the injustices of the apartheid era.

Improvements, as stated by the respondents are the demise of racial discrimination and the advent of freedom of movement. Both groups of males and females pointed out that the most important changes that were brought about by democratic citizenship are freedom of movement, freedom of speech and freedom of association.

Two of the seven male participants were not satisfied with the allocation of job opportunities. These two male participants feel that job opportunities are reserved for blacks, consequently they hinted at seeking employment overseas. They regard black economic empowerment as discrimination in reverse. However, five of the male participants maintain that black economic empowerment is justified as long as it does not place whites at a disadvantage. The researcher concluded that the majority of the male participants welcome black economic empowerment. Nevertheless, three of the male interviewees felt that they could solve the problem of unemployment by creating their own small businesses. This shows that some citizens have realised that they have to meet the authorities halfway in creating employment. All the six female respondents are not overly concerned about unemployment. This could be attributed to the fact that female interviewees feel that they are one day going to get married and that their husbands will be assigned to provide for their families. All the six female respondents are more optimistic than their male counterparts, that employment opportunities will improve as business increases, hence none of them hinted at seeking employment overseas. All the six female interviewees are not worried about black economic empowerment.

In view of the data obtained from the interviewees the researcher concluded that the majority of secondary school learners are satisfied with the changes brought about by democratic citizenship in a national context.

5.2.3   Conclusions from literature study and data

Reimer (in Mosher 1994: 169) acknowledges the vital part played by the family in inculcating democratic values, and hence democratic citizenship, on secondary school learners by maintaining that schools alone cannot democratise secondary school learners. Data collected for this study show that democratic citizenship has achieved this democratisation through the family to a certain extent. The researcher bases this assertion on the information that ten out of thirteen participants maintain that they enjoy democratic privileges in their families. Only three female participants pointed out that they did not yet enjoy such privileges. This means that democratic citizenship still has a little way to go to achieve its goal of democratising family relations of secondary school learners. Solmitz (2001: 45) adds that if parents can show faith in their children, youth could develop initiative and a sense of social responsibility. In view of what Solmitz (2001: 45) and Reimers (Mosher 1994: 169) say, the researcher concluded that the views of secondary school children should be taken into consideration by their parents in order to teach them how to live democratically. The view that secondary school children should be afforded the chance to express their views, is emphasised by Schweisfurth et al. (2002: 30), who point out that democracy is constructed by living it daily. In addition, Giroux (1993: 188) maintains that adults should not disregard the interests of students under the pretext of control and management. Data collected for this study indicates that boys are given more hearing than girls by their parents.

Dewey (1998: 62) emphasises the importance of democratising secondary schools by suggesting that secondary school learners should be allowed to participate in decision-making processes of the school. In concurring with Dewey (1998: 62),

Solmitz (2001: 45) argues that secondary school learners should be allowed to participate in all aspects of program development and management of the school in order to learn about democratic citizenship. Dewey (1998: 62), Solmitz (2001: 45) and Sigel and Hoskins (1991: 4) maintain that the task of the schools is to socialise the youth into democratic adult citizens. Data collected from interviews, however, suggests that teachers take it for granted that secondary school learners will learn democratic citizenship through observation only because, as all the interviewees maintained, they are not officially taught citizenship at school. Sigel and Hoskins (ibid.) highlight this propensity of schools by pointing out that schools often take it for granted that democratisation will occur unaided in learners. According to Dewey (1998: 60-62), in traditional schools the control of learners is imposed by teachers, whereas in contemporary schools control is achieved by allowing learners to participate in decision-making processes. Allowing learners to participate in decision-making processes enables them to take responsibility for their actions. In view of Dewey's (1998: 60-62) findings, the researcher concludes that participants of this study do not yet experience democratic citizenship at school.

According to Ichilov (1998: 215), in order to develop secondary school learners into democratic citizens, teaching methods across the curriculum need to be more active, participant, co-operative, investigative and critical. Ichilov (ibid.) suggests that the curriculum needs also to create a chance for direct and explicit examination of political issues and structures. The reason for this, according to Ichilov (1998: 215), is that democracy is based on the notion of choice and choice based on ignorance is no choice at all. Ichilov (ibid.) is trying to draw our attention to the fact that if secondary school learners are not taught about political issues and structures they will not be in a position to make a comparison of these structures and to make appropriate choices.

Bearing in mind what Ichilov (1998: 215) says, the researcher postulates that the introduction of citizenship education can enhance the acquisition of democratic citizenship by secondary school learners.

As far as the participation of secondary school learners in the community is concerned Conrad and Hedin (in Shaver 1976: 51) maintain that secondary school learners should be involved in the life of the community. In other words the youth should not just talk about public issues, they should do something about these issues. Conrad and Hedin (ibid.) point out those public issues in which the youth can be involved:

- peer counselling
- free day care for low-income families.
- helping the elderly.

If secondary school learners are taught these duties they will grow into adults who are well prepared to face their responsibilities in their various communities.

Rimmerman (2001: 111) also maintains that students should participate in the larger community if they are to be properly prepared for their roles as citizens in a democracy. Rimmerman (ibid.) points out that students can be involved in service opportunities such as, organising for social change or political campaigns. Information obtained from the interviewees adds that secondary school learners are excluded from involvement in issues that affect their communities.

The researcher came to this conclusion because all the thirteen participants stated that they are excluded from decision-making in their various communities. Democratic citizenship has not yet changed their circumstances within the communities.

5.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher made the following recommendations based on the findings of this research and the literature review.

Parents should encourage their children to develop democratic values by allowing them to give reasons why they hold certain views and by also providing reasons why they themselves hold certain views. This view is emphasised by Osler and Vincent (2002: 1-2). who say that democratic settings enhances the acquisition of democratic values.

Parents should not make children feel that they are being disrespectful when the children approach them with problems. Good communication between parents and their secondary school learners is important because the family is the most important contributor in the process of developing young citizens (Hansen in Schweisfurth et al. 2002: 114). The part that the family plays in the development of secondary school learners is also emphasised by Reimer (in Mosher et al. 1994: 169) who points out that the school alone cannot promote positive adolescent growth and that the family should also be involved. Parents should therefore have an active interest in their children. Furthermore Barber (1992: 108) maintains that democracy depends on the faculty of independent thought and action. Parents should therefore encourage their secondary school learners to ask questions and to express their ideas. This will assist secondary school learners to develop into democratic citizens who are prepared to listen to the ideas of others.

Secondary school learners should be given more say in the decision-making processes of the school. In emphasising the importance of learners' participation at school, Martinez (1998: 56) argues that the views of the learners reveal and reflect their own understanding about the school world and the reality. By affording secondary school learners the opportunity to participate, teachers will get the opportunity to understand them better. Teachers will therefore be in a

better position to assist these secondary school learners to become democratic citizens. In view of these ideas the researcher declares that the inclusion of learners in the decision-making processes of the school cannot be overemphasised. Therefore, the researcher recommends that secondary schools must actively assist learners to become democratic citizens by introducing formal citizenship education.

Secondary school learners should be given the chance to practise what they have learned at school in their communities. The communities can do this by handing secondary school learners the opportunity to take part in the meetings organised by their communities. According to Osler and Vincent (2002: 29), inviting secondary school learners to community meetings will give them the chance to contribute to the development of just, peaceful and democratic communities. Osler and Vincent (2002: 29) specify that schools are an integral part of the communities in which they are situated, and along with parents and other members of the community, should play a part in the development of the learners by affording them the chance to contribute to the development of the community.

Participation by secondary school learners in their communities will assist them to develop social skills such as tolerance and the ability to take the views of others into consideration. According to Mosher et al. (1994: 70), learners who participated in the town meetings of New England in the United States of America reported that they were able to apply the skills they had learned at these meetings in other aspects of their lives.

In view of these findings and the complaints by this research's participants, that they were excluded from participating in their communities, the researcher would like to recommend that it is essential to give secondary school learners the chance to participate in their communities.

5.4   FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has brought to light significant issues, which may require further research regarding democratic citizenship. Firstly the researcher believes that the views on democratic citizenship of parents and teachers of secondary school learners would also provide a worthwhile topic for investigation. Secondly the researcher believes that the views of primary school learners on democratic citizenship should be investigated. Thirdly the researcher suggests that the views on democratic citizenship of learners of higher education institutions should also be investigated.

5.5   SUMMARY

Secondary school learners recognise the benefits brought about by democratic citizenship, but they also realise that democratic attitudes are not developed overnight and are prepared to discuss their problems concerning democracy, for instance, their apparent desire to participate in decision-making and thus learn responsibility.

This attitude is also reflected by the willingness of some respondents to create employment for themselves as a result of widespread unemployment. Moreover, this indicates an emerging capacity to express and create freely, a gratifying result of democracy.

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Appendix A

1.   How has democratic citizenship impacted on your situation in your family?

2.   What impact has democratic citizenship brought about on your relations with your peers?

3.   How has democratic citizenship influenced your situation at school?

4.   What influence does democratic citizenship have on your life in your community?

5.   What effect has democratic citizenship brought upon your life in a national context?