**THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONING OF EGO DEVELOPMENT IN GRADE NINE
LEARNERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT**

by

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that

THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONING OF EGO DEVLOPMENT IN GRADE NINE LEARNERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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SUMMARY

THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONING OF EGO DEVELOPMENT IN GRADE NINE LEARNERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

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This study examined the nature and prevalence of ego strength among early adolescent learners in grade nine attending an independent school.

An in-depth literature review was conducted in order to explore the role and theories of ego development. Thereafter, theories and key aspects of various dimensions of adolescent development were highlighted.

The empirical investigation included both quantitative and qualitative research methodology. A questionnaire was administered to one hundred and ten grade nine learners in order to obtain a broad measure of the respondents' ego and superego strength. Thereafter, two learners were selected in order to explore their experiential life worlds. The findings of the empirical investigation were compared with information that emerged from the literature study.

The study was concluded by offering recommendations to parents, educators and professionals working in the field of psychology of education in empowering them in addressing the phenomenon of ego development among early adolescent learners.

Key words: ego development, ego, superego, early adolescent, learner, questionnaire, case study, personality.

This is dedicated to:

   my incredible parents, Godfrey and Leslie,
   my precious brothers, Graeme and Stephen,
   and my amazing husband, Stuart,

for their incredible and unconditional love, support and encouragement throughout my studies.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

Everyone has his own specific vocation
or mission in life;
everyone must carry out a concrete
assignment that demands fulfillment.
Therein he cannot be replaced,
nor can his life be repeated, thus,
everyone's task is unique as his specific
opportunity to implement it.

Victor E Frankl

1.1   INTRODUCTION

When one hears the word ego, a number of ideas of what it means may come to mind. The average person on the street may think of a person with an ego being someone who has an attitude about him or herself – 'having a big ego'; another may compare it to someone whose self-esteem is being built up – 'thanks for boosting my ego'; and yet another may think of 'their ego being hurt' when they are passed a hurtful comment. When we come to a formal definition of the word, the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2000) describes the ego as "an individual's idea of himself or herself, especially in relation to other people or to the outside world" – in other words, the person's self-esteem. The Merriam-Webster online dictionary (www.merriam-webster.com) also poses its definitions of the word ego, namely that it is "the self especially contrasted with another self or the world"; "egotism or self esteem"; and a more scientific definition: "the one of the three division of the psyche in the psychoanalytic theory that serves as the organised conscious mediator between the person and reality, especially by functioning both in the perception of and adaptation to reality." Therefore, we can see that different people may have varying understandings of the term ego.

As the study and field of psychology has expanded over the years, the topic of ego development seems to have been noted by a number of landmark psychologists from various schools of thought. The father of psychology, Sigmund Freud, dedicated his life to understand human nature. He defined many concepts and ideas in psychology; one of these concepts he coined is that of the ego.

The ego and the development of the ego has since been further described and theorised by a number of psychologists. However, when looking at the topic of ego development in present times it appears to have diminished in literature and research over the recent years. This is a topic which was well founded by persons who made a huge impact in the development of psychology, especially depth psychology, such as Sigmund Freud and Erik Erikson. Here one can note that the key feature of depth psychology is the emphasis given to the 'deep', unconscious aspects of personality (Meyer, Moore & Viljoen, 1997:27). However, recent well known and acknowledged authors, such as Berk (2005), the term ego development is not even as much as listed in the glossary or index.

This brings the question of 'Where has ego development gone?', 'Is it still appropriate in child development?' and 'How is it defined in today's times?'

Ego development is a concept which has a history in the field of both psychology and education. As parents, educators, and psychologists it is vital that one clearly understands what the term ego development means as well as what the concept of the ego and the development of the ego implies.

1.2   PRELIMINARY LITERATURE INVESTIGATION

The concept of ego development has roots in ancient Greek, Hebrew and Hindu cultures. In contrary to what many may believe, it did not originate with Freud or with later psychoanalysts. It is in fact psychoanalysis which originated in part as a rebellion against the nineteenth century ego psychology. Although Freud coined the term ego, he consciously avoided using the term and preferred using words chosen from common language to those of Latin origin (Weiner, 1996).

When we turn to the Dictionary of Psychology (Colman, 2006) ego is described as one of the three components of the human mental apparatus in psychoanalysis, in the second formulation of the theory by Sigmund Freud (1865-1939) after he replaced the topography of unconscious-preconscious-conscious with the structural model of the id-ego-superego in 1920. As already said, ego development was well founded by influential persons in psychology such as Sigmund Freud and Erik Erikson. A brief overview of the major theories is given. The theories will be expanded in more detail in chapter two.

1.2.1   Sigmund Freud and ego development

Freud (1947) explains the ego in terms of instinctual drives. He believed that the ego, which functions on all three levels of consciousness, uses energy which is derived from the id, more specifically from the so-called ego-drives. The ego begins to develop during the first year of life and continues to change throughout a person's life in that it learns through experience, learns new ways of drive satisfaction, and learns to adapt to changing id drives and circumstances in physical and social reality. He views the id as being inborn, while the ego and the superego develop gradually – the superego during the first six years of life and the ego throughout life (Meyer et al, 1997:60).

Freud therefore sees the ego as a regulating function of the personality which develops gradually and continually as one grows. The ego is seen as functioning in the unconscious, preconscious, and conscious levels – where it functions together with the id and superego. More detail of Freud's theory has been discussed in chapter two of the study. However, if one is to have a basic idea of the definition of the ego according to the psychoanalytic theory, it can be seen as one of the three components of the personality that has contact with the external world of reality, and also governs, controls and regulates the personality. The ego can be compared to a police officer that mediates between the internal instincts and external environment the person finds him or herself in. Here, the ego is seen to be ruled by the reality principle in that it is the realistic and logical thinking of the ego which formulates plans of action to satisfy the needs a person has.

1.2.2 Erik Erikson and ego development

Erik Erikson's theory of ego psychology has a different perspective from that of Freud. Erikson (1968b) believes that the ego is of vital importance and that part of the ego is capable of functioning independently from the id and the superego. To Erikson childhood is a very important aspect in personality development and in disagreement to Freud, Erikson believed that the personality continues to develop beyond five years of age.

1.2.3 Loevinger and ego development

Jane Loevinger (1976) made a significant contribution to personality theory through her theory of ego development as well as her psychometric test for stages of ego development. Her work was grounded in the psychoanalytic theory, and she drew from Freud's later theories on the differentiation and development of the ego. Loevinger describes nine chronological stages that represent an increasingly more complex manner of understanding oneself in relation to the world. The nine stages are:

①infancy, ②impulsive, ③self-protective, ④conformist, ⑤self-aware, ⑥conscientious, ⑦individualistic, ⑧ autonomous, and ⑨ integrated.

In conclusion, it is clear that ego development was a topic which played a pivotal role in certain theories. However, key sources do not make much use of the term 'ego development'. This brings the question of 'Where has ego development gone?', 'Is it still appropriate?' and 'How is ego development currently seen and used?' Other vitally

important questions that exist are: 'What are the elements and characteristics of ego development and ego strength?', and 'What factors may impact on ego development?' These are some of the questions which were probed and enquired through this study.

1.3   PROBLEM STATEMENT

In view of the above discussion, the specific research question addressed by this study was therefore:

What is the role and functioning of ego development in grade nine learners and what are the implications thereof on personality development?

1.3.1   Sub-problems

The sub questions that were researched in the following chapters include:

- What are the usages and meanings in the past and present of the term 'ego development'?
- Why is the concept of ego development infrequently used today?
- What is the developmental level of the young adolescent?
- How does the ego develop?
- What is the importance of ego development in psychology of education?
- What is the measure of ego development of a selected group of young adolescents?
- What does the life world of two young adolescents reveal about their ego development?
- What guidelines on ego development can be shared for the field of psychology of education?

1.4   RESEARCH AIM

The main aim of this study is to investigate the role and functioning of ego development of young adolescents in grade nine, and determine the implications thereof on personality development.

The aims of this dissertation include:

- To gain insight into the prior research and theories regarding ego development.
- To investigate why the concept of ego development is infrequently used today.
- To provide information on the developmental level of the young adolescent.
- To investigate whether ego development is still pertinent in today's society.
- To gather information concerning the elements and characteristics of ego development in adolescents.
- To further investigate the function and use of ego development in adolescents.
- To measure the ego development of a selected group of young adolescents.
- To gain insight into the life world of two young adolescents and see how this relates to their ego development.
- To propose guidelines on ego development, specifically with regard to the field of educational psychology.

1.5   MOTIVATION

The reason that I undertook this study is in order to find out what has happened to the term ego development which as mentioned previously, is used infrequently in current textbooks relating to education and psychology. Ego development was a major aspect in previous work done by well known and highly regarded psychologists. It is of interest to investigate its infrequent usage or how it has changed. Ego strength is a factor in certain test media and, therefore, one needs to have a proper understanding of ego development and how the term has evolved over time.

The second aspect of motivation for my study was in order to further investigate the purpose and process of ego development especially in young adolescents. Through my studies during my master's year in educational psychology, the adolescents I worked with all had low ego strength. This intrigued me and has motivated me to further research the topic of ego development. What happened or did not happen that has influenced the ego's development and strengthening?

Therefore, the motivation for my study was twofold: to gain further knowledge and insight into the aspect of ego development in grade nine learners to better understand the topic, as well as to develop guidelines for educational psychologists, teachers and parents in

order to improve and strengthen the development of the young adolescents' ego. The findings would therefore contribute to the body of knowledge associated with personality development and learning.

1.6   RESEARCH DESIGN

1.6.1   Demarcation

My research method included both the quantitative and the qualitative approach to research. Qualitative research is a general term used for various nonstatistical procedures that are designed to explore various characteristics, features, relationships and elements. Qualitative methods therefore involve exploring issues by verbal means such as interviews and group discussions that are conducted with the client and other relevant persons. On the other hand quantitative research methods include techniques of data generation and analysis which rely primarily on mathematical or statistical procedures (Cohen & Swerdik, 2005:222).

From the above explanation one can view that the qualitative research approach focuses primarily on attempting to understand a certain phenomenon or situation from the viewpoint of the person concerned – taking into account the person's meaning that they have attributed to their unique experience. Quantitative research is more impersonal, scientific and distanced in that it aims to establish a causal relationship between variables as well as explore the relationships between phenomena.

For the purpose of this study, a personality test was administered to a homogenous group of young adolescents in order to determine their ego strength. In addition, two in-depth case studies were done in order to have a more intense and in-depth understanding of the role and functioning of ego development in the lives of two young adolescents. A concise description of these methodologies was presented in chapter four.

1.6.2   Quantitative design

In order to conduct the quantitative research, a standard personality test was applied.

1.6.2.1 Selection of respondents

The personality test was administered in a group setting to one hundred and ten learners. The learners were selected according to their grade level – namely grade nine. The participants were selected on the basis that they fulfill the following criteria: that they were grade nine learners attending the same independent school where the medium of instruction is English. The learners were between the ages of thirteen and fifteen years. Both male and female learners were included in the population group and the young adolescents involved in the sample were of diverse cultural backgrounds. The population group was selected by asking the grade nine learners attending the school if they were willing to take part in the study, as well as by gaining consent from their respective parents or guardians. Therefore, the primary unit to be analysed was the learners themselves.

1.6.2.2 Data collection: The High School Personality Questionnaire

To obtain information on the ego strength of the young adolescents, the High School Personality Questionnaire was administered to the one hundred young adolescents. This questionnaire was in pencil and paper format. The questionnaire was developed in the United States (US) by Raymond B Cattell and Mary D L Cattell. The aim in developing the High School Personality Questionnaire was to create a questionnaire that would give a valid as well as reliable picture of the personality of an adolescent between twelve and eighteen years of age. The questionnaire includes all the major dimensions of personality that are able to be factorially analysed, as well as be able to be administered in groups and individuals, and also measure psychologically significant characteristics (Cattell & Cattell, 1975).

1.6.2.3 Motivation

The High School Personality Questionnaire was selected as the quantitative test resource for this study because of its very relevant and focused two factors: C and G which have a close link to ego development.

Factor C gives an indication of the person's level of dynamic integration, of personal and interpersonal facets, of emotional control, stability, and the ability to handle frustration (Visser, Garbers-Strauss & Prinsloo, 2003:25). A low score of factor C reflects possible

emotional instability or low ego strength, and a high score of factor C reflects possible emotional stability and high ego strength.

The second factor I focused on in the High School Personality Questionnaire is factor G. Factor G measures a person's conscientiousness, adjustment to and acceptance of social norms (Visser et al, 2003:28). Low ego strength is reflected in a low factor G score, and high ego strength is reflected in a high score of factor G.

1.6.2.4 Data collection

The High School Personality Questionnaire was administered. Form A of the questionnaire was used for this study. The data was collected by utilising the questionnaires and answer sheets for Form A. Learners used pencils and erasers in order to complete the questionnaire. The venue utilised for the testing was at the school hall, where the learners were seated at separate desks and chairs. I administered the questionnaire personally, in a group setting, and a colleague of mine at the school assisted with the invigilation of the questionnaire. The instructions were read according to the manual, and where questions arose, they were discussed with the learners. It was made clear that the questionnaire was not 'right' or 'wrong' but was the correct response for each individual and unique learner.

1.6.2.5 Data analysis

The data was analysed, through scoring and interpretation, as allocated and stipulated in the manual and according to the normal hand scoring method using the masks. South African norms and a sten scale were applied during interpretation of the scores. The interpretation was done according to the marking and interpretation guidelines set out in the High School Personality Questionnaire manual. The two specific factors measuring ego development, namely factor C and factor G, were interpreted according to the sten scale. A score between one and four fell within the low category. A score between five and six was described as being average. A score between seven and ten fell within the high category. However, it should be kept in mind that the low and high categories are seen as being in a bipolar relationship with each other, and not necessarily good and bad.

1.6.3   Qualitative design

The qualitative design comprised of two case studies of two learners of the population group who completed the personality test.

Due to the in depth nature of the two case studies in the qualitative approach, it would naturally lend itself to more than one form of data collection. In order to establish and discover what the learners thought, how they felt and how they described their unique subjective reality, I utilised semi-structured interviews as well as projective media such as the sentence completion questionnaire.

1.6.3.1 Selection of respondents

The selection of the learners was done randomly and also depended on permission granted by the learners' parents and their own willingness to participate in the study. Based on the information that was ascertained from the questionnaire, one learner who presented as an individual with high ego strength and one with low ego strength were selected to participate in the in-depth study. Although comparisons cannot be made between the two case studies, my aim was to determine the life worlds of these two adolescents and how this related to their ego development. These two learners were a part of the original group of learners on which the questionnaire was administered.

1.6.3.2 Data collection

The media which were selected for the case studies, namely the semi-structured interviews and sentence completion, will now be discussed.

(i)   Interviews

As mentioned above, semi-structured or discursive interviews were used in order to promote openness between myself and the learners. Here facts, ideas, opinions, life experiences, and deep emotions could be expressed in a warm and empathetic environment. Observation and nonverbal behaviour were also noted during my times of interaction with the two learners in order to gain information regarding their nonverbal communication and how they interact.

(a)   Motivation

Semi-structured interviews result in a host of information regarding the learner: through what they share and do not share verbally in the interview as well as what is communicated through their nonverbal gestures, posture, etc or the lack thereof.

(b)   Data collection

All the interviews were audio-taped and transcribed for use in the data analysis where necessary. The sessions together with the two learners took place on school property at a time that was convenient to each learner. These interviews were conducted separately, on a one-to-one basis with the learner.

(c)   Data analysis

The information gained through the semi structured interviews was interpreted by restructuring all the information into clear categories and themes relating to ego development, the developmental phase of the young adolescent as well as the personality development of the learner.

(ii)   Sacks Sentence Completion Test

The Sacks Sentence Completion Test was designed in order to obtain significant clinical matter in four representative areas of adjustment. It was developed by Joseph Sacks of the New York Veterans Administration Mental Hygiene Service. The four areas that are covered by the test include family, sex, interpersonal relationships and self-concept (Abt & Bellak, 1959:370).

The test requires approximately twenty to forty minutes to complete, and was administered individually by me. The four responses for each of the fifteen categories in the test were analysed jointly and assigned a global assessment mark as explained in chapter 4.

(a)   Motivation

Due to the sentence completion test being a projection medium, it was naturally a manner in order to gain information regarding the learners' intrapsychic processes in a nondirective and nonthreatening manner. Unconscious information may also come to the fore when working with projective media.

(b)   Data collection

The data was gathered by assessing the two learners through the application of the Sacks Sentence Completion Test. On both occasions the test was completed by the learner using pencil and paper. The session with the learners took place on separate occasions, on a one-on-one basis, and took place on school property at a time that was suitable to each learner.

(c)   Data analysis

Data gathered from the sentence completion questionnaire was interpreted according to the guidelines and norms set aside in Abt and Bellak (1959).

1.7   VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The media used in the quantitative aspect of this study, namely the High School Personality Questionnaire, has been tested and is scientifically proved to be both a reliable and valid test. It is also been approved by the Health Sciences Research Council (HSRC) of South Africa as a valid and reliable test in South Africa. It is considered an excellent instrument, provided that it is updated and revised (Foxcroft, Paterson & le Roux, 2004:63).

With regard to the qualitative research designs, the following strategies have been applied to this study as a guide when designing the study and selecting the research methods. Henning, van Rensburg and Smit (2004:148-150) note that validity in qualitative research is determined by three main criteria. The first is that of good craftsmanship which will have an outcome of a well researched as well as a well written investigation. The second is that of whether or not other people, especially the participants in the study, agree that the observations one has made are true and that the findings are understandable to them. The third is that the participants will benefit from the outcome of the inquiry: being both practical and having the aim to empower. I intended to fulfill these three criteria during the sessions that took place together with the two case study learners with whom I was working in more depth during this study.

Other strategies that were employed during the research in order to uphold the validity and reliability included using a variety of methods in order to get a complete and verified

picture of the learners' ego development; allowing sufficient time in order to collect the data and interpret it in an accurate manner; keeping meticulous notes of the sessions and transcripts of the interviews; conducting the interviews and research in a professional and thorough manner; and as a result having a rich, thick description of the findings of the research.

1.8   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

When taking part in quantitative and qualitative research there are a number of ethical issues one should take into account. This is due to the fact that one is dealing with real people who are sharing themselves, trusting the researcher with their personal lives, and exposing how they attribute meaning to their realities. It is therefore a very threatening and self-exposing situation that the participants step into which we need to respect and appreciate. In this study, it was vital to discuss these ethical concerns from the outset. Firstly, I needed to obtain permission from the institution involved, from the learners' parents if they were under the legal age, as well as from the learners themselves: informed consent should be obtained from all the respondents. Awareness of the intrusive nature of the qualitative case studies should be negotiated with those concerned in writing. The research goals were also transparent and those involved were made aware of what would be done with the findings of the research. Participants were assured that they would be treated as anonymous and their privacy and sensitivity would be protected as far as possible. The researcher should not forget always to keep those involved as safe as possible and no exploitation should take place.

1.9   ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

From the preliminary literature study and my personal exposure to learners with low ego strength, an exposition of the problem of a lack of recent relevant information and an understanding of what the ego and ego development was presented in chapter one. The problem formulation, the aims of the study and an outline of the empirical investigation were covered in this chapter.

The focal point of chapter two was on the prior research and theories regarding ego development as well as the infrequent use of the concept of ego development in recent literature.

In chapter three the developmental level of the young adolescent was explored, as well as the characteristics of ego development in young adolescents. Also included in chapter three was a discussion of the significance of ego development in psychology of education.

Chapter four included the research design in which the measurement of ego development of a group of adolescents, as well as a description of the life world of two young adolescents in relation to ego development was explored.

An analysis and interpretation of the research data was presented in chapter five.

In chapter six a synthesis of the investigation was made. In conclusion, the findings and recommendations resulting from the study were offered, as well as providing guidelines on ego development for psychology of education.

1.10   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter has attempted to give a brief overview of the content of the research study aiming to investigate the role and functioning of ego development in grade nine learners and the implications thereof on personality development. The literature included studies pertaining to the concept of ego and ego development, as well as a more detailed focus on the young adolescent and ego development. There does not appear to be many studies in the recent decade concerning the phenomenon of ego development. From my interactions with young adolescents through my training, it appeared that parents, teachers and educational psychologists need to have a deeper understanding of how they can build and increase their child, learner, or client's ego strength in order to better cope with life's demands and stressors. A quantitative and qualitative approach was used in order to uncover a general measure of ego development in grade nine learners, as well as an in-depth and personal perspective. The findings will hopefully yield rich information concerning ego development, its role

and functioning, the general measure of grade nine learners' ego development, as well as a deeper description of two learners' reality and how they have attributed meaning resulting in their ego development. These results can be used in order to support learners by providing practical guidelines on building ego strength for parents, teachers and educational psychologists.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH AND THEORIES OF EGO DEVELOPMENT

The stream we did not know we lived upon the banks of
proceeded nevertheless unto the sea.
It touched us in its effects, watering
the flowers in the field, which kept that one cause back.

The bloodroot clearly tapped a secret source,
until we saw the surface shake
its daytime diamonds in the windy brake,
and the thought occurred: of course.

So much within the scope of mind
lay simply undivined
that even more without
would, less than ever, be found.

Ernest Kroll

2.1   INTRODUCTION

It is a common assumption that the concept of ego development originated with Freud or a psychoanalyst. However, ego development can be traced back to roots in ancient Greek, Hebrew and Hindu cultures (Lê Xuân & Loevinger, 1996:3). The theory of the ego and the related origin of its development can be traced back to a period that occurred in a number of cultures between 800 and 200 B.C., also known as, the 'axial age in human history.' In Plato's Apology, Socrates says to Callias, "If your two sons were only colts or bullocks, we could have hired a trainer for them to make them beautiful and good, and all that they should be; and our trainer would have been, I take it, a horseman or a farmer. But now that they are human beings, have you a trainer in your mind for them? Is there anyone who understands what a man and a citizen ought to be?" Therefore, one can see that the notion of the person developing to fulfill his or her own best nature has existed since the time of Socrates (Loevinger, 1976:6).

Psychoanalysis was initially a response to nineteenth century ego psychology, and the concept 'ego' was scarcely if ever used by Freud. Phrases and terms such as the 'I', the 'me', 'self' and 'ego' were used widely in nineteenth century philosophy, psychiatry and psychology. One can therefore see that much time could be spent tracking the definitions and usages of authors in different languages but this would not prove that people who are living their daily lives in today's times have intact egos (Loevinger, 1976:4). Lê Xuân and Loevinger (1996) have also noted that there have also been similar and related models, such as Kohlberg's moral development (Kohlberg, 1964 in Lê Xuân and Loevinger, 1996), character development (Peck & Havinghurst, 1960 in Lê Xuân and Loevinger, 1996), interpersonal reliability (Isaacs, 1956 in Lê Xuân and Loevinger, 1996), cognitive complexity (Harvey, Hunt & Schroder, 1961 in Lê Xuân and Loevinger, 1996), and interpersonal integration (C Sullivan, 1956 in Lê Xuân and Loevinger, 1996).

2.2   EGO AND EGO DEVELOPMENT

Interest in developmental aspects was enthused by Darwin's theory of evolution at the end of the nineteenth century. The early twentieth century was therefore more centered on child development and child welfare than in previous times in the US. Here the focal

point moved from studying children's growth in terms of chronology where all types of development are occurring together, to the realisation that observation alone will not yield a concept such as ego development, nor will it distinguish signs of ego development from signs of intellectual development, or psychosexual development, or adjustment. "Ego development is an abstraction, and the essence of science is that abstract ideas guide observations, and observations in turn alter abstract ideas" (Le Xuân & Loevinger, 1996:3).

Psychoanalysis gives at least four meanings to ego development. However, it appears that the term has been used too loosely by psychoanalysts due to their failure to recognise that it has truly diverse meanings, or alternatively that it cannot have these diverse meanings. A criticism of Erikson's chronicle of psychosocial development is that it fails to acknowledge that during ego formation one cannot distinguish ego development from psychosexual development or intellectual development, or adjustment. All such psychoanalytic outlooks do not view ego development as does Loevinger, where it is seen as a major dimension of individual differences in any age group (Loevinger, 1976:5).

When one looks at ego development, a theoretical issue which arises is whether it is best illustrated as a gradual process of evolving, or alternatively as a set of distinct stages, with isolated jumps from one stage to the next. Both of these options have their own dilemmas. Adler's concept of "style of life" was often compared with the self or the ego, the unity of personality, individuality, the method of facing problems, opinion about oneself, the problems of life, as well as the whole attitude toward life (Ansbacher, 1956:174). Adler appeared to see these terms as different ways of describing a single thing or function, namely the ego. This however contrasts other psychoanalytic writings where the ego is seen as being a collection of different functions.

Adler's view was also expanded on by Sullivan (1956), who used the term self-system rather than ego. Here the ego is seen as having relative stability and changing slowly. It is described by Sullivan as maintaining its identity, its stability, and its consistency by selectively blocking out observations that are incongruent with its current state – remembering that one person's reality may not be the same to another. This assumption is also the basic theoretical foundation for the utilisation of projective media and

techniques, as well as sentence completions to measure ego development (Lê Xuân & Loevinger, 1996:4).

2.2.1   Sigmund Freud's concept of ego

2.2.1.1 Background

Sigmund Freud was a student of Meynert, a German psychiatrist. Meynert developed a theory of personality based on the psychology of the ego, and Freud went on to transform the field of psychiatry with his psychoanalytic theory of the ego. Rather than using the Latin 'ego' in his theory, Freud chose to use the German *Das Ich*, 'the I'. He therefore aimed to use the term in a manner which was consistent with the technical psychiatric definition of the ego during that period, which was used to describe the self-conscious and controlling feature of the personality. As Freud's experience grew, his concept of the ego also expanded and he then saw the conscious ego as a repressor that covers over unconscious forbidden memories and impulses which may enter the consciousness (Benner & Hill, 1999:385).

i)   The conscious and unconscious

According to Freud's (1947:9) work the fundamental principle of psychoanalysis is the division of mental life into the conscious and unconscious. Psychoanalysis views consciousness not as being the essence of mental life, but rather as being a property of mental life that could co-exist together with other properties. The psychology of the conscious is therefore seen as being capable of solving the problems of dreams and hypnosis. A mental element is not necessarily conscious; a state of consciousness is in actual fact temporary. In other words an idea that in one moment is conscious, may not be so a few minutes later, but can become conscious again if certain conditions bring it about. Freud used the term latent to describe a mental element that was capable of becoming conscious at any time.

Unconscious, on the other hand, goes together with the word latent and its sense of 'being able to become conscious.' It is described as powerful mental processes or ideas that exist which can have the same effect and impact on the mind as ordinary ideas without themselves becoming conscious. Some of these unconscious ideas are not able to become conscious due to a certain force which opposes them. The state where the ideas existed before being made conscious is called repression, and the force bringing

about and maintaining the repression is called resistance. The repressed is therefore an example and model of unconscious. There are two types of unconscious: the first is that which is latent but capable of becoming conscious in the normal everyday way; and second that which is repressed and not capable of becoming conscious in the normal ordinary way. The term preconscious is used to describe that which is latent and only unconscious in the illustrative and not dynamic sense. What is termed the unconscious is descriptive of that which is dynamically unconsciously repressed (Freud, 1947:11).

According to Freud (1947:12), when looking at the structure of the conscious, preconscious and unconscious, it is presumed that the preconscious is closer to the conscious than the unconscious is. It should also be noted that although in psychoanalysis the three terms, conscious, preconscious, and unconscious are used, in the descriptive sense there are two kinds of unconscious, whereas in the dynamic sense there is only one. Another way of looking at the difference between the preconscious and unconscious idea or thought, is that the unconscious is worked out based on unrecognisable material, whereas the preconscious has in addition to that also been connected with verbal images which are memory residues.

2.2.1.2 Definition of ego

Freud (1947:15) defined the ego as "the coherent organisation of mental processes" which each individual possesses. The ego is perceived to include consciousness, as well as control the approaches to its mobility. It is seen as being the organisation in the mind that controls all of its essential processes, and continues to censor dreams while it sleeps at night. The ego also represses information and ideas where it attempts to cut off particular tendencies in the mind from the consciousness, and also from other forms of manifestation and activity. These tendencies that are shut out stand in opposition to the ego, and the activity per se is confronted with the task of removing the resistances that the ego shows concerning itself with that which is repressed. In other words it is this resistance that stems from one's ego and also belongs to the ego. There can therefore be something in the ego itself which is unconscious and behaves like the repressed. Freud (1947:17) states that the unconscious does not coincide with what is repressed but all that is repressed is unconscious, and not that the whole unconscious is repressed.

In Freud's (1947:48, 52) work he also discussed the id and its relation to the ego. He sees the duty of the ego being to bring in the external world to stand up to the id and its characteristic; as well as to replace the pleasure principle which rules in the id with the reality principle. In comparison, the id delegates and entrusts based on instinct, where the ego bases this on perception. The ego embraces reason and sanity, where the id represents passions.

Another term which Freud (1947:34) coined is that of the super-ego or the ego-ideal. The superego develops from the ego through an intricate process where the person's contact with the behavioural and moral codes of society serves as a key role. The superego has a punishing element which Freud calls the conscience, as well as a positive facet called the ego ideal which promotes moral behaviour. The conscience functions according to moral principles and punishes the person by bringing about guilt feelings about immoral behaviour or wishes. Energy required by the superego in order to exercise constant pressure on the ego, is obtained from the id, specifically the aggressive drive (Meyer et al, 1997:61).

The structure of the psyche according to Freud is illustrated in figure 2.1. The three different levels of consciousness and the three structural elements of the psyche, as well as their contents, can be seen including how they interrelate with each other.

Figure 2.1 The structure of the psyche according to Freud
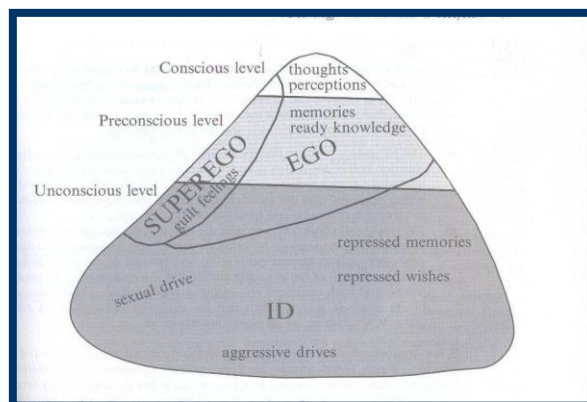
Source: Meyer et al (1997)

2.2.1.3 Concept of ego development

The ego functions on all three levels of consciousness. It uses the energy it gains from the id from the 'ego drives', in order to function and develop. Freud believed that ego development begins in the first year of life, and continues to transform and evolve throughout the individual's life. This development takes place through experiences, learning new ways of drive satisfaction, and adapting to changing id drives and situations in both the physical and social reality. The first six years of life were seen as being the most significant with regard to ego development according to Freud (Meyer et al, 1997:60-61).

Ego drives are linked with individual survival, and are aimed at satisfying the person's basic life needs: namely breathing, eating, drinking, etc. These are therefore very basic but yet extremely significant needs. One of the vital functions of the ego drives is their responsibility for the development of the ego and provision of the energy required for its functioning (Meyer et al, 1997:64). Freud also describes the ego as developing from obeying instincts to being able to dominate them; from just perceiving the instincts to restraining them. The superego or ego ideal assists in this process and feat through the response pattern against the instinctual processes in the id. When observing the ego from a different perspective, it is also seen as being subjected to having three masters with three dangers, namely (1) the external world, (2) the libido of the id, and (3) the harshness of the superego (Freud, 1947:82).

As the ego functions, it utilises defense mechanisms in order to safeguard and protect itself. These are described by Erikson (1977:175) as "unconscious arrangements which permit the individual to postpone satisfaction, to find substitutions, and otherwise to arrive at compromises between id impulses and super-ego compulsions".

It appears therefore that Freud focused primarily on the definitions of the unconscious, conscious and preconscious, as well as the structure of the id, ego and superego. When explaining ego development and how the ego's synthesis grows or fails to grow, Erikson maintained that Freud saw this as being dependent on and supported by the social order of society (Erikson, 1997:255).

2.2.2   Erik Erikson's concept of ego

Erik Erikson built on Freud's works and ideas, and extended his theory by focusing on the psychosocial aspects of development beyond early childhood. Erikson believed that psychosocial and psychosexual growth takes place simultaneously, and that each stage of life is comprised of a task of creating balance between oneself and the social world. His theory includes eight periods of life which extend through the entire life span, with each period having a specific crisis that needed to be resolved. This crisis according to Erikson was a turning point in life where one has the potential to either move forward by resolving the conflict, or regress by failing to master the developmental task. One's life is therefore seen as being a result of the choices one makes during these life stages (Corey, 2005:61).

2.2.2.1 Background

Erikson pointed out that Freud said the study of dreams is the royal road to the adult's unconscious, and in parallel to that it was said by Waelder (in Erikson 1977:168) that the best clue to understanding the infantile ego is through the study of child's play: 'fantasies woven around real objects.' When comparing Freud's theory to Erikson's, Erikson believed that Freud did not go far enough in describing the ego's place in development, and also did not give enough consideration to the social impact throughout the life span (Corey, 2005:62). Table 2.1 provides a comparison of Freud's psychosexual stages with Erikson's eight psychosocial stages.

Table 2.1 Comparison of Freud's psychosexual and Erikson's psychosocial stages

Period of Life	FREUD: Psychosexual Stages	ERIKSON: Psychosocial Stages
First year of life	**Oral Stage** Sucking at mother's breasts satisfies need for food and pleasure. Infant needs to get basic nurturing or later feelings of greediness and acquisition may develop. Oral fixations results from deprivation of oral gratification in infancy. Later personality problems can include mistrust of others, rejecting others; love, and fear of or inability to form intimate relationships	**Infancy: Trust versus Mistrust** If significant others provide for basic physical and emotional needs, infant develops a sense of trust. If basic needs are not met, an attitude of mistrust toward the world, especially toward interpersonal relationships, is the result.
Ages 1 – 3	**Anal Stage** Anal zone becomes of major significance in formation of personality. Main developmental tasks include learning and independence, accepting personal power, and learning to express negative feelings such as rage and aggression. Parental discipline patterns and attitudes have significant consequences for children's later personality development.	**Early Childhood: Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt** A time for developing autonomy. Basic struggle is between a sense of self-reliance and a sense of self-doubt. Child needs to explore and experiment, to make mistakes and to test limits. If parents promote dependency, child's autonomy is inhibited and capacity to deal with world successfully is hampered.

Table 2.1 continued

Period of Life	FREUD: Psychosexual Stages	ERIKSON: Psychosocial Stages
Ages 3 - 6	**Phallic Stage** Basic conflict centers on unconscious incestuous desires that child develops for parent of opposite sex and that, because of their threatening nature, are repressed. Male phallic stage, known as Oedipus complex, involves mother as love object for boy. Female phallic stage known as Electra complex, involves girl's striving for father's love and approval. How parents respond, verbally and nonverbally, to child's emerging sexuality has an impact on sexual attitudes and feelings that child develops.	**Preschool Age: Initiative versus Guilt** Basic task is to achieve a sense of competence and initiative. If children are given freedom to select personally meaningful activities, they tend to develop a positive view of self and follow through with their projects. If they are not allowed to make their own decisions, they tend to develop guilt over taking initiative. They then refrain from taking an active stance and allow others to choose for them.
Ages 6 – 12	**Latency Stage** After the torment of sexual impulses of preceding years, this period is relatively quiescent. Sexual interests are replaced by interests in school, playmates, sports, and a range of new activities. This is a time of socialisation as child turns outward and forms relationships with others.	**School Age: Industry versus Inferiority** Child needs to expand understanding of world, continue to develop appropriate gender-role identity, and learn the basic skills required for school success. Basic task is to achieve a sense of industry, which refers to setting and attaining personal goals. Failure to do so results in a sense of inadequacy.
Ages 12 – 18	**Genital Stage** Old themes of phallic stage are revived. This stage begins with puberty and lasts until senility sets in. Even though there are societal restrictions and taboos, adolescents can deal with sexual energy by investing it in various socially acceptable activities such as forming friendships, engaging in art or in sports, preparing for a career.	**Adolescence: Identity versus Role Confusion** A time of transition between childhood and adulthood. A time for testing limits, for breaking dependent ties, and for establishing a new identity. Major conflicts center on clarification of self-identity, life goals, and life's meaning. Failure to achieve a sense of identity results in role confusion.
Ages 18 – 35	**Genital Stage Continues** Core characteristic of mature adult is the freedom "to love and to work". This move toward adulthood involves freedom from parental influence and capacity to care for others.	**Young adulthood: Intimacy versus Isolation** Developmental task at this time is to form intimate relationships. Failure to achieve intimacy can lead to alienation and isolation.
Ages 35 – 60	**Genital Stage Continues**	**Middle Age: Generactivity versus Stagnation** There is a need to go beyond self and family and be involved in helping the next generation. This is a time of adjusting to the discrepancy between one's dream and one's actual accomplishments. Failure to achieve a sense of productivity often leads to psychological stagnation.
Ages 60 +	**Genital Stage Continues**	**Later Life: Integrity versus Despair** If one looks back on life with few regrets and feels personally worthwhile, ego integrity can results. Failure to achieve ego integrity can lead to feelings of despair, hopelessness, guilt, resentment, and self-rejection.

Source: Corey (2005:62-64)

2.2.2.2 Definition of ego

Erikson (1968:218) like Freud describes the ego as being the part of the personality that makes planned and organised functioning. He defines the ego as "the domain of an inner agency safeguarding our coherent existence by screening and synthesising, in a series of moments, all the impressions, emotions, memories, and impulses which try to enter our thought and demand action, and which would tear us apart if unsorted and unmanaged by a slowly growing and reliably watchful screening system". As noted previously, Erikson (1968:224) views the person and the environment as being entwined: "One can only conclude that the functioning ego, while guarding individuality, is far from being isolated, for a kind of communality links egos in a mutual activation. Something in the ego processes then and something in the social processes is – well, practically identical". Erikson therefore expands on Freud's definition by including the aspects of communality and socialisation in the development of ego strengths.

2.2.2.3 Concept of ego development

Ego development according to Erikson develops throughout the life span, and is controlled and regulated by a genetically determined foundation, namely the epigenetic principle that brings about specific characteristics of the ego to come to the fore in a predetermined sequence. In consistency with Erikson's psychosocial theory, it must be kept in mind that the demands and opportunities of the social environment have a significant role in the development of the ego. As the new born child grows and matures through the life stages, as described in the Table 2.2, they are continually exposed to interaction between themselves and their environment, and a number of crises are experienced. These crises are situations where the ego has to make choices regarding its future. If this development moves in a successful manner, the ego will attain characteristics such as hope, willpower, trustworthiness, the ability to love, and the ability to care. The social influences of society which are present in the person's life make certain demands on the person, and simultaneously also provide the opportunity for growth to take place. These demands and growth areas are in unison with and favour to the developmental potential and needs of the individual in that specific stage of development. It must be kept in mind that although at each stage there is a certain aspect of the personality that surfaces as the focal point of development, the other aspects of development continue to grow in the background which is also part of the epigenetic ground plan. Therefore, when one compares how Erikson illustrates the ego

in relation to Freud, Erikson's viewpoint is that the ego is an executive officer that mediates between the id and superego as does Freud, but he adds that it is also a negotiator that decides between different developmental options and tries to find answers to developmental crises in a creative way (Meyer et al.1997:207, 209).

Table 2.2   The epigenetic chart according to Erikson

Stage									Ego Strengths
Maturity								Integrity vs. despair	Wisdom
Adulthood							Generactivity vs. stagnation		Care
Early adulthood	Trust vs. distrust in respect to spouse	Maintain autonomy in relationship	Master new roles in family	Learning new responsibilities, in family and career	Reformulate identity as married person	Intimacy vs. isolation	Family planning; start career	Developing joint philosophy and values	Love
Adolescence					Identity vs. confusion				Trustworthiness
School age				Industry vs. inferiority					Competence
Play age			Initiative vs. guilt						Purpose
Early childhood		Autonomy vs. doubt							Willpower
Infancy	Trust vs. distrust								Hope

Source: Meyer et al (1997:210)

2.2.3   Jane Loevinger's concept of ego

2.2.3.1 Background

Jane Loevinger brought a different perspective on ego development. She noted the three meanings ego development can have: firstly, as the course of character development within an individual; secondly, the history of the concept; and thirdly, the increase in ability which has taken place through humankind's history. Loevinger devoted most of her work on ego development to the first area, and pointed out that the term most commonly used in child psychology for 'ego development' is that of socialisation. However, Loevinger's focus is on character structure which therefore

includes transformation of structures including the cognitive element of Jean Piaget being important in development (Loevinger, 1976:3-4).

2.2.3.2 Definition of ego

Ego development according to Loevinger (1976:13) is "at once a developmental sequence and a dimension of individual differences in any age cohort, but this description does not suffice as a definition, for mental age can also be described so." Loevinger therefore uses her descriptions of the stages of ego development in order to define the term.

One may then wonder and ask with what age each stage of ego development is associated. Loevinger's answer to this question was, "I shall not answer. For one thing, there are two different answers, since the average stage for a given age is not the same as the average age for a given stage. More importantly, to describe the progress of average children would be to slip back into a classical child psychology study of socialisation… What I seek to describe is what persons of each stage have in common, whatever their age" (Loevinger, 1976:13-14).

2.2.3.3 Concept of ego development

Loevinger took on a different perspective, stand and direction to her predecessors with regard to ego development. Where Freud and Erikson viewed ego as a regulating agent, Loevinger viewed ego development almost as emotional growth through socialisation. Therefore the development of the concept appears to have grown from where Freud viewed the ego as a regulating agent which is under constant pressure from the id and simultaneously needs to accommodate all the demands of the physical environment and moral codes (Meyer et al, 1997:60). Erikson also described the ego as a regulating agent as Freud did, but he took ego development a step further. He linked the ego process to social processes and described eight psychosocial stages ranging from birth to old age that comprises of crises which if resolved optimally end in ego strengths (Meyer et al, 1997:209). Where Erikson is seen as identifying positive elements and strengths of ego development, Loevinger on the other hand described ego development as being stages of movement or a social and emotional growth process from an egocentric, two dimensional way of viewing the self as opposed to, or being in, the world to a self-actualising and self-transcending individual (Lê Xuân & Loevinger, 1996:6). In

other words, where Erikson's elements of ego development were all viewed as being positive, Loevinger included both positive and negative elements in her stages of ego development.

As mentioned previously, Loevinger's concept of ego development is best described through the definitions and illustrations given in her stages of ego development. These stages have been described in the section that follows.

(i) Loevinger's stages of ego development
When looking at the initial stage of ego development or the 'beginning' of the process, it would naturally be the new born child. One of the earliest tasks he or she would have is to construct for him or herself a stable world of objects, and, together with this, the self would also be in a process of growth. There are many theorists, particularly psychoanalysts, who refer to this period as being the period of ego development. However, this would exclude the term from any further developing stages which are viable. This is therefore called the first stage of ego formation, and is beyond the scope of this dissertation. The following stages of ego development will however be described as set out in Loevinger's theory (Lê Xuân & Loevinger, 1996:4).

> (a) Impulsive stage: E2
> The lowest of the accessible stages to Loevinger's studies is the impulsive stage. At this stage the child is seen as being an individual with physical needs and impulses, who is dependent on others for control. There are intense and dependent attachments to the child's caretakers that are based on physical needs. When trying to understand and form perceptions of other people, they are based on basic opposites such as good and bad. The good are those who give and share with and provide for one, and the bad ones are seen as the mean ones who do not. The word 'no' has a large role of affirming the growing self. Rules at this stage are poorly understood. This kind of behaviour is characteristically normal for the very young child. However, by school age, children have favourably advanced beyond it – those who do not are often described as having impulsive personalities (Lê Xuân & Loevinger, 1996:4).

(b) Self-protective stage: E3

This stage is the first step toward control over one's impulses and character development therefore occurs when the child is able to suspend the need for immediate gratification. Rules are now appreciated by children, who know that it is to their advantage to obey them. Long term goals and ideals are not taken into account during this stage – these children rather want to have immediate satisfaction, and in doing so will take advantage of others to achieve this. As the name of the stage is called, children in this stage are self-protective and do not take responsibility for any wrong doing but rather blame others. Small children in this stage in normal time tend to have rules and controls being prominent, along with rituals and traditions. Older children and adults who remain in this stage may develop into aggressive, unpleasant, opportunistic, and even psychopathic adults (Lê Xuân & Loevinger, 1996:5).

(c) Conformist stage: E4

The transition from the self-protective stage to the conformist and group-centered stage takes place in normal development at school age, at some time during the school years. During this stage the child identifies their self with the group or its authority (parents, teachers, peers et cetera.) Rules are accepted without question. Cognitive simplicity is prominent during this stage, where there is a right and a wrong way which is the same for everyone all of the time. There are no exceptions to these rules, and that which is socially approved is the right way. Being friendly and nice in social interaction is greatly valued. At this stage a person is often preoccupied with their appearance, material things, their reputation, and being socially accepted. One's self and other people are recognised in terms of stereotypes that are founded by social groups, rather than in terms of individual and unique differences. Interpersonal interaction takes place primarily through actions, namely talking, rather than by means of emotions (Lê Xuân & Loevinger, 1996:5). The conformist stage could also possibly be seen as correlating with Kohlberg's 'law and order' stage. Here the law is seen as being the guiding principle with the result that people refuse to take part in certain behaviour as long as the law forbids such behaviour. The law is therefore understood to be maintained at all costs and a person's acceptance by society depends on their obeying these laws (Mwamwenda, 2004:135).

(d) Self-aware stage: E5

A person in the self-aware stage has come to the awareness that not everyone, including one's own self, conforms completely all the time to the characteristics of the stereotyped demands that are laid out by society. When one is able to distinguish and set free the 'who I am' from the 'who I ought to be', one is then able to start examining the self. Where interpersonal interaction was previously primarily through actions, it now includes emotions. In comparison to the conformist stage where there are absolute rules and statements one needs to abide by, the self-aware stage person recognises that there are alternate possibilities in numerous situations. However, one should note that the self-aware stage is basically a version of conformity where there is modification of absolute rules (Lê Xuân & Loevinger, 1996:5).

(e) Conscientious stage: E6

Progression to the conscientious stage is a main and mystifying shift. Psychoanalytic theories explain this change by one's identification with others one admires, loves, and fears. Social learning theorists' explanation is that a person who does not have a conscience is punished or socially rejected. The distinguishing characteristic of the conscientious stage is having self-evaluated standards. During this stage, conformity does take place but the difference between the conscientious stage and the conformist and self-aware stages is not the behaviour itself but rather if one has hurt another person. Rules are not seen as being as crucial as motives and consequences. Long term goals and ideals are attributes of this stage. In the conscientious stage the person strives to achieve goals, attempts to live up to ideals, and to improve the self. Priorities and appropriateness are considered in moral decisions and issues. Persons at this level normally think beyond their own personal concerns to those in society. This aspect may have the negative facet where such a person may feel extreme responsibility for others (Lê Xuân & Loevinger, 1996:6). It seems therefore as if this stage is where the child is, for the first time, able to move from the self as central focus to the environment: other people, motives, and moral issues.

(f) Individualistic stage: E7

In the individualistic stage the person has now formed a sense of individuality of their personality as a whole and or of their lifestyle. With regard to perception of others, there is greater acceptance and tolerance than in previous stages. During this phase the inner and outer self are frequently distinguished. The ideas of psychological development and psychological causation are additional elements of the individualist stage, which develop fully in the autonomous stage. People are also seen as having and being in different roles, or in other words role differentiation (Lê Xuân & Loevinger, 1996:6).

(g) Autonomous stage: E8

Autonomy is a need that threads throughout one's life span, with the demand being made in different forms. When one looks at the young child in the impulsive stage, the need to be autonomous is shown by wanting to do things 'by myself'. Erikson (1950) used the term autonomous in his self-protective stage. However, the term autonomy in this stage has the main characteristic of being able to recognise other people's need for autonomy. There is also no longer the intense striving sense of responsibility for others that come together with this understanding of autonomy. One develops an increased respect for others and their needs to discover and follow their own way, and even making their own mistakes. Inner conflicts between one's needs and wishes are recognised and often accepted as being part of life, and therefore not always able to be reached. Where the conscientious person strives for achievement, the autonomous person strives in search of self-fulfillment (Lê Xuân & Loevinger, 1996:6).

(h) Integrated stage: E9

There are very few individuals who reach the theoretical highest point of the integrated stage of ego development. There is not a lot of information relating to this stage, but Abraham Maslow provides one of the best explanations and depictions of the self-actualising person (Lê Xuân & Loevinger, 1996:6). Maslow refers to the yearning for self-fulfillment which is the tendency individuals have to become actualised in what they are potentially: the longing to become more and more what or who one is, and to become all that one is capable of becoming (Maslow, 1954:200). Maslow describes self-actualisation as "the full use and

exploitation of talents, capacities, potentialities, et cetera. Such people seem to be fulfilling themselves and to be doing the best that they are capable of doing" (Maslow, 1954:200). Characteristics which Maslow described self-actualisers as having include: clear perception of reality; exceptional acceptance of the self, others and the world; great spontaneity; a strong problem-centered approach to life; a need for privacy and solitude; great personal autonomy and an ability to adopt a stance independent of one's culture; fresh appreciation of the simple beauty and wonder of nature; a growing identification with fellow humans; strong internal value system where methods and goals are clearly distinguished; as well as a sense of humour and great creativity. Maslow and Frankl described self-transcendence which is defined as being a characteristic of mature people who are outward-looking rather than being focused on themselves. Such a person wants to be involved in aspects which give his or her life meaning and purpose (Meyer et al, 1997:541).

In their study Westernberg and Gjerde (1999:246) found the following results regarding a longitudinal study from middle adolescence into young adulthood: firstly, that ego development increases by approximately one and a half ego levels (Loevinger's theory was used); secondly, that the range and variation of ego level scores increase; thirdly, development progressively slows down once the self-aware stage has been reached; and fourth, regression in ego level is extremely uncommon. The self-aware stage therefore appears to be a developmental obstacle during the period from adolescence to young adulthood, which needs extra effort.

In conclusion, when looking at Loevinger's stages of ego development and maturation, one can make the mistake of seeing the stages as a type of ladder that needs to be climbed, with the higher stages being those who are socially better adjusted. However, that is not true. One can find well adjusted persons at all of the stages, especially children who are well adjusted and cannot be functioning at the highest stages. It is therefore important to describe ego maturity and adjustment independently, in order to establish and observe the relationship between them. An important aspect when taking this relationship into account is how one defines and describes these terms, as each one's own perception and perspective of the terms give a different outlook (Lê Xuân & Loevinger, 1996:7).

2.2.4 Summary

In summary, the viewpoint and understanding of ego development has been described from the perspective of Freud, Erikson and Loevinger. The topic of the 'ego development' and how it develops has expanded from Freud's idea of it being a regulating agent mainly taking place in early childhood, to Erikson's theory of the ego developing through eight psychosocial stages from birth to old age where ego strengths result, and then to Loevinger's concept of ego development comprising of stages throughout the lifespan where there are both positive and negative elements.

2.3 THE CONCEPT OF EGO DEVELOPMENT: WHERE HAS IT GONE?

It is useful to describe ego and ego development according to well known founders and theorists of psychology; however, it does not help if we cannot relate it to our times today and find its relevance in current society. It therefore leads us to the question, of what exactly is ego development as described in the preceding literature study in relation to today's everyday terminology. Has ego development come and gone with time or is it just as relevant today but only stated and termed differently? In the following section an attempt has been made to answer these questions.

2.3.1 The process of ego development

Ego development appears to include concepts and aspects such as major ego functions, namely: impulse control, delay capacity, interpersonal development morality, and self-awareness. Character development and cognitive functioning also seem to be included in the process of ego development (Von der Lippe, 2000:374).

According to Loevinger's theory, the family is the most influential factor as a context for ego development during the period of adolescence. It therefore highlights the impact of parental influence and family factors that could have an effect on ego development during adolescence (Von der Lippe, 2000:374-389).

Lê Xuân and Loevinger (1996) also describe the process of ego development by defining some characteristics of the ego developmental stages as stated in table 2.3.

Table 2.3 Some characteristics of levels of ego development

Level	Code	Characteristics		
		Impulse Control	Interpersonal Mode	Conscious Preoccupations
Impulsive	E2 (1-2)	Impulsive	Egocentric, dependent	Bodily feelings
Self-Protective	E3 (Delta)	Opportunistic	Manipulative, wary	"Trouble" control
Conformist	E4 (1-3)	Respect for rules	Cooperative, loyal	Appearances, behaviour
Self-Aware	E5 (1-3/4)	Exceptions allowable	Helpful, self-aware	Feelings, problems, adjustment
Conscientious	E6 (1-4)	Self-evaluated standards, self critical	Intense, responsible	Motives, traits, achievements
Individualistic	E7 (1-4/5)	Tolerant	Mutual	Individuality, development, roles
Autonomous	E8 (1-5)	Coping with conflict	Interdependent	Self-fulfillment, psychological causation
Integrated	E9 (1-6)		Cherishing individuality	Identity

Source: Le Xuân and Loevinger (1996:4)

2.3.2 The characteristics of ego development as they appear in recent literature

Further to the information and research done by Lê Xuân & Loevinger in 1996, research has been done in the recent decade relating to ego development, mostly in America and Europe. From that research a number of characteristics of ego development have been ascertained, and some of these results have been presented in this section, specifically relating to adolescence.

However, as I have journeyed through recent research and studies done by various authors on the topic of ego development, it appears that they have not clearly differentiated between the elements, causes and outcomes of ego development. It seems to be vague and concepts in these areas come across as being enmeshed with each other. I have therefore tried to structure the data under the following headings:

1. Elements of ego development according to various researchers
2. Causes of high and low ego strength
3. Results and outcomes of high and low ego strength
4. Behaviour that can be expected as a result of high and low ego strength

It should also be noted that some of the words used by the researchers, such as 'individuality' and 'positive body image' are broad and not defined clearly. It was therefore hoped that the research undertaken in the following chapters would provide clarity with regard to these terms that were loosely used.

2.3.2.1 Elements of ego development according to various recent researchers

According to Benner and Hill (1999:388) ego strength is a term used by psychodynamically oriented psychotherapists to express the level of effectiveness of which the ego achieves its various functions. The ego is seen as being the part of the personality that ascertains a relationship with the environment and world we live in. The group of functions which the ego comprises of is thought to include conscious perception of the environment, thought, feeling and action. The aspects of evaluating, judging, solution-forming, compromising, and defense-creating aspects of the personality which form the basis for reality-testing, intermediary synthesising, and the executive functions of the personality are also contained within the ego. As with the development from Freud to Loevinger it seems as if in the recent research a link also exists between (1) the ego as a regulator and (2) the ego as having the ability of character development. Good or high ego strength is characterised by the personality being capable of exhibiting such traits as commitment, responsibility, loyalty, perseverance, integrity, empathy, likeability, humour, playfulness, flexibility, curiosity, dedication, and courage. Low or poor ego strength is viewed as being where the personality has rigid and restrictive defenses which consume a lot of energy, as well as being dominated by unconscious factors.

The High School Personality Questionnaire (HSPQ) includes two factors, namely factor C and factor G, which describe elements of low ego and superego strength as well as high ego and superego strength. As described by Visser et al (2003:24-25) a low score on factor C gives evidence of emotional instability or low ego strength whereas a high score on the same factor is defined as emotional stability or high ego strength. Descriptions of the aspects of both poles can be found in table 2.4.

Table 2.4 Elements of factor C of the High School Personality Questionnaire

FACTOR C	
Low Score (-C) **EMOTIONAL INSTABILITY** **(Low ego strength)**	**High Score (+C)** **EMOTIONAL STABILITY** **(High ego strength)**
▪ Emotionally less stable, influenced by emotions ▪ Easily perturbed, changeable ▪ Becomes emotional when frustrated	▪ Emotionally stable, emotionally mature ▪ Realistic, calm ▪ Emotionally controlled

▪ Changeable in attitudes and interests. Becomes easily confused	▪ Stable, constant in interests. Steadfast
▪ Evades responsibilities, gives up easily	▪ Responsible, distinguishes between emotional needs and reality, adjusts to facts
▪ Tends to worry	▪ Calm, unruffled
▪ Gets into fights and problem situations	▪ Shows restraint in avoiding problem situations

Source: Visser et al (2003:24)

In summary, factor C is a measure of a person's level of dynamic integration, of personal and interpersonal facets, of emotional control, stability and the ability to handle frustration (Visser et al, 2003:25). It therefore seems as if the characteristics of high ego strength on the High Shool Personality Questionnaire's factor C as belonging more to the ego as regulator than to the ego as having the ability of character development. In other words it is more of a description of a regulator than a strong or weak character. Factor G on the other hand leans more toward character development, but also has elements of personal integrative functions in it, such as being frivolous versus emotionally disciplined.

Table 2.5 Elements of factor G of the High School Personality Questionnaire

FACTOR G	
Low Score (-G) **OPPORTUNISTIC** **(Low ego strength)**	**High Score (+G)** **CONSCIENTIOUS** **(High ego strength)**
▪ Opportunistic ▪ Does not accept general moral standards, disregards rules and obligations towards others ▪ Fickle ▪ Frivolous ▪ Self-indulgent ▪ Slack, indolent ▪ Undependable	▪ Dutiful, persevering, moralistic ▪ Concerned about moral standards and rules ▪ Consistent, persevering, determined ▪ Responsible ▪ Emotionally disciplined ▪ Orderly, conscientious ▪ Dutiful

Source: Visser et al (2003:28)

Factor G therefore is a measure of a person's conscientiousness, adjustment to and acceptance of social norms (Visser et al, 2003:28).

Erikson connected the ego to the social context, and in some of the recent research regarding ego development certain relationships have been found with the social context which can therefore be seen as being embedded in Erikson's theory of ego development.

The following relationships were found between ego development and the social context: Von der Lippe and Aundsen (1998:25-32) found that in Norwegian families ego development was related to the following elements:

- Connectedness between mother and daughter as well as between father and daughter.
- Maturity of conflict negotiation was positively related to the connectedness between mother and daughter, and negatively to in individuality between father and daughter.
- A different perspective was also expressed that women may see individuality not as a single goal in ego development or individuation, but rather that self-other differentiation of identity and interests may develop through close relationships, not separation.

When looking at the relation between involvement in structured activities and Erikson's ego strength in adolescence, Markstrom, Li, Blackshire, and Wilfong (2005:85-95) found the following aspects relating to ego development:

- Extracurricular activities of sport, student government, issue groups, and volunteerism were related to several ego strengths.
- Gender differences were also noticed, namely that the females had higher scores in the ego strengths of purpose, fidelity, love and care.
- Higher scores in hope, will, competence and wisdom were also associated with higher socio economic status of the individual's family, possibly due to the greater opportunities and resources available.

Findings revealed by Hauser and Safyer (1994:487-502) indicate that:

- The specific emotions of enthusiasm, affection, anxiety, and neutrality were directly associated with higher stages of ego development,
- Sadness and anger were inversely related to ego development.
- These results were evident in both genders.

▪ Greater emotional diversity and emotional conflict was associated with higher levels of ego development, possibly due to the individuals' awareness of differences amongst other individuals and in their interpersonal relationships.

DiNapoli's (2002:446-448) research provided the following information with regard to ego development elements:

▪ Girls appear to have higher-level ego development than boys.

▪ Self-perception, physical fitness, health status, and coordination contributed to higher level ego development.

▪ Adolescents with lower-level ego development were linked to negative efficacy expectations, low self-esteem, and reported greater feelings of depression.

▪ School connectedness was related to higher-level ego development.

▪ Social bonding, history of school suspensions and having to repeat a grade was related to lower-level ego development.

There has also been evidence that higher levels of ego-development were associated with greater nurturance, interpersonal sensitivity, valuing of individuality and uniqueness, empathy, as well as inner control (Henninghausen, Hauser, Billings, Schultz & Allen, 2004:29-44).

2.3.2.2 Causes of high and low ego strength

Markstrom et al (2005:85-95) noted that positive parenting and healthy parent-child relationships as being contributing factors and causes of ego strength. Evidence of this was due to the family being responsible for initiating the process of socialisation that the peers, schools and organisations can build on.

In a later study by Von der Lippe (2000:373-393) she found that "daughters' ego development was predicted by parental cognitive style and affective enabling, but not by constraining communications. Fathers' cognitive and affective enabling transactions and mothers' affective enabling transactions contributed to the explained variance in the adolescents' ego development when daughters' age, parents', socio-economic status, and ego development were controlled. Parents' ego levels were related to their enabling transactions, which also predicted daughters' ego levels, suggesting that in particular enabling parenting behaviour may play a mediating role. Mothers' challenging behaviour

toward daughters and parental autonomy from responding in kind to daughters' communications were also related to high ego levels in daughters".

Newman, Tellegen and Bouchard (1998:985-995) studied twins reared apart in order to examine the individual differences in ego development. Their study revealed that reared-apart twins were similar in trait levels of ego development, and that ego development appears to be considerably heritable. Both genetic as well as environmental factors therefore seem to play a role in ego development.

It therefore appears that the major causes of ego strength, whether they are high or low, as being related to the following aspects:

- Positive versus negative parenting
- Healthy versus unhealthy parent-child relationships
- Parental ego levels
- Parental communication style
- Parental behaviour and role-modeling
- Genetic versus environmental factors.

2.3.2.3 Results and outcomes of high and low ego strength

Evans, Brody and Noam (2001:79-86) observed in their study with female psychiatric patients that those with a positive body image had a better general sense of self-worth, and that physical appearance plays a vital role in depression and suicidal ideation during adolescence. More specifically that those with a positive body image had a lower risk of depression and suicidal ideation during adolescence. Higher ego development was associated with the following outcomes:

- Accounts of more positive overall self-worth
- Being more self-reflective
- Having an internalising cognitive style
- Ability to recognise strengths
- Greater competency

With regard to adaptation and identity development, Newman (2005:734-746) stated the following, "Although higher levels of ego development do not assure mental health, they do suggest greater flexibility in adapting to challenges in the broadening social context.

Identity development in adolescence also does not appear to be painless, or particularly easy."

Bursik and Martin (2006:1-18) pointed out that with regard to gender difference, although girls demonstrate higher ego development in the high school period, by the time adolescents leave the period of adolescence and move into young adulthood there appear to be no significant differences between the sexes. Additional important information from their study was that with increasing ego development, adolescents displayed:

- Increased internal academic locus of control
- A stronger learning orientation
- Diminished grade orientation
- Higher class rank.

Ego development was therefore seen as being an important predictor of academic achievement.

The results and outcomes of high and low ego strength could also possibly be related to the elements of both high and low ego strength. Therefore the characteristics listed in 2.3.2.1 may too be outcomes and results of ego strength or the lack thereof.

2.3.2.4 Behaviour that can be expected as a result of high and low ego strength

The impact of behavioural problems in childhood and adolescence in predicting the ego-level attainment of young adults was explored by Krettenauer, Ullrich, Hofmann, and Edelstein (2003:125-153). "The study adds evidence to the growing body of research that emphasises the pervasive role of self-control and self-regulation in shaping individuals' course of development. Problems of under or over control in childhood and adolescence do not only influence individual's educational or occupational careers but also predict qualitatively distinct modes of intellectual, emotional, and interpersonal functioning as described in Loevinger's theory." Their research demonstrated that:

- Behavioural problems during the childhood and adolescent years were inversely related to ego scores in early adulthood.
- It was also noted that aggression in childhood as well as late adolescence appeared to be negatively correlated with ego-level attainment in adulthood.

When looking at three broad areas of over control, under control and resiliency, the researchers established that:

- Individuals with under control tend to be related to the lowest ego-levels;
- Individuals with over control correlated with intermediate ego-levels; and
- Those individuals with resiliency (in other words neither over nor under control) were related to higher levels of ego development. Resiliency therefore also appears to be an element of high ego strength.

Popularity during adolescence and its correlation to ego development was researched by Allen, Porter and McFarland (2005:747-760). Their findings indicated that popular adolescents exhibited:

- Higher coexisting levels of ego development
- Secure attachment
- More adaptive relations with mothers and best friends

Data obtained also indicated that popular adolescents were inclined to be:

- More capable of controlling their impulses
- Seeing numerous perspectives within conflictual situations
- Integrating and balancing the needs of self and other

2.3.3   SUMMARY

In the different areas above I have structured the recent research results under the topics of the elements, causes, results and behaviour outcomes of ego development. One of the significant factors in the formation of high ego strength appears to be the family context, parental involvement, socialisation, as well as intrinsic motivation. A number of elements of both high and low ego strength were listed in order to give a clear understanding of the concept of high and low ego strength.

As stated in 2.3.2.1 it appears that the term ego development seems to have expanded and developed from Freud's view as the ego purely as a regulator, to a dual role where the ego is not only a regulator but also having the ability of character development.

2.4   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this second chapter has endeavoured to provide insight into the theory and definitions of three distinguished theorists with regard to ego development: namely, Sigmund Freud, Erik Erikson and Jane Loevinger. The literature presented has attempted to give a thorough yet understandable understanding of ego and ego development. Research and studies pertaining to these topics, specifically relating to the period of young adolescence, has been referenced. The topic of ego development and the research thereof which I have come across appears to be mainly focused on adults and adolescent females who reside in Northern America and in Europe. There did not appear to be research conducted on adolescents residing in Africa with respect to ego development.

Apart from the psychodynamic use of the ego as regulator of the personality which is still seen in tests such as the High School Personality Questionnaire and which is still used by people who work from this perspective, recent literature mostly links ego to character development, as can be seen in the previous section 2.3.

In Chapter Three I aspired to provide further literature with regard to the holistic development of young adolescents: including the social, emotional, cognitive, moral, and religious domains, in order to present the full picture of early adolescence and how ego development corresponds and relates to this specific period of life.

CHAPTER 3

THE DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL OF ADOLESCENCE AND ITS RELATION TO EGO DEVELOPMENT

Learning is acquired by reading books;
but the much more necessary learning,
the knowledge of the world,
is only to be acquired by reading man,
and studying all the various editions of them.

Philip Dormer Chesterfield

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In chapter two the developmental theories and viewpoints of Freud, Erikson, Loevinger, and Maslow were discussed specifically regarding the concept of ego development, and in addition ego development according to recent research was also conferred. In this chapter the additional perspectives were explored in order to gain further insight into the various developmental tasks and aspects of adolescence. The chapter has followed the structure of a broader layout with regard to the developmental levels where developmental criteria have been included according to different authors. The developmental domains of physical, cognitive, social, emotional, moral and religious development were explored in order to gain a detailed and holistic perspective of the adolescent life world from a theoretical point of view.

3.2   DEVELOPMENT IN ADOLESCENCE

The term adolescence originated from the Latin verb *adolescere* which means 'to grow up' or 'to grow to adulthood'. It therefore implies the developmental phase in the human life cycle that is positioned between childhood and adulthood. The onset of adolescence is normally identified with its distinguished physical and physiological changes such as growth acceleration, functioning of reproductive organs, sexual maturity, and secondary sexual characteristics are evident (Gouws, Kruger & Burger, 2000:2).

Adolescents and their development should be viewed holistically. However, it is of vital importance to remember that each adolescent is a unique individual who has intellectual, emotional, moral, religious, physical and social qualities which develop at different rates, in different ways and at different stages of life. The developmental areas in adolescence described in the following chapter are therefore broad guidelines of these developing areas. Here it should be noted that these different aspects develop simultaneously and cannot be separated in reality. All of these developmental areas are dependent on each other and have an influential factor on the other developing domains (Gouws et al, 2000:4).

Berk (2005:627) provides the broad milestones in development in adolescence in the table below. This chapter has provided more extensive detail of these areas.

Table 3.1 Milestones development in adolescence

Age	Physical	Cognitive	Language	Emotional/Social
14 to 16 years	▪ If a girl, completes growth spurt. ▪ If a boy, reaches peak and then completes growth spurt. ▪ If a boy, voice deepens. ▪ If a boy, adds muscle while body fat declines. ▪ May have had sexual intercourse. ▪ If a boy, motor performance increases dramatically.	▪ Is likely to show formal operational reasoning on familiar tasks. ▪ Masters the components of formal operational reasoning in sequential order on different types of tasks. ▪ Becomes less self-conscious and self-focused. ▪ Becomes better at planning and decision making. ▪ Evaluates vocational options in terms of interests, abilities, and values.	▪ Can read and interpret adult literary works.	▪ Combines features of the self into an organised self-concept. ▪ Self-esteem differentiates. ▪ Self-esteem tends to rise. ▪ Is likely to be constructing an identity. ▪ Is likely to engage in societal perspective taking. ▪ Is likely to have a conventional moral orientation. ▪ Gender stereotyping may decline. ▪ Has probably started dating. ▪ Conformity to peer pressure may decline.

Source: Berk (2005:627)

3.2.1   Physical development in adolescence

Physical development includes the growth of the body, changes in proportion in the different body parts, as well as changes in the internal structure and functioning of the body. With regard to the adolescent, Gouws et al (2000:5) describe physical development as including the following:

- Growth acceleration or the growth spurt
- Primary and secondary sexual characteristics developing
- Motor development
- Impact of early or late bodily development, especially with regard to body image
- Menstruation, erection, ejaculation, and nightly semen emissions
- Breaking of the male voice
- Appearance of acne

Freud's ego drives were linked with the individual's basic physical needs and survival. These ego drives were aimed at gratifying the individual's fundamental life needs such as breathing, eating, and drinking (Meyer et al, 1997:64). Freud therefore appears to have linked the ego with the physical development and needs in the individual. According to Freud adolescence is described as being the genital stage within his psychosexual stages, and according to Freud this stage begins with puberty and proceeds until old age. Adolescents are then required to deal with the sexual energy by investing it in a variety of socially acceptable activities such as friendships, extracurricular activities, and preparation for the future career world (Corey, 2005:63). Freud therefore sees the ego as having a strong regulating role during adolescence where there appears to be heightened sexual energy.

3.2.1.1 Characteristics of the physical growth

The changes that occur during puberty are very vivid and striking as the body of a school-age child transforms into that of a full-grown adult within a few years. Hormonal processes that order pubertal growth takes place genetically, and females advance in puberty approximately two years prior to their male counterparts (Berk, 2005:517).

The initial outward sign of puberty that one can notice is the rapid increasing height and weight of the adolescent, which is also known as the growth spurt. Females are normally

taller and heavier during early adolescence, and during middle adolescence it is the males who then exceed the females. With regard to the physical body proportions, the adolescent's hands, legs and feet accelerate in growth, and then later the torso. This is often why some adolescents appear to look out of proportion. Hormonal factors also influence the body proportions, where the male shoulders broaden in relation to the hips. The opposite takes place with the female, where her hips broaden in relation to her shoulders and waist (Berk, 2005:519).

Together with puberty there is a steady improvement in the gross motor performance of the adolescent, however there is a difference between males and females. For females the growth is slow and gradual, whereas for males there is a noticeable surge in their strength, speed, and endurance that continues throughout adolescence. For the males, competence at sports is closely related to peer admiration and self-esteem. Intraschool and intramural athletics provide the opportunity for important lessons in competition, assertiveness, problem-solving and teamwork. Regular and continual physical activity also has the added benefits of enhanced functioning of the immune system, cardiovascular health, as well as psychological well-being (Berk, 2005:520).

3.2.1.2 Sexual maturation

As the physical features of the adolescent develop, so does the sexual functioning. Primary sexual characteristics including the reproductive organs (ovaries, uterus, vagina, penis, scrotum, testes), as well as secondary sexual characteristics (breast development, pubic hair) which are visible on the outside of the body that indicate additional signs of sexual maturity develop. The menarche or first menstruation also occurs in females. For males includes the enlargement of the testes, changes in the texture and colour of the scrotum, pubic hair emerges, as well the penis beginning to enlarge (Berk, 2005:521).

Differences in pubertal growth can be due to heredity, as well as nutrition and exercise. In females, a sudden increase in body weight and fat may activate sexual maturation. Therefore females who take part in demanding athletic training or those who eat very little usually experience later puberty. Physical health also plays a role in the onset and rate of pubertal growth, as the menarche is normally delayed where there is malnutrition,

poor health care, poor sanitation, or infectious disease. Therefore there appears to be joint roles in both heredity and environment in pubertal growth (Berk, 2005:523).

The psychological impact of these pubertal events can be experienced both negatively and positively. The reaction of the adolescent usually depends on the prior knowledge they have, as well as the support they receive from their family members and peers, and cultural attitudes towards puberty and sexuality. Where a female has not had prior information or knowledge about the onset of the menarche, this could be experienced as being shocking, disturbing and shameful. As for girls, if their male counterparts do not receive similar prior knowledge and support, their spermarche may also be experienced with mixed feelings. In general, it appears that females receive more social support than males with regard to the changes of puberty. Females also tend to share with a friend about their menarche, whereas males tend to keep their pubertal changes, specifically the spermache, to themselves (Berk, 2005:526).

Puberty is also able to influence the emotional state and social behaviour of adolescents. It is commonly believed that puberty triggers adolescent moodiness and the desire for greater physical and psychological independence. However, according to Larson and Ham (1993), the negative moods of adolescents could be linked to a greater number of negative life events, including difficulties with parents, disciplinary actions at school, breaking up with a girlfriend or boyfriend, et cetera. It was evident in their study that negative events increased progressively from childhood to adolescence, and adolescents reacted to this with greater emotion than did children. As expressed by Berk (2005:528), adolescence seems to be a period of "deeper valleys and higher peaks in emotional experience due to both biological and situational forces."

The parent-child relationship appears to rise in tension in the adolescent years. Contributing factors could include the adolescent's new power of reasoning as well as the difference between the parents' effort to protect their adolescent child, while the adolescent seeks to take on greater responsibilities, and independence (Berk, 2005: 529).

Early and late pubertal timing also has an influential psychological factor. This is also linked to society's view of what is seen as being attractive. Benner and Hill (1999:153)

define body image as "the mental representation of one's physical body". This mental representation includes perceptions individuals have of their physical characteristics as well as their attitudes regarding their bodies. With regard to body image of adolescents, the majority of females would like to be thinner which is therefore in line with late maturing females rather than those who are early maturing. Males experience the opposite where early maturation is linked with a positive body image whereas late maturation is linked with more dissatisfaction with the physical body image. It is therefore evident that the adolescent's satisfaction with their appearance strongly impacts on their self-esteem and psychological well-being (Berk, 2005:530).

Evans et al (2001:84-85) noted that females with a positive body image had a better sense of self-worth. They also found that physical appearance plays a significant role in depression and suicidal ideation in adolescence. The results were consequently that higher ego development or ego strength was associated with a stronger overall sense of positive self-worth. DiNaploli (2002:446-448) also found that the physical fitness, health status and coordination abilities of adolescents appear to contribute to higher ego development. Newman et al (1998:985-995) had support from their study that ego development has genetic influences and factors. Physical characteristics and development seems to therefore be closely linked to ego development.

3.2.2   Cognitive development in adolescence

Cognitive development is an extensive field that includes features such as intelligence, the measure of intelligence, the formal-operational phase, as well as the development of thinking skills and creativity. It is also associated with all the other areas of a person's ability to grow in knowledge, as well as being closely linked to the sensory perceptual development, communication, and the general ability to process information (Gouws et al, 2000:5).

Piaget (1971) viewed that the development of the child's cognitive processes followed an orderly design. He divided the child's growth into four developmental phases, with the highest level occurring during adolescence (Gouws et al, 2000:39). Piaget described adolescents as reaching the stage of formal operational thought which is where abstract, scientific thinking develops. Adolescents therefore employ hypothetico-deductive reasoning where when faced with a problem they think of all the possibilities and then

test them in a systematic way. Propositional thought also develops where the adolescents are able to evaluate the logical aspect of verbal statements separate from real-world circumstances (Berk, 2005:581). According to Piaget an operation is defined as being a type of action which can be carried out directly, in the manipulation of objects, or internally where its categories or propositions are manipulated. An operation is therefore viewed as being internalised and reversible (Piaget, 1958:8). Table 3.2 gives a description of Piaget's phases in the cognitive development of the child.

Table 3.2 Piaget's phases in the cognitive development of the child

Phase	Age	Characteristics
Sensory-motor phase	+- 0 to 2 years	- Functioning changes from a reflex level to a goal-directed activity - Characterised by sensory and motor adaptations - Begins to make use of memory, thought & intimidation
Pre-operational phase	+- 2 to 7 years	- Displays the ability to represent matters intellectually or symbolically - Language development is central - Does not readily see other people's point of view - Approximate 4 to 7 years stage of intuitive thought
Concrete-operational phase	+- 7 to 11 years	- Is capable of cognitive acts concerning concrete, real matters - Understands laws of conservation and is able to classify and seriate - Understands reversibility
Formal-operational phase	+- 11 to 15 years	- Is capable of carrying out formal operations, can think abstractly and logically - Can handle possibilities and hypotheses; thoughts are more scientific - Develops concerns about social issues and identity

Source: Gouws et al (2000:39)
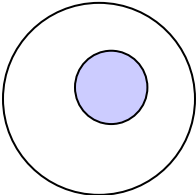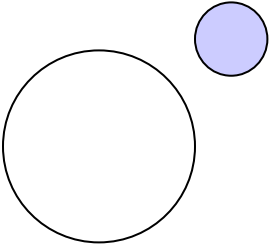
Adolescents are therefore able to use abstract thought. These new abstract reasoning abilities may result in more argumentative, idealistic and critical behaviour. Adolescents are more prone to think of themselves and two distorted images may result from this: the imaginary audience, and the personal fable. The imaginary audience is the adolescents' belief that they are the focus of attention and concern of everyone else, whereas the personal fable is the inflated opinion of their own importance where they may feel that they are special and unique due to the opinion that everyone is observing and thinking of them (Berk, 2005:582). There is also egocentricity in the adolescent's way of thinking, in respect of being centered on the self. This too is linked with the imaginary audience and the personal fable (Gerdes, 1998:154)

With regard to language development adolescents tend to add many abstract words to their vocabulary. Their ability to define these words increases with clarity and accuracy. Adolescents are also better able to understand irony, sarcasm and figurative language. The capacity to use more complex grammatical constructions is also evident (Berk, 2005:582).

3.2.2.1 Motivation

There are two types of motivation, namely intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is established in a person's will to be enriched inwardly, whereas extrinsic motivation is where a person is compelled to take action due to a prompting by someone or something else, in order to receive a reward from someone else, or to impress or satisfy someone else. In childhood prominence is placed on extrinsic motivation. However, in adolescence the individual is exposed to extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation enables the person to take responsibility for their own actions. Both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation has their place, and a balance between these two types of motivation should be sought (Gouws et al, 2000:61). Table 3.3 gives a more detailed description of intrinsically and extrinsically motivated people.

Table 3.3 Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation	
Intrinsically motivated people …	Extrinsically motivated people …
- Anticipate realisation of the goal concerned. - Want to enrich themselves inwardly and are goal-directed. - Concentrate on the learning task. - Persevere and practice. - Are interested in the object or theme and in independent study. - Regard learning as a meaningful activity; they have intellectual curiosity. - Have a strong will to carry out the task successfully. - Set their own standards. - Do not experience unsuccessful first attempts as failures; they make future attempts. - Can study with the necessary will-power and perseverance. - Are prepared to develop their talents through study. - Study purposively and with the necessary enthusiasm, and pursue realistic study objectives. - Are prepared to invest optimal effort in their studies, have a positive attitude towards study and employ responsible study methods. - Can appreciate the value and meaning of their studies for the pursuit of their careers in later life.	- Tend to be uncertain and doubt their own abilities, and are not creative. - Have no desire to know more about a matter than is necessary (they want only the basic knowledge); they display a pronounced sense of uninvolvement and do no more than is expected of them. - Tend to be pessimistic about their chances of success. - Mainly seek to realise short-term goals. - Rely heavily on the teacher's assistance and on other factors, such as recognition, approval and encouragement. Their work performance depends mainly on external pressure or encouragement. - Are often anxious and tense owing to the danger of possible failure. - Allow or even require that another person or circumstance determines their standard for them as well as the degree to which they will be successful at their studies. - Strive for social approval from their peers, teachers, parents and other adults.

Source: Berk (2005:61)

Connections between cognitive development and ego development also appear to be evident. Bursik and Martin (2006:1-18) found that ego development is an important predictor of academic achievement. Henninghausen et al (2004:29-44) indicated that higher levels of ego development were associated with inner control. Meyer et al (1997:209) pointed out that according Erikson the individual uses their creative abilities in order to solve the development crises that one is faced with and have it result in ego strength. Loevinger's theory (1976:4) included the alteration of structures including the cognitive element as being important in ego development. Character development and cognitive development were seen as being part of the process of ego development according to Von der Lippe (2000:373-393). Evans et al (2001:79-86) also agreed that persons with higher ego development were noted as having an internalising cognitive style as well as the ability to recognise strengths and having greater competency. Cognitive development therefore seems to go hand in hand with ego development.

3.2.3   Social development in adolescence

The social development of adolescents normally encompasses their relationships with other people, the changes in these relationships, as well as the impact of society and significant persons on the individual. These relations include that with their parents, siblings, peers, friends, teachers, as well as other adults. Other areas of social development in adolescence laid out by Gouws et al (2000:6) include:

- Parental style and the impact thereof
- The struggle for independence
- Peer group formation
- Peer group pressure and conformity
- Relationships with friends of the same and opposite sex
- Personality development
- Identity and self-concept formation

3.2.3.1 Social relationships

Family relationships in adolescence are impacted by the parental style where the ideal is for there to be a balance between connection and separation between adolescents and their parents. It is vital for parents to maintain an authoritative role and at the same time adapt the family interaction in order to meet their child's need for more autonomy. As adolescents are more critical in their thinking, they often question and challenge their

parents' parental authority which may cause conflicts. Berk (2005:624) also noted that family circumstances have an impact on the parent-adolescent relationship where parents who are financially secure, not overloaded with job pressures and content with their marriages tend to provide their children with the support, guidance and autonomy they need. Adolescents who have positive, warm and supportive parents also tend to have stronger sibling ties. Sibling relationships in adolescence may be less intense as the peer group takes a stronger place, however this does not necessarily mean that the attachment with one's peers dissolves. Siblings can provide the close friendship and support that peers cannot, especially when the individual finds it difficult to make friends.

The adolescent spends a lot of time with their peer group in the school setting and often after school hours. Peers therefore have an important role in the self-concept formation of the individual. The peer group provides the adolescent with the channel to gradually grow in independence from their parents, as well as give feedback about the individual's personality, appearance and behaviour and therefore contributes to the adolescent's identity formation. Social acceptance, support, friendship and camaraderie are provided through the role the peer group plays as a socialising agent. New roles are also able to be explored and experimented within the group. Competition is also a natural occurrence in the peer group which if done in a healthy and moderate way can be a positive life skill. Interaction with different races, socio-economic classes, and cultures enables the adolescent to grow in their social skills. During adolescence the individual also tends to conform to his or her peer group. If the norms and values of the group correspond with the individual's parents this can have a very positive outcome, however if the norms and values go against those of the individual's parents' this could let to a lot of conflict (Gouws et al, 2000:76).

Relations with friends also play a vital role in adolescence where friends help deal with the effects of stress, provide a sense of self-worth, teach social and personal skills, and provide a listening ear where one finds understanding, empathy, support and acceptance. There are gender differences between males and female same-sex friendships. For males the friendship is normally less intense and based on common activities and interests, where for females friendships are normally more intense, person-directed and emotional (Gouws et al, 2000:79).

Heterosexual relationships are a major occurrence in the social development of the adolescent where there is more interest in the opposite gender than in previous years. For males, contact with females is normally initially teasing that may be associated with some physical contact such as grabbing books et cetera. Females normally react in the culturally predictable manner where they yell and run after the boy to get back at him. Initial attempts of communication with the opposite sex are therefore rather awkward. As time progresses, the communication becomes more sophisticated and mature where things are done in a calm and self-assured manner. The dating process also normally begins during adolescence where the relations between genders normally become more serious, intimate and consistent, providing experiences to base the choice of a marriage partner in later years. Heterosexual relations can therefore have both positive and negative experiences, where heartache, pain and stress may be evident as well as the dangers of early sexual activity, premarital sex, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases (Gouws et al, 2000:80).

3.2.3.2 Self-concept and self-esteem

There are also changes in the self-concept and self-esteem during adolescence. Benner and Hill (1999:1075) describe the self-concept as "the constellation of perceptions and attitudes that a person maintains with regard to him or herself. To speak of the self-concept in the singular is somewhat misleading since there are many different selves or more accurately aspects of the self that are perceived and evaluated," such as the physical self, personal self, family self, social self, and moral self. Benner and Hill (1999:1084) continue to describe self-esteem as an aspect of the self-concept, which is "the ability to properly evaluate and accurately present oneself which involves a realistic assessment of personal strengths and weaknesses, positive and negative qualities, and true potentials and limitations".

As the adolescents' ability for abstract thought enhances and their self-descriptions also become more organised and constant, their personal and moral norms develop as significant themes. For the majority of adolescents their self-esteem increases, although it is sensitive to the feedback received from others. There are a number of factors that could impact on the adolescents' self-esteem and therefore this varies between each individual. Aspects such as academic competence, family relation, peer group acceptance and physical appearance all impact the self-esteem (Berk, 2005:623). At this

point one may question what the difference is between self-concept and ego development. Self-concept can be described as the evaluative aspect of the self which can be positive or negative, and realistic or unrealistic. On the other hand, ego development consists of the dual aspect of being a regulating function, and on the other as character development.

3.2.3.3 Identity development

As discussed in chapter two, the major personality achievement according to Erikson is the successful resolution of the psychological conflict of identity versus identity confusion. The ideal resolution for the adolescent is to create a solid self-definition that comprises of self-chosen values and goals (Corey, 2005:63).

Benner and Hill (1999:604) described identity as the answer to the question of 'Who am I?' Erikson (1968) suggested that identity involves a sense of personal uniqueness and self-continuity as well as identification with group ideals. Erikson (1968:22-23) illustrated the identity development process in that it:

> "… employs a process of simultaneous reflection and observation, a process taking place on all levels of mental functioning, by which the individual judges oneself in the light of what he or she perceives to be the way in which others judge him or her in comparison to oneself and to a typology significant to him or her. While he or she judges their way of judging him or her in the light of how he or she perceives him or herself in comparison to others and to types that have become relevant to him or her … Furthermore, the process described is always changing and developing: at its best it is a process of increasing differentiation, and it becomes ever more inclusive as the individual grows aware of a widening circle of others significant to him, from the maternal person to mankind."

For Erikson (1968:27) the crisis of identity formation was evident in the adolescent years. During the phase of adolescence, the individual experiences a period where he or she is free of adult responsibilities and are able to explore social roles and personality styles, as well as make important decisions, integrate new experiences, past experiences and goals into a consistent and rational sense of the self or who one is. This idealistic commitment is a central aspect in the identity crisis because if one takes on

and accepts a life philosophy this provides a framework for the process of other decisions that need to be made. It is therefore evident that religious development and a religious or spiritual worldview have a large impact on decision-making and identity formation (Benner & Hill, 1999:604).

The question 'Who am I' would bring about a number of responses, and in the same manner there is more than one type of identity. Adolescents are faced with the task of forming identities with regard to their sex role identity, their career identity, their cultural or ethnic identity, et cetera. Identification can also be defined as an activity that one is involved in with the goal of reconciling the self-image an individual has with their ideal image. Adolescents may over-identify with other members of the peer group or with other admired persons such as media personalities, and in the process momentarily lose touch with their own identity. The result is normally that the adolescent will transfer their attention and energies to identification models that represent the values that they aim to have as their own in the future (Gouws et al, 2000:90).

Erikson clearly noted that ego development does not and cannot take place without social development (Erikson, 1997:255). He saw society as having a large social impact on the individual throughout the lifespan and in adolescence this refers specifically to the individual's positive resolution of identity formation versus identity confusion (Corey, 2005:62). The environment was therefore seen by Erikson (1968:224) as being intertwined with the individual person and the social environment being pivotal in optimal ego development. More recent research by Von der Lippe (2000:373-393) noted that Loevinger also stated that family was the most influential factor as a context for development, specifically during adolescence. Parental influence and family factors therefore are seen as being fundamental factors in ego development during adolescence. Newman et al (1998:985-995) confirmed through their study with identical twins that environmental factors play a role in ego development. Markstrom et al (2005:85-95) established in their study that both the social aspects of interacting with peers and being involved in structured activities, as well positive and healthy parenting as being influential and contributing factors of socialisation that are interdependent in the development of the ego.

3.2.4   Emotional, moral and religious development in adolescence

Although this domain has been left until the end, the emotional, moral and religious development in adolescence is an extremely important aspect of the adolescent's global development. These areas have a very close link to all the other developmental domains and can have a large impact on various aspects, such as progress to independence, identity formation, et cetera. The moral development includes the acquisition of values and norms that are then used to distinguish between socially acceptable and unacceptable behaviour (Gouws et al, 2000:6). Areas of emotional, moral and religious development in adolescence include:

- Emotional maturity
- Heightened emotionality
- The role of the peer group, media and the school in moral development
- Religious awakening, doubt and revival
- The need for religion in adolescence
- Acquiring values

3.2.4.1 Emotional development

Adolescents experience a number of emotional changes during the period of adolescence due to their physical, cognitive, personality, and social growth. The higher hormonal levels in adolescence may also impact the emotional development and expression of the adolescents. Different situations appear to create different emotional responses from adolescents and this could be a contributing factor in the emotionality they express. For example they could be happy and cheerful when spending time with friends and then irritated and depressed in the classroom situation. As discussed in 3.2.2 adolescents are a lot more self-focused and this attention that they direct towards themselves could also contribute to them experiencing more feelings of anxiety, guilt, embarrassment, and perfectionism. Together with this self-focus, the adolescent is also more inclined to show detail and insight into their own and other people's emotions due to their abstract and complex thoughts. Adolescents are therefore more empathetic towards others as well more aware of their own feelings (Louw, Ede & Louw, 1998:434).

The heightened emotionality in adolescence is also in response to the interaction and adjustment to the environment as they desire independence and also have a change in relations with their parents due to these adjustments. Adolescents need to form an

identity as they move from childhood toward adulthood, as well as cope with the emerging sexual identity and also develop a personal internalised value system. Other stress factors that adolescents are faced with and that could naturally contribute to their heightened emotionality include demands of society, peer-group pressure, relations with the opposite sex, and academic demands at school (Gouws et al, 2000:96).

Bétoin (2005:4) describes the emotional needs of adolescents being such as a pendulum where they maneuver from the one side of independence to the opposite of closeness. As mentioned above adolescents are also faced with a number of anxieties with the different stresses they experience. Parental involvement is still needed and wanted during adolescence, however interference from parents is not necessarily welcome. With all the changes that take place during adolescence the individual may find themselves responding to these unpredictable situations with uncertainty. However, as the years progress during adolescence the adolescent moves to become more relaxed in themselves and generally grows in confidence in their own abilities and hope for the future.

The emotional development is interlinked with all the various aspects of development and maturity that takes places during adolescence. With each new experience, the individual is able to grow in emotional maturity.

In recent research by Hauser and Safyer (1994:487-502) there was evidence that greater emotional diversity and emotional conflict was associated with higher levels of ego development. Certain emotions such as enthusiasm, affection, anxiety and neutrality were linked with higher levels of ego development. DiNapoli (2002:446-448) found that self-perception was associated with development of the ego, and Henninghausen et al (2004:29-44) added that higher levels of ego development were related to greater nurturance, interpersonal sensitivity, empathy, as well as valuing individuality and uniqueness. Emotional development therefore appears to have a very strong link to ego development.

3.2.4.2 Moral development
Piaget recognised two stages of moral understanding, namely heteronomous morality and autonomous morality. Heteronomous morality is where moral rules are understood

to be fixed commands of authority figures and is normally evident in children between the ages of five and ten years, where autonomous morality is where rules are seen as being flexible and socially consented principles and occurs in children who are ten years and older (Berk, 2005:623).

Kohlberg (in Gouws et al, 2000:104) on the other hand extends Piaget's theory of moral development to view it is a gradual process that continues beyond childhood into adolescence and adulthood. Kohlberg described moral development as progressing through three levels which each include two stages. The three levels and six stages are described in table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Kohlberg's moral levels and stages

Level	Stages
Level One: (4 to 10 years) **Preconventional morality** The emphasis is on external control where the standards of others are adopted in order to gain rewards or avoid punishment	**Stage 1**: Obedience as manner of avoiding punishment **Stage 2**: Instrumental objectives. Good behaviour is maintained in order to receive reward.
Level Two: (10 to 13 years) **Conventional morality** In this level children want to please others. Obedience to standards that are maintained by others and adhering to these standards in order to be viewed as 'good' by the people they like.	**Stage 3:** Obedience in order to secure social approval. 'Good boy/girl' morality. Conformity. **Stage 4**: Dutiful and respects social order. Still has rigid ideas regarding rules.
Level Three: (from the 13th year or early adulthood, or never) **Post-conventional morality** This level is characterised by the attainment of authentic morality. Control over behaviour becomes an internal process and maintaining right and wrong standards.	**Stage 5**: Law-abiding and has a sense of contractual obligation to work and family. Starts to think rationally. Behaviour is determined in order to promote the common good. **Stage 6**: Morality of universal as well as reasoning about ethical principles. There is adherence to personal principles and standards, as well as obedience to principles of ones own conscience.

Source: Gouws et al (2000:104)

Moral development is viewed to be a slow and gradual process. With regard to the period of adolescence, the adolescent's reasoning at the first and second stage decreases during adolescence. Stage three reasoning increases through middle adolescence and then also declines. The adolescent then moves to stage four reasoning during the remaining adolescent years (Berk, 2005:598). It should also be kept in mind that age is not the cause of a change in moral judgment and reasoning; it is rather a change in the cognitive, affective, social and additional developmental changes that occurs which impacts on the individual's moral development (Gouws et al, 2000:104).

Table 3.5 provides the relation between Kohlberg's moral stages and Piaget's cognitive stages. It should however be kept in mind that Kohlberg's theory emphasises justice rather than caring as being the moral ideal (Berk, 2005:597).

Table 3.5 Relationship among Kohlberg's moral and Piaget's cognitive stages

Kohlberg's Moral Stage	Description	Piaget's Cognitive Stage
▪ Punishment and obedience orientation	▪ Fear of authority and avoidance of punishment	▪ Preoperational, early concrete operational
▪ Instrumental purpose orientation	▪ Satisfying personal needs	▪ Concrete operational
▪ "Good boy-good girl" orientation	▪ Maintaining the affection and approval of friends & relatives	▪ Early formal operational
▪ Social-order-maintaining orientation	▪ A duty to uphold laws and rules for their own sake	▪ Formal operational
▪ Social contract orientation	▪ Fair procedures for changing laws to protect individual rights and the needs of the majority	
▪ Universal ethical principle orientation	▪ Abstract universal principles that are valid for all humanity	

Source: Berk (2005:596)

There are a number of factors that can influence the adolescent's maturity of moral reasoning. Such aspects include the individual's personality, social experiences, child-rearing practices which the individual has been raised under, interaction with peers, education, as well as cultural features. In agreement with Kohlberg, it appears that these experiences provide the adolescent with cognitive challenges that motivate them to ponder about moral dilemmas in complex ways (Berk, 2005:599).

A number of theorists have found a connection between ego development and moral development. Freud saw the ego ideal as promoting moral behaviour and the conscience functioning according to moral principles as well as punishing the person by bringing about guilt feelings should they have immoral wishes or behaviour (Meyer et al, 2007:61). On the other hand Loevinger's stages of ego development appear to be closely related to Kohlberg's moral stages. As Loevinger's stages progressed in development of the ego, a number of aspects from Kohlberg's theory or moral development seem to be closely correlated.

3.2.4.3 Religious development

The cognitive development and more specifically the capacity for abstract thought that develops during adolescence simultaneously has an impact on the religious development which takes place. The ability to think abstractly enables the individual to move from thinking in a concrete level to that of one where spiritual matters are better able to be grasped and understood. Adolescence is therefore a stage where there is a search for spiritual fulfillment where deep questions can be answered and the meaning or purpose of life can be sought. There also appears to be more tolerance regarding different religious viewpoints and beliefs (Gouws et al, 2000:116).

Religious doubt may also take place during adolescence where the critical thought that develops in adolescence is focused on the religious aspects. Here the individual may question and be disillusioned by their family members or other members of society, who are inconsistent in practicing their religion. An example would be a parent who does not go to church but who forces their child to do so, and who 'does not practise what he or she preaches'. Figure 3.1 provides a schematic representation of the possible results of the critical approach and mindset of the adolescent where the individual may turn them away from religious beliefs where they reject religion, or lead them to turn to an

alternative religion, or empower them to continue with their religious quest, or alternatively to renew their faith in God and not man (Gouws et al, 2000:117).

Figure 3.1 Possible results of religious doubt

Source: Gouws et al (2000:117)

Religious involvement may therefore increase or decrease in adolescence, depending on the individual and their experiences. Berk (2005:623) noted that young people who are part of a religious community are advantaged in their moral values and behaviours as religious association and membership is associated with community service, responsible behaviour, and is avoidant of bad behaviour and misconduct. Religious involvement and development therefore appears to have a positive impact on the individual.

3.2.5   Developmental factors

Human development and the development in adolescence are influenced by a number of factors. It must always be kept in mind that the areas of development that have been discussed in this chapter take place simultaneously and are interdependent; what happens in one domain of development has repercussions and an impact on the other developmental domains. Figure 3.2 illustrates a number of factors that influence the development that takes place, and reminds us to keep perspective of the person developing as a whole (Louw et al, 1998:18).

Figure 3.2 Influential factors of human development


```
                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                    │ Physiological Influences        │
                    │ - Genes                         │
                    │ - Maturation                    │
                    │ - Constitution (physique, health,│
                    │ nervous system, endocrine       │
                    │ system)                         │
                    └─────────────────────────────────┘
                                   │
                                   ▼
┌──────────────────────────────┐          ┌──────────────────────────────┐
│ Environmental Influences     │          │ Personal Influences          │
│                              │          │ - Personality characteristics│
│ Social Interaction           │          │ (habits, intelligence, needs)│
│ - Socialisation (family, peers,│  ( Individual )   - Self-concept    │
│ school, work, groups, culture)│  →          ←      - Values          │
│                              │          │ - Attitudes                  │
│ Physical                     │          │ - Decisions                  │
│ - Climate                    │          │ - Future goals               │
│ - Population density         │          └──────────────────────────────┘
│ - Geographical environment   │
│                              │
│ Events                       │
│ - Technological              │
│ - Political and social changes│
└──────────────────────────────┘
                                   ▲
                    ┌─────────────────────────────────┐
                    │ Metaphysical Influences         │
                    │ - "Life"                        │
                    │ - God                           │
                    └─────────────────────────────────┘
```

Source: Louw et al (1998:18)

3.3   CONCLUSION

In conclusion, chapter three has aimed to provide an indication of the different developmental aspects and growth that occurs during adolescence. This enables the reader to view the adolescent and their ego development as well as personality development in perspective to the various other developmental aspects, in other words, social, emotional, cognitive and physical aspects. As noted in the chapter, each adolescent is a unique individual who would develop in his or her own manner and timing and that should always be kept in mind. However, there are broad and common developmental aspects that apply to the majority of adolescents and this provides one with an indication of what the general life world of the adolescent entails. It therefore also enables us to better understand the period of adolescence as well as the adolescents which have been researched in this study. One cannot look at how the ego develops in

adolescence without having a picture of this developmental stage and all the interrelated features and influential factors in mind.

The chapter clearly indicates the close and interdependent relationship ego development has together with the other developmental aspects that occur during adolescence. It is apparent that ego development does not take place in isolation but has an integral part and is an integral factor in the holistic development of the adolescent.

Chapter four which follows presents the research design and methodology of the empirical investigation that was utilised in order to explore the phenomenon of ego development among selected adolescent learners.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Never regard study as a duty

but as the enviable opportunity to learn to know

the liberating influence of beauty in the realm of the spirit

of your own personal joy and to the profit of the community

To which your later work belongs.

Albert Einstein

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The research design is a pivotal part in the outcome of quality data and information in an empirical study. Following from the previous literature study, it is clear that the phenomenon of ego development in adolescent learners appears to be a complex task to measure and investigate.

My perception of the measure of ego development in adolescent learners is that it is an area which has been and is neglected at present. Moreover, I maintain that the ego strength of learners in the adolescent years, specifically grade nine learners, is of a low strength due to the current demands and pressures they are faced with, resulting from a lack of family involvement, unconditional acceptance, as well as high standards to fulfill in the demands of daily life. Therefore, this study poses the following research question: *What is the role and functioning of ego development in grade nine learners, and what are the implications thereof on personality development?*

In searching for an answer to the above research problem, the following sub-problems were attended to in this study:

- What are the usages and meanings in the past and present of the term 'ego development'?
- Why is the concept of ego development infrequently used today?
- What is the developmental level of the young adolescent?
- How does the ego develop?
- What is the importance of ego development in psychology of education?
- What is the measure of ego development of a selected group of young adolescents?
- What does the life world of two young adolescents reveal about their ego development?
- What guidelines on ego development can be shared for the field of psychology of education?

Leedy (1993:139) states that all research methodology rests upon a bedrock axiom: "The nature of the data and the problem for research dictate the research methodology." All data, all factual information, all human knowledge must ultimately reach the

researcher either as words or as numbers. Leedy (1993:141) consequently distinguishes quantitative research methodologies as dealing with data that is predominantly numerical, and qualitative research methodologies as dealing with data that is predominantly verbal.

4.2 TYPES OF RESEARCH

The course in which the research process and the research methodology of a research study is decided by the researcher's option of a quantitative, qualitative, or combined quantitative-qualitative method. Schutt (2004:15) noted that social scientists frequently use a combined quantitative-qualitative approach in order to enrich their research. In such methods surveys, questionnaires, as well as observation and interviews can be conducted with the research group. In such situations the combined quantitative and qualitative approaches provide deeper and more intense findings or data where a clear picture of the social reality can be obtained by studying the phenomenon being researched from different viewpoints and perspectives. The method of using multiple research approaches in a study is referred to as triangulation.

According to Schutt (2004:17) quantitative data and qualitative data can be used interchangeably and therefore it can be difficult at times to distinguish clearly between the two. Qualitative data that has been collected can be converted into quantitative data by looking at the frequency of times specific words or phrases are used, and when one measures the time that passes between distinctive observed behaviour. On the other hand when quantitative data is collected, this could include enquiries that require written responses, and these responses could be transferred into qualitative data.

The research undertaken for this study made use of the combined method where both quantitative and qualitative research methods were employed. The specific methods applied in the study included:

▪ A questionnaire in order to ascertain the general measure of high and low ego strength with regard to grade nine learners in an independent English medium school in Pretoria, South Africa. The questionnaire was purely quantitative as it provided raw score data that was completed by learners selecting multiple-choice responses with a pencil and paper technique.

▪ Case studies were conducted as in-depth qualitative investigations into the life worlds of two grade nine adolescent learners. Although one should not compare the two case studies, it was of interest to take note of the differences between the life worlds of the two learners: one, who presents with high ego strength, and the other, who presents with low ego strength. The case studies included the following two methods:

   ▫ Semi-structured interviews with the two learners in order to gain deeper information and insight into the learners' life-worlds through conversing and enquiring about certain aspects relating to ego development and ego strength.

   ▫ The Sacks Sentence Completion Test which was conducted with the two learners in order to gain semi-structured projective information pertaining specifically to the ego development and ego strength aspects of their current functioning.

4.2.1   Quantitative research: The High School Personality Questionnaire

Quantitative research methods include techniques of data generation and analysis that rely primarily on mathematical or statistical procedures (Cohen & Swerdik, 2005:222). For the purposes of this study a standardised personality questionnaire was administered to a group of young adolescents in grade nine in order to determine their degree of ego strength. A more detailed account of this research follows in the section below.

4.2.1.1 Selection of respondents for the High School Personality Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered in a group setting to one hundred and ten learners. The learners were selected on the base of their grade level, namely grade nine. Participants were included on grounds that they fulfilled the following criteria: that they were in grade nine; they were attending the same private school where the medium of instruction is English; and the learners were between the ages of thirteen and fifteen years. Both male and female learners from diverse cultural backgrounds took part in the study and were included in the population group. Academic performance and intelligence were not criteria when selecting the group, and the learners were not selected with any previous knowledge of their ego development. The primary unit that was analysed was therefore the learners themselves.

4.2.1.2 High School Personality Questionnaire

The High School Personality Questionnaire (HSPQ) was developed by Raymond B. Cattell and Mary D.L. Cattell in the USA. The main objective of the questionnaire was to formulate an instrument which could provide a valid and reliable personality image of a person between the age of twelve and eighteen years.

The term personality can be described in a number of ways. Benner and Hill (1999:852) describe personality as an abstract concept as referring to "those internal qualities that define personhood and those external characteristics that make individual differences evident". Whereas Visser, Garbers-Strauss and Prinsloo (1995:1) define personality as the integrated and dynamic organisation of the individual's psychic, social, moral and physical characteristics, as it obtains expression in the person's interaction with the environment and especially with other people. On the other hand, Cattell (in Visser et al, 2003:1) regards personality to be that which tells us what any human being may do when he or she is placed in a given situation.

The High School Personality Questionnaire measures fourteen comparatively independent personality dimensions. There are both primary and secondary factors within the questionnaire. Each primary factor is characterised as a bipolar continuum where two extreme poles are described. The left-hand pole represents a sten score of one to four, and the right-hand pole represents a sten score of seven to ten. Scores that fall within the two extreme poles on each of the continuums may be regarded as being significant scores (Visser et al, 2003:22).

Reliability coefficients relating to the various groups for whom the High School Personality Questionnaire is standardised are represented in the different test manuals. The coefficients were calculated by means of the test-retest method. English and Afrikaans speaking learners' reliability coefficients ranged between 0,43 and 0.96 whereas Black and Indian learners' coefficients were lower, ranging between 0,21 and 0,79. In spite of this the High School Personality Questionnaire may be administered on learners from different backgrounds (Visser et al, 2003:45).

While the High School Personality Questionnaire was standardised for learning from diverse backgrounds, only construct validity was reported in the manuals. Founded on

the low inter-correlation between the different factors and the reasonably high equivalent coefficients calculated for the different factors (ranging between 0,50 and 0,84) it may be deduced that the questionnaire does have a relatively high level of construct validity (Taljaard & Prinsloo, 1995:406).

Studies in countries including India, Italy, Finland, Brazil, France, Germany, Belgium, Holland and Japan have provided verification of the intercultural stability of the personality dimensions that are measured in the questionnaire (Cattell, Eber & Tatsuko, 1970; Tsujioka & Cattell, 1965). The High School Personality Questionnaire therefore does appear to be a reliable, valid and unbiased test medium.

The fourteen primary factors of the questionnaire are briefly described in Table 4.1. In addition to the primary factors there are also two secondary order factors which can be calculated. These secondary order factors, namely extraversion and anxiety, are calculated according to a formula which comprises of a combination of various primary order factors.

Table 4.1 Fourteen primary factors of the High School Personality Questionnaire

Factor	Low Score Description	Standard Ten Score (Sten) Average										High Score Description
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
A	Critical, reserved, Cool											Warm, soft-hearted, participating
B	Dull, less intelligent											More intelligent, bright
C	Emotionally immature, unstable											Emotionally mature, stable, realistic
D	Deliberate, stodgy, placid											Unrestrained, nervous
E	Obedient, mild, dependent											Assertive, aggressive, rebellious
F	Sober, silent, serious											Happy-go-lucky, enthusiastic
G	Casual, quitting, undependable											Conscientious, persevering
H	Timid, threat-sensitive, shy											Venturesome, thick-skinned
I	Practical, tough-minded											Tender minded, sensitive, protected
J	Vigorous, goes readily with group											Individualistic, obstructive, reflective
O	Secure, resilient, confident											Discouraged, worrying, self-reproaching
Q_2	Group follower, values social approval											Make own decisions, resourceful
Q_3	Careless, ignores standards, lax											Self-controlled, self-respecting
Q_4	Relaxed, composed											Tense, driven, irritable
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Source: Visser et al (2003:21)

(i)   Motivation

The High School Personality Questionnaire was included as an instrument in this study based on the fact that one's personality plays a major role in virtually every aspect of life, as well as owing to its significance in offering two subscales that provide a measure of ego development. The application of this questionnaire was therefore due to its instrumental role in coming to an understanding of the personality characteristics and function of the early adolescent learners' level of ego development. The High School Personality Questionnaire includes two primary factors (C and G) which are indicative of ego strength and weakness which is extremely apt for this study. Factors C and G have a close link to ego development.

Factor C provides an indication of the individual's level of dynamic integration, personal facets, interpersonal aspects, emotional control, stability and the ability to deal with frustration (Visser et al, 2003:23). A low factor C score is indicative of possible emotional instability or low ego strength, and a high score indicative of emotional stability and high ego strength.

Factor G measures the individual's conscientiousness, and their adjustment to as well as their acceptance of social norms (Visser et al, 2003:28). A low factor G score reflects low superego strength, and a high score reflects high superego strength.

(ii)   Data collection

The High School Personality Questionnaire is a pencil and paper questionnaire which comprises of one hundred and forty-two (142) items per form. The questionnaire can be administered individually or in a group setting. Of the four High School Personality Questionnaire forms, only two are standardised for South African groups. For the purposes of this study, Form A was applied. No time limits apply during the testing; however, it takes approximately forty to fifty minutes to complete one form of the questionnaire.

During the administration of the questionnaire, each respondent should preferably sit at a table that is large enough to hold all the test material. Tables need to be spaced in such a manner which eliminates the possibility of respondents copying each other's

responses and makes it easier for invigilation purposes. Preferably, a writing board and chalk or a white board and marker, should be available for demonstration purposes.

The two learners who were included in the case studies attend the same school and therefore the questionnaire only needed to be applied on one occasion in the school hall where all one hundred and ten learners could be seated. Permission was obtained from the learners' parents or guardians, as well as the relevant teachers and principals of the school in order to administer the questionnaire in a suitable venue on the school premises. In order to answer the questions on the High School Personality Questionnaire, each learner was provided with a questionnaire, an answer sheet, an HB pencil as well as an eraser.

I administered the test personally with the learners. The instructions were read according to the manual and where there were questions from the learners, they were discussed. It was stressed that the questionnaire did not have correct or incorrect answers but was rather the correct response for each unique and individual learner. A colleague of mine at the school assisted with the invigilation of the questionnaire.

(iii)   Data analysis

The data was analysed through scoring and interpreting as allocated and stipulated in the High School Personality Questionnaire manual and according to the normal hand scoring method using the questionnaire masks. According to Cattell (in Visser et al, 2003:13) the answer sheet for hand scoring (456PP) should be used if the manual scoring is preferred as was the case with this study. The scoring was therefore completed with the aid of two scoring stencils, namely 679 and 680. Before the scoring began the answer sheets were checked in order to make sure that only one answer per question had been marked.

Before the respondents' scores were interpreted, the raw scores were tabulated on the right-hand side of the answer sheet and converted into norm scores. The norm scores used for the purpose of interpreting allow one to associate a learner to other learners of a group to which he or she belongs, with regard to his or her various personality characteristics.

South African norms and a sten scale were applied during the interpretation of the raw scores. The interpretation took place according to the marking and interpretation guidelines as laid out in the High School Personality Questionnaire manual.

The two particular factors measuring ego development, namely factor C and G, were interpreted according to the sten scale. A score between one and four was described as being low, a score between five and six was described as being average, and a score between seven and ten was described as being high. It should, however, be kept in mind that the low and high groupings are in a bipolar relationship with each other and are not necessarily 'good' or 'bad'.

4.2.2   Qualitative research: Case studies

In comparison to quantitative research, qualitative research includes various nonstatistical procedures in order to explore a range of characteristics, features, relationships and elements. Such methods include exploring issues by using verbal means such as interviews and group discussions together with the learner or other relevant persons (Cohen & Swerdik, 2005:222). Qualitative research therefore endeavours to understand a phenomenon or circumstance from the perspective of the person involved. For the purposes of this study, in-depth case studies were conducted with two of the learners who had formed part of the questionnaire group in order to have a more concentrated and in-depth understanding of the role and functioning of ego development in the life worlds of two adolescents. The section that follows expands on this aspect of research in this study.

Case studies entail gathering enough information regarding a specific person, social setting or phenomenon in a systemic manner in order to allow the researcher to better understand how the subject functions or operates (Berg, 2004:251). A case study is therefore not necessarily a data-gathering technique but rather a methodological approach which includes a number of data-gathering measures such as interviews, observations, surveys and document analysis (O'Leary, 2004:115). It can be inferred then that case studies can be used to explore a subject in an in-depth manner where one examines subtleties and intricacies, where one attempts to be holistic, as well as where one explores processes, outcomes and the contextual situation.

4.2.2.1 Selection of respondents for the case studies

The selection of case study respondents is commonly random or non-random. A random selection includes the process by which every constituent in a population has an equal chance of selection. Whereas a non-random selection comprises the researcher handpicking respondents on a pragmatic or theoretical basis (David & Sutton, 2005:80).

In the selection of respondents, two learners from the population group who took part in the questionnaire were selected on a pragmatic basis. One of the cases presents a learner with high ego strength and the other case a learner with low ego strength. The measure of ego strength in order to make this selection was based on the measure of the Factor C and G sten scores in the High School Personality Questionnaire. The learner who presented with high ego strength naturally had a high Factor C and G score; whereas the learner who presented with low ego strength had a low Factor C and G score. The learners' inclusion to participate in the in-depth case study was subject to their willingness to partake as well as their parents' consent. It should be kept in mind that although comparisons cannot be made between these two case studies, the aim of taking this stance was in order to determine an understanding of the life worlds of these two adolescents, as well as how this was associated with their ego development.

4.2.2.2 Selection of media for the case studies

The assessment media which were selected for the purposes of the case studies included the interviews, Sacks Sentence Completion Test as well as information from the High School Personality Questionnaire. This media was selected in order to assist the researcher in gaining a deeper understanding of the learners in a holistic way that included the facets of their functioning, personality and life worlds. Through the utilisation of the above mentioned media as well as using direct questioning, information regarding the high ego strength learner and the low ego strength learner's attitudes and life worlds could be deduced. As both the respondents were selected on the basis of their High School Personality Questionnaire scores, this information naturally also forms part of the case studies.

4.2.2.3 Interviews

According to O'Leary (2004:164) there are three types of interviews, namely structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews.

- Structured interviews utilise pre-established questions that are asked in a predetermined order and use a standardised manner of delivery. In these situations researchers aim to be detached and neutral.

- Unstructured interviews on the other hand attempt to attain specific information without the support of any predetermined questions. In such interviews the researcher utilises a more conversational style in order to stimulate, probe and bring about questions which take place in a natural conversational manner.

- Semi-structured interviews are on a continuum between structured and unstructured interviews. These types of interviews normally begin with a defined plan of questioning in order to extract specific information, opinions, beliefs and attitudes regarding certain issues. Although the interview may start with a more structured and delineated plan it continues as a more conversational interviewing style where questions flow in a natural manner.

For the purposes of the case studies the semi-structured interview was selected.

(i)   Motivation

The primary purpose of the semi-structured interviews was to determine what the perceptions, attitudes, beliefs and viewpoints regarding the two learners' lives, and how this related to their ego strength.

(ii)   Data collection

Prior to the collection of data permission was obtained from both of the learners' parents as well as the participants. Both of the learners and their parents were assured of confidentiality in the research report for ethical reasons. Additional consent was acquired from the participants in the case study to tape record the interviews and transcribe them in order to be included in the present study. The tape recorder used during the interviews was placed in the corner of the room in order for it to be unobtrusive. Note-taking during the interview process was kept to a minimum in order to provide full attention to the interview as well as not distract the interviewee. Therefore, the researcher aimed to create an environment where the interviewee felt relaxed and comfortable to unfold information concerning their personal circumstances and life worlds. A similar semi-structured plan of the interview was included for both case studies.

Before the interview commenced aspects related to ego development that was derived from literature which were hoped to be covered and explored were recorded on a grid. Issues and significant areas that arose during the interview as well as those which required further clarification were noted and followed up with the learner at a later stage: either during the interview or on the completion thereof.

The case studies took place on the school premises of the school which both of the learners attended. Special permission had been granted for the learners to be excused from their classes in order to administer the psychological media.

(iii)   Data analysis

In the data analysis it was aimed to listen for recurring themes in the interview, including any significant aspects that could shed more light on the participants' life worlds.

The following structure was utilised in order to interpret the information that transpired in the interviews:
- Biographical information
- Family and environmental information
- Physical image
- Intellectual image
- Extracurricular image
- Emotional image
- Moral image
- Religious image, and
- Summary of the interview

4.2.2.4 Sacks Sentence Completion Test

Sentence completion tests have been in use since approximately 1920 (Smith, 1990:111). The Sacks Sentence Completion Test (SSCT) is a standardised test which is scored quantitatively but interpreted qualitatively. Dr Joseph M. Sacks together with other psychologists from the New York Veterans Administration Mental Hygiene Services developed the Sacks Sentence Completion Test. The test is used in order to explore significant areas of an individual's adjustment and attitudes. It also allows the

researcher to obtain information regarding specific aspects of functioning in the individual's life world. The four areas that are covered in the test include family, sex, interpersonal relationships and self-concept. The family area encompasses three sets of attitudes, namely those towards the mother, father, and family unit. The sex area includes attitudes towards marriage, women and heterosexual relationships. The area of interpersonal relationships encompasses attitudes toward friends, acquaintances, colleagues, peers, and superiors. The area of self-concept includes fears, guilt feelings, and goals, as well as attitudes toward one's own abilities with regard to both their past and future (Abt & Bellak, 1959:370). One of the sixty test items, namely item fifty-six, was adapted in order for the item to be less intrusive and threatening for the learner to respond to. The original item 'My sex life …' was adapted to 'My view of sex is …'

The reliability and validity testing of this instrument produced contingency coefficients of 0,48 and 0,57 with standard score errors of 0.02 and 0.03. The results of the SSCT contrast positively with those in validation studies of other methods of personality study such as the Rorschach and Thematic Apperception Tests (Abt & Bellak, 1945:372).

There is no time limit for the test; however, it usually takes approximately twenty to forty minutes to complete.

(i)   Motivation

Benner and Hill (1999:916) describe projective personality tests such as the sentence completion tests as having an underlying assumption that an individual's response to unstructured or semi-structured stimuli as being influenced by underlying needs, motives and concerns. It is therefore evident that the individual can be assumed to project something of him or herself in to the responses in the task. The interpretation of these responses can therefore provide significant information concerning the individual's basic personality structure and motivations. They also view projection as the unconscious process where an individual ascribes to another the desires, impulses or ideas that one views as being unacceptable within oneself. Defense mechanisms of the ego are therefore seen as permitting the person to take what is internally threatening or undesirable and make it part of an external object or person. The conflict that then occurs about the projected aspect can be viewed as an attack from without rather than an internal ego-threatening struggle which is more threatening (Benner & Hill, 1999:915).

Due to the natural attributes of the sentence completion test as being a projective medium, it lent itself in this study in order to gain data concerning the learners' intrapsychic process in a manner that was nondirective and non-threatening. In this manner it is apparent that unconscious information may also arise when employing projective media.

The Sacks Sentence Completion Test is found to be a highly effective test in determining the content of subjects' attitudes in the various areas and is also fairly easy to administer. There are also substantial innate projective qualities in the test which together lend to the use of the SSCT in order to explore and gather information regarding the relationships and attitudes of the two adolescent learners whom were part of the case study (Smith, 1990:112).

Sentences that explore significant areas of an individual's adjustment can be selected and in certain circumstances such tests can be applied for the purpose of investigating certain clusters of attitudes, needs and feelings. This projective media has the underlying hypothesis that completed sentences symbolise and personify the learner's reality as he or she experiences and attaches meaning to it. It is therefore evident that the items that are included in the sentence completion test present the theme with sufficient occasions in order to express his or her attitudes. This information can be extremely useful in providing the therapist with pivotal clues to the content and dynamics of the learner's experiential world as well as an aid in screening learners for future intervention. The reason the Sacks Sentence Completion Test was chosen to be administered in this study was firstly to gather general information regarding the four categories of the test with regard to the learners, and secondly, hopefully to find within this information a link between the life worlds of the adolescents and their ego strength.

(ii)   Data collection
The Sacks Sentence Completion Test was administered on the two learners who participated in the in-depth case study. The two learners attended the same school and were both in grade nine. However, the test was administered separately and took place in a one-to-one session. Each learner was supplied with a copy of the Sacks Sentence Completion Test which comprised of a list of partly completed sentences, as well as a

HB pencil and eraser. The test was conducted on the school premises in a therapy room at a time that was suitable to the learners and did not interfere with their academics.

The following instructions were read to each of the two learners at the commencement of the test:

"Below are sixty partly completed sentences. Read each one and finish it by writing the first thing that comes to your mind. Work as quickly as you can. If you cannot complete an item, circle the number and return to it later" (Abt & Bellak, 1959:377).

(iii)   Data analysis

Data which was gathered using the Sacks Sentence Completion Test was interpreted according to the guidelines and norms stipulated in the test manual. Once the respondents had completed the tests it was read through by the administrator in order to gather an overall impression regarding each learner's circumstances. The test was then studied again where notes were also made of those sentences that may have a bearing on each other as well as identify prominent themes. The researcher's insight as an intern educational psychologist was applied in this respect. Scoring and interpretation of the test was carried out according to the guidelines provided by Abt and Bellak (1959:379).

The Sacks Sentence Completion Test includes sixty items that are proposed in such a manner that it provides information regarding fifteen categories described below, according to the following scale: 2, 1, 0 and X where:

- 2 indicates a serious disturbance: The respondent appears to require therapeutic aid in managing emotional conflicts in this area.
- 1 indicates a mild disturbance: The respondent has emotional conflicts in this area but does appear to handle them without therapeutic aid
- 0 indicates no significant disturbance in this area, and
- X indicates unknown due to insufficient information.

The four types of answers for each of the fifteen categories are listed below and were analysed together after which a global assessment mark was assigned to each of them in accordance with the above scale.

The different categories and items of the Sacks Sentence Completion Test are indicated in table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Categories and items of the Sacks Sentence Completion Test

	ITEM	CATEGORY
1.	14, 29, 44, 59	**Attitudes towards mother:** ▪ My mother … ▪ My mother and I … ▪ I think that most mothers … ▪ I like my mother but …
2.	1, 16, 31, 46	**Attitudes towards father:** ▪ I feel that my father seldom … ▪ If my father would only … ▪ I wish my father … ▪ I feel that my father is …
3.	12, 27, 42, 57	**Attitudes towards family unit:** ▪ Compared with most families, mine … ▪ My family treats me like … ▪ Most families I know … ▪ When I was a child, my family …
4.	10, 25, 40, 55	**Attitudes towards females:** ▪ My idea of a perfect woman … ▪ I think most girls … ▪ I believe most women … ▪ What I like least about women …
5.	11, 26, 41, 56	**Attitudes towards heterosexual relationships:** ▪ When I see a boy and girl together … ▪ My feelings about steady relationships are … ▪ If I had sexual relations … ▪ My view of sex is …
6.	8, 23, 38, 53	**Attitude toward friends and acquaintances:** ▪ I feel that a real friend … ▪ I don't like people who … ▪ The people I like best … ▪ When I'm not around my friends …

7.	6, 21, 36, 51	**Attitude toward seniors at school or at work:**
		▪ The senior learners at school …
		▪ The educators at school …
		▪ When I see the principal coming …
		▪ Educators whom I consider my superiors …
8.	4, 19, 34, 48	**Attitude towards subordinates:**
		▪ If I were in charge …
		▪ If I had to be an educator …
		▪ The learners in my class …
		▪ In giving orders to others, I …
9.	13, 28, 43, 58	**Attitude towards friends at school or at home:**
		▪ At school I get along best with …
		▪ The learners in my class are …
		▪ I like to be with friends at school who …
		▪ Friends who attend school with me usually …
10.	7, 22, 37, 52	**Fears:**
		▪ I know it is silly, but I am afraid of …
		▪ My friends don't know that I'm afraid of …
		▪ I wish I could lose the fear of …
		▪ My fears sometimes force me to …
11.	15, 30, 45, 60	**Guilt feelings:**
		▪ I would do anything to forget the times I …
		▪ My greatest mistake was …
		▪ When I was younger, I felt guilty about …
		▪ The worst thing I ever did …
12.	2, 17, 32, 47	**Attitude towards own abilities:**
		▪ When the odds are against me …
		▪ I believe I have the ability to …
		▪ My greatest weakness is …
		▪ When I cannot cope with my schoolwork …
13.	9, 24, 39, 54	**Attitude towards the past:**
		▪ When I was very young …
		▪ Before I came to high school …
		▪ If I can start high school over again …
		▪ My most vivid childhood memory …

14.	5, 20, 35, 50	**Attitude towards the future:**
		▪ To me the future looks …
		▪ I look forward to …
		▪ Some day I …
		▪ When I am older …
15.	3, 18, 13, 49	**Goals:**
		▪ I always wanted to …
		▪ I could be perfectly happy if …
		▪ My secret ambition in life …
		▪ What I want most out of life …

Source: Abt and Bellak (1959:379-382)

4.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter aimed to present a detailed description of the empirical investigation which took place in the present study, and contained the research design. Included in the chapter was the statement of the main research problem as well as the sub-problems that were explored. The different types of research approaches that were encompassed throughout the investigation as well as their merit to the study were incorporated. Assessment media that were utilised in the study were explored with regard to their theoretical background, the motivation for being included in the present study, the administration of the media, the collection of the data, as well as the analysis of the data obtained. Chapter five which follows provides an analysis of the data as well as the presentation, discussion and interpretation of the empirical research results.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The facts are always friendly,
every bit of evidence one can acquire,
in any area,
leads one that much closer to what is true.

Carl Rogers

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter four the research design and methodology were presented. In this chapter the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the results of the empirical research have been put forward.

5.2 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

One hundred and ten grade nine learners from an English-medium independent school in Pretoria completed a group administered questionnaire, namely the High School Personality Questionnaire. The procedures for the administration of the questionnaire as well as the scoring and interpretation thereof were discussed in 4.2.1.

The administration of the questionnaire took place under identical conditions for all of the learners: on the same day, at the same time, and at the same school. The administration of the questionnaire was conducted by myself and a colleague at the school assisted with the invigilation of the questionnaire.

The aim of the quantitative research was to investigate two factors that are closely related to ego development, namely ego strength and superego strength. A research problem was stated and the data provided on the High School Personality Questionnaire form as well as the questionnaire results were used in order to investigate this.

As mentioned above, the data collection took place by means of the High School Personality Questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire with regard to the above-mentioned two factors was between 0.93 and 0.97 which may be considered to be very good.

5.2.1   Research problem

Research problem: What is the measure of ego development of a group of one hundred and ten young adolescents?

The ego developmental measure categories are:

- ▫   High measure of ego strength;
- ▫   Average measure of ego strength;

□   Low measure of ego strength.

The results of the research problem were presented in 5.2.3.

5.2.2   Results

5.2.2.1 Biographical data

The biographical data of the research population is provided in Table 5.1. Please note that some of the learners chose to remain anonymous in the testing and this was taken into account in the sections below.

Table 5.1 Biographical data of the research population

Gender	Male:	52
	Female:	58
	Anonymous:	0
Age:	13 years old:	1
	14 years old:	86
	15 years old:	21
	Anonymous:	2
Home Language:	English:	61
	Afrikaans:	22
	English/Afrikaans:	13
	English/Spanish:	1
	English/Sotho:	1
	Shona:	1
	Venda:	1
	Setswana:	1
	Setswana/Sepedi:	1
	English/Sepedi:	1
	Greek/English:	1
	Greek:	1
	Dutch:	1
	French:	1
	Anonymous:	3

5.2.3 Results of the quantitative study

The data that was obtained regarding the sample group is presented in Table 5.2. In order to make the table easy to follow visually with regard to the learners' Factor C and G sten scores, colours were used in order to describe whether the learners' scores were:

- Below average (sten of 1 to 4) which was shaded green;
- Average (sten of 5 and 6) which was shaded yellow; and
- Above average (sten of 7 to 10) which was shaded blue.

Table 5.1 Results of learners' High School Personality Questionnaire factors C and G

	GENDER	AGE	LANGUAGE	FACTOR C Ego strength		FACTOR G Superego strength	
				Raw Score	Sten	Raw Score	Sten
1	Male	14	English	10	5	7	3
2	Male	14	Setswana	7	4	9	4
3	Male	15	English	7	4	16	8
4	Male	14	English	11	6	12	6
5	Male	14	English	10	5	7	3
6	Male	15	English/Afrikaans	11	6	14	7
7	Male	14	English/Afrikaans	15	8	15	8
8	Male	14	English	14	8	12	6
9	Male	14	English	15	8	9	4
10	Male	14	English/Afrikaans	11	6	11	5
11	Male	14	English	9	5	7	3
12	Male	14	English	11	6	14	7
13	Male	15	English	8	4	11	5
14	Male	14	Afrikaans	11	6	11	5
15	Male	14	Tswana/Sepedi	12	6	16	8
16	Male	15	English	7	4	11	5
17	Male	14	English/Afrikaans	8	4	8	3
18	Male	14	English	9	5	11	5
19	Male	14	Afrikaans	14	8	11	5
20	Male	14	Afrikaans	15	8	15	8
21	Male	15	English	11	6	12	6
22	Male	14	Afrikaans	16	9	12	6
23	Male	15	English	10	5	6	2
24	Male	14	Afrikaans	9	5	12	6
25	Male	15	English/Sepedi	17	10	12	6
26	Male	15	English	7	4	12	6
27	Male	14	Afrikaans	8	4	4	1
28	Male	14	English	11	6	12	6
29	Male	14	English	18	10	9	4
30	Male	14	English	10	5	8	3
31	Male	14	Dutch	10	5	8	3
32	Male	14	English	10	5	8	3
33	Male	14	English	12	6	10	4
34	Male	14	English/Spanish	14	8	9	4
35	Male	14	English	15	8	10	4

Table 5.2 continued

	GENDER	AGE	LANGUAGE	FACTOR C Ego strength		FACTOR G Superego strength	
				Raw Score	Sten	Raw Score	Sten
36	Male	15	English/Afrikaans	12	6	12	6
37	Male(An)	14	Afrikaans	6	4	12	5
38	Male(An)	15	English	9	5	12	5
39	Male(An)	14	English	9	5	13	6
40	Male(An)	14	Greek/ English	5	5	12	5
41	Male(An)	14	English/Afrikaans	10	6	3	1
42	Male(An)	14	English	4	3	10	4
43	Male(An)	14	Afrikaans	12	7	14	7
44	Male(An)	14	English	10	6	9	3
45	Male(An)	15	English	6	4	8	3
46	Male(An)	14	Afrikaans	11	7	12	5
47	Male(An)	15	English	7	4	14	7
48	Male(An)	14	Afrikaans	14	8	14	7
49	Male(An)	14	English	9	5	17	9
50	Male(An)	15	English	9	5	13	6
51	Male(An)	14	English	14	8	11	5
52	Male(An)	15	English	15	9	14	7
53	Female	14	Afrikaans	6	4	12	5
54	Female	15	English	9	5	12	5
55	Female	14	English	9	5	13	6
56	Female	14	Greek/ English	5	5	12	5
57	Female	14	English/Afrikaans	10	6	3	1
58	Female	14	English	4	3	10	4
59	Female	14	Afrikaans	12	7	14	7
60	Female	14	English	10	6	9	3
61	Female	15	English	6	4	8	3
62	Female	14	Afrikaans	11	7	12	5
63	Female	15	English	7	4	14	7
64	Female	14	Afrikaans	14	8	14	7
65	Female	14	English	9	5	17	9
66	Female	15	English	9	5	13	6
67	Female	14	English	14	8	11	5
68	Female	15	English	15	9	14	7
69	Female	14	Afrikaans	6	4	9	3
70	Female	14	Afrikaans	14	8	10	4
71	Female	14	Afrikaans	8	5	11	5
72	Female	14	English	8	5	11	5
73	Female	14	Afrikaans	9	5	12	5
74	Female	14	Sotho/ English	6	4	6	2
75	Female	14	English	6	4	6	2
76	Female	13	English	8	5	10	4
77	Female	14	English/Afrikaans	10	6	13	6
78	Female	15	Afrikaans	7	4	5	1
79	Female	14	English	14	8	6	2
80	Female	14	English	11	7	14	7
81	Female	14	Afrikaans	8	5	10	4
82	Female	15	English	6	4	15	7
83	Female	14	Greek	16	10	11	5

Table 5.2 continued

	GENDER	AGE	LANGUAGE	FACTOR C Ego strength		FACTOR G Superego strength	
				Raw Score	Sten	Raw Score	Sten
84	Female	14	English/Afrikaans	10	6	15	7
85	Female	15	Afrikaans	7	4	13	6
86	Female	14	English	7	4	13	6
87	Female	14	Afrikaans	9	5	13	6
88	Female	14	Afrikaans	9	5	6	2
89	Female	14	English	8	5	16	8
90	Female	15	English	8	5	12	5
91	Female	14	Afrikaans	11	7	14	7
92	Female	15	English/Afrikaans	14	8	16	8
93	Female	14	English	9	5	5	1
94	Female	14	Afrikaans	6	4	8	3
95	Female (An)	14	English/Afrikaans	10	6	14	7
96	Female (An)	14	English/Afrikaans	9	5	7	2
97	Female (An)	14	English/Afrikaans	6	4	11	5
98	Female (An)	14	Afrikaans	2	1	3	1
99	Female (An)	14	English	18	10	16	8
100	Female (An)	14	English	13	8	11	5
101	Female (An)	14	English	14	8	15	7
102	Female (An)	14	English	12	7	7	2
103	Female (An)	14	English	8	5	17	9
104	Female (An)	14	English	7	4	12	5
105	Female (An)	14	English	10	6	10	4
106	Female (An)	14	Afrikaans	10	6	13	6
107	Female (An)	14	-	11	7	2	1
108	Female (An)	14	English	9	5	12	5
109	Female (An)	14	English	12	7	11	5
110	Female (An)	14	French	9	5	7	2
			TOTALS: AVERAGE:	1151	653 (Sten 6)	1208	546 (Sten 5)

Table 5.2 presents the data obtained in a visual manner:

▪ The first column provides the number of learners that were included in the study;

▪ The second column notes whether the learner was a male, a female, an anonymous male, or an anonymous female learner;

▪ The third column states the learners' age;

▪ The fourth provides the learners' home language;

▪ The fifth column notes the learners' factor C (ego strength) raw score;

▪ The sixth column states the learners' factor C (ego strength) sten score;

▪ The seventh column presents the learners' factor G (superego strength) raw score; and

▪ The eighth column provides the learners' factor G (superego strength) sten score.

The last row in the table provides the total number as well as the average number of the one hundred and ten learners' standard score and sten score for both factor C (ego strength) and G (superego strength). The average sten score of factor C (ego strength, sten 6) and G (superego strength, sten 5) fell in the average range; however, the average factor C (ego strength) sten score was slightly higher than the average factor G (superego strength) sten score.

Table 5.3 provides a summary of where the respondents' sten scores fell as well as how many times the sten occurred within the one hundred and ten respondents. There are two broad columns: one for factor C and the other for factor G. For both factors there is a column for the sten as well as the number of times it occurred within the one hundred and ten respondents.

Table 5.3 Results of factors C and G: Overall totals of sten scores 1 to 10

FACTOR C Ego strength		FACTOR G Superego strength	
Sten	Number times occurred	Sten	Number times occurred
1	1	1	6
2	0	2	8
3	1	3	14
4	19	4	13
5	32	5	23
6	21	6	20
7	12	7	15
8	17	8	9
9	2	9	2
10	5	10	0

The data from table 5.3 was incorporated into a graph in figure 5.1 which follows, whereby the data can be seen visually and with the aid of colour. The factor C results were shaded in light blue and the factor G results were shaded in navy blue.

Figure 5.1 Results of factor C and G: Overall totals of sten scores
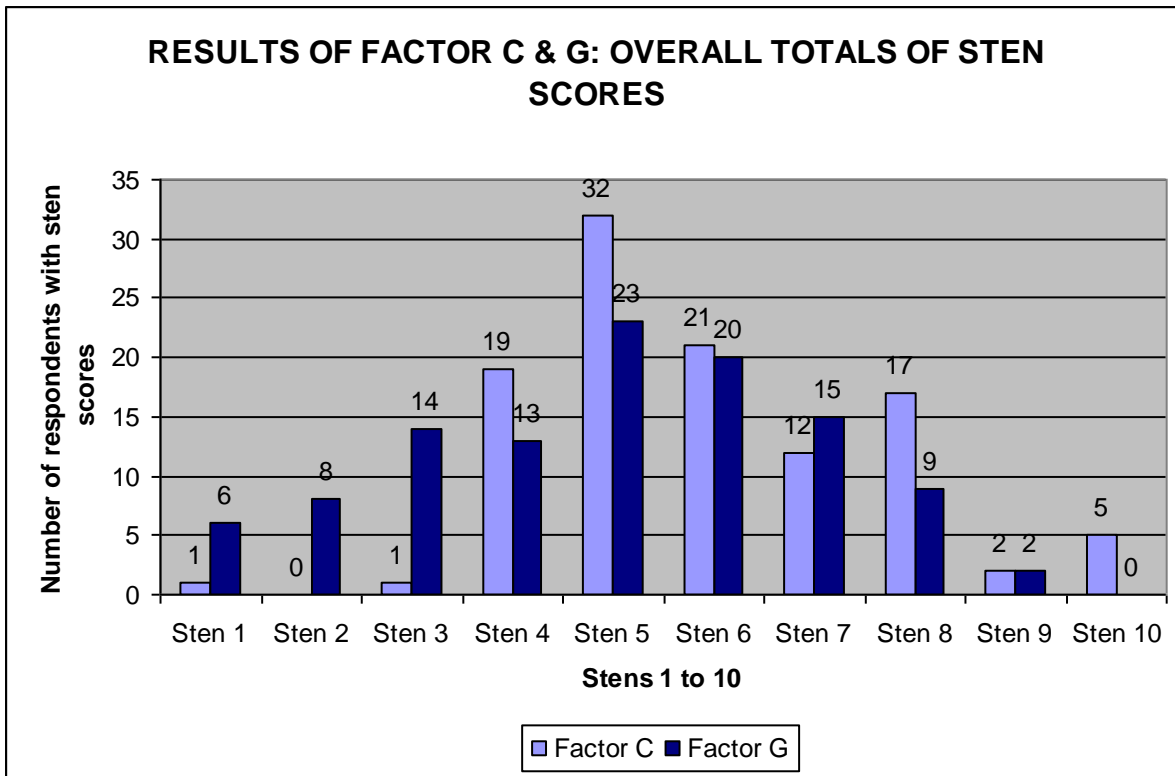
From the results illustrated in figure 5.1 it is evident that the graph appears to have a normal curve where the majority of the respondents fell in the average range and the minority of respondents fell in the extremities. Stens 1 to 4 have been classified as being below average, and stens 7 to 10 have been classified as being above average. Based on this and the data noted in 5.2.3, 21 of the 110 learners, or 19% of the respondents, had a below average factor C sten signifying low ego strength; and 41 of the 110 learners, or 37,3% of the respondents, had a below average factor G sten indicating low superego strength. It should be noted that this is a very significant percentage of learners. On the other hand, 36 of the 110 learners, or 32,7% of the respondents, had an above average factor C sten, signifying high ego strength; and 26 of the 110 learners, or 23,6% of the respondents, had an above average factor G sten, indicating high superego strength.

As stated in 2.3.2.1 ego strength has to do with the emotional stability or self-regulation of a person; superego strength has to do with the character development of a person. Therefore, it appears that 19% of the respondents lack emotional, control, stability and

the ability to handle frustration. However, 32,7% of the respondents have a stronger measure of dynamic integration of their personal and interpersonal attributes relating to emotional control, discipline and stability. When focusing on superego strength, 37,3% of the respondents appear to lack conscientiousness as well as have difficulty with the acceptance of social norms. Whereas, 23,6% of the respondents seem to have characteristics of perseverance, moralistic behaviour, responsibility, as well as acceptance of social norms.

When combining factors C (superego strength) and G (ego strength), the following percentages were evident: 28,1% of the respondents fell in the below average category, 28,1% of the respondents fell in the average category, and 43,6% fell in the above average category.

It therefore appears that few of the adolescents in the study had either very low ego and superego strength, or very high ego and superego strength; and a large number of the adolescents had an average ego and superego strength. It was also evident that of the respondents who fell in the below average category, the factor G (superego strength) sten scores seemed to have a greater percentage than the factor C (ego strength) sten scores; and when looking at respondents who fell in the above average category, the factor C (ego strength) sten scores seemed to be have a greater percentage than the factor G (superego strength) sten scores. This could be indicative that the respondents have stronger and more evident ego strength (factor C) than they do superego strength (factor G).

A few secondary findings also emerged during the study, such as:
- □ Of the one hundred and ten grade nine learners, their average Factor C (ego strength) score was higher than their Factor G (superego strength) score.
- □ Of the one hundred and ten grade nine learners, there was no significant difference in the average sten score between that of males and females;

5.3 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH: CASE STUDIES

The data gathering methods used in order to conduct the qualitative research included two in-depth case studies with two learners who had previously completed the High School Personality Questionnaire in the group of Grade nine learners, and for the qualitative research also completed the Sacks Sentence Completion Test. One of the learners presented as having low ego strength, where the other learner could be considered to have high ego strength.

5.3.1   Case study one: John (low ego strength)

5.3.1.1 Biographical information

Name: John (pseudonym)

Gender: Male

Chronological age: 15 years, 03 months

Home language: English/Afrikaans

Grade: Nine (9)

Ego and superego strength on High School Personality Questionnaire:

Factor C: Sten 4

Factor G: Sten 3

5.3.1.2 Interpretation of assessment media

(a) Interview

The interview with John was conducted by myself on 14 September 2007 and took place at John's school in Pretoria. A full transcription of the interview has been attached as annexure A.

John presented as being extremely confident and relaxed during the interview. He was dressed in full school uniform. He shared that he had a recent haircut because the educators at his school had been complaining about his long hair. John is tall and slim for his age.

From the interview it emerged that John feels rather over-confident with regard to school and his interpersonal interactions, especially with superiors at school. He tends to react on impulse and finds it difficult not to involve himself in differences with others, even

teachers. This was evident in the interview where John responded to my question saying:

> Ja, like this one guy actually irritates me in class. There's this guy who's like quite overweight and then he asks the guy in front of me who really irritates me to throw away a piece of paper for him because he was right by the dustbin so he told him he needs the exercise. So I took an eraser and threw it at his face. And he started crying and shouting at me. So ja, sometimes I lose my temper…and…I think I might be a bit disrespectful to those I don't like. Like for example if she (the teacher) says she's not really fond of me then I'll say, 'Well I really hate you so.'

John's passion seems to be for his tennis and he finds a lot of fulfillment in it.

- **Additional biographical information**

John is the eldest child of two children. He lives in an upper-class suburb fairly close to the school he attends. John has had all of his primary and secondary education at the same school. He has never repeated a grade and is achieving fairly well at present.

- **Family and environmental background**

John's parents have been married for over twenty years; neither has been married previously. John's father is an investment banker who has to travel often for business, and at times John is able to join his father on these trips, to which John looks forward. His mother used to work in the insurance industry and now she together with her husband owns a property business. She works from home at present.

John described his relationship with his father as being close and that he would rather be with his father in his spare time than his mother but this is not always possible due to his father's long work hours and job in Johannesburg. John experiences his father as supportive of him, especially with regard to his tennis. His relationship with his mother is also close but in a different way. John feels his mother is quick tempered and is often moody when she is stressed.

His relationship with his younger brother, who is nine years, seems to be characterised by distance and closeness. John shared that he and his brother want to do different things and have different interests which means that they do not often interact on the same level. Moreover, John is more fluent in Afrikaans than his younger brother, and thus better able to interact with his father who is Afrikaans. John's mother is English speaking. However, his parents converse in Afrikaans, and when the children speak to their parents, they use each parent's first language.

John's family gardener assists with transportation of John and his brother, especially to tennis practice and often collects the boys from school in the afternoons. When it comes to support with his sport, John prefers his parents not to watch his matches and practice as he feels under additional pressure to achieve. He also does not want to disappoint his parents should he lose.

- **Academic image**

John is coping well with his academic demands and subjects at school. John spends many hours after school at tennis training and coaching, and finds that he does not need to study intensively to do well in his tests and exams. He feels he is rather intelligent. John's favourite subjects at school are mathematics, and economic and management sciences; his least liked subject is english.

John does not appear to have a close relationship with his teachers whereby he could approach them with ease to ask for assistance with school work.

Based on the interview with John, he functions on the level of formal operational thought which is the stage of cognitive development in Piaget's theory that follows concrete operations. Gouws et al (2000:39) characterise the formal operational phase as follows:

- Capability of carrying out formal operations where the person can think abstractly and logically;
- Ability to handle possibilities and hypotheses;
- Thoughts are more scientific;
- Development of concern regarding social issues and identity.

- **Emotional image**

John presents as a very confident and perhaps overly confident learner who does not fully respect his teachers. He does not seem to be an extremely mature learner and does not necessarily look for the deeper concerns of certain issues that arise. His interaction with others, and particularly with his peers, is marked by a strong interest in girls. He appears to have a rather chauvinistic attitude to women, especially regarding their physical appearance. In this regard, John commented: "Well, like we always want to be around girls. It's nice you know. Cause you know I've got like a lot of girl-friends." In his Sacks Sentence Completion Test he said that his idea of a perfect woman is thin, tall with a good looking face. Here the ideal woman is dependent on physical attributes rather than character or personality.

The need to protect certain friends and peers is also evident. John is willing to fight for others and get involved in not only his own problems but also in those that others are experiencing. John described himself as being easily irritated by others who push his wrong buttons, and reacting impulsively where he will shout or swear. He also felt that he is an emotional person who experiences strong emotions in different situations: either getting very excited, disappointed or sad. John is easily frustrated especially if he cannot get something right.

John also saw himself as someone who is rather indecisive and erratic. He changes his mind often and feels his mind is always active. In the classroom situation he sees himself as noisy, talkative, careful, playful, and at times, thoughtless. He feels he works well under pressure. He is relaxed and perhaps slack when it comes to his school projects.

- **Metaphor**

During the interview with John he was asked to describe himself by means of a metaphor. This request was made in order to enable John to express himself in a projective manner which would be non-threatening as well as to provide valuable qualitative information. John chose to describe himself as "a light bulb because I have my on and off days, and some days I'm in a good mood and some days I'm in a bad mood. Ja, I'm like not always the same." John went on to describe the light bulb as one which can burn for long periods of time which possibly relates to his endurance in his

sports and academics. It is not a coloured bulb perhaps relaying that he feels he is a normal individual. However, it is a special make which could also signify his uniqueness. His buttons can be pushed by others who talk to him and by means of his own self-talk which is either negative or positive.

This metaphor suggests that John views himself as an individual who tends to be rather emotional fluctuating between good and bad moods which seem to be dependent on the feedback he gets from others, as well as his own self-talk. John also acknowledged his fitting in with others by being a 'normal light bulb' as well as having his unique characteristics.

▪ **Physical image**

As described in 3.2.1 adolescents experience a number of physical changes and development during adolescence. Adolescents often base their self-esteem on athletic achievement and security linked to physical strength. This is the case with John. He has reached all his physical and motor developmental milestones, and appears to be satisfied with his physical appearance. He places a lot of emphasis on his physical appearance, strength and fitness.

▪ **Cognitive image**

John's view of the future seems to be ambivalent. On the one hand, he is concerned about the environmental constraints on planet earth; on the other, he is hopeful about pursuing a career as a professional tennis player.

The interview indicated that John presents as a motivated and focused person in certain areas, especially his tennis. However, his motivation is more extrinsically based to win the acceptance of his peers, recognition from his parents, and to gain esteem from others. John's tennis requires a lot of commitment and dedication from him which he appears to produce with ease.

The support which John receives from his parents is largely financial. His sports equipment is provided, coaching paid for, and transport arranged. However, his parents seldom take the time in their daily schedules to support him by driving him to practice

and watching his practice lessons. Therefore, John experiences anxiety to perform and win the matches he takes part in, possibly to gain his parents' attention and acceptance.

▪ **Moral image**

The moral image links with superego strength as includes aspects such as conscientiousness, adjustment and acceptance of social norms, as well as moral and responsible behaviour. With regard to moral development, John views moral rules as necessary but flexible, subject to different people in different situations. John appears to be more concerned about himself than he is of the group and fairness to others in the group. Therefore, it seems that his moral reasoning is rather skewed and more focused on the acceptance of others. This indicates that his acceptance of moral and social norms is dependent and focused on himself which is indicative of low superego strength.

John also appears to be rebellious with regard to certain rules. Some examples of this behaviour include using foul language in front of and toward his educators, and a challenging and argumentative attitude toward his educators. John's approach to authority figures is characterised by challenging behaviour, distance and, at times, lacking respect. Here again John displays low superego strength as he behaves in an irresponsible and disrespectful manner to others.

In the interview John shared that he is a Christian who attends church regularly with his family. He currently attends a reformed Protestant church and would prefer a church that is not so structured.

The results regarding John's moral image confirm his data gathered by the High School Personality Questionnaire that indicated emotional immaturity, rebelliousness, undependable behaviour, laxness, and lack of attention to standards.

▪ **Brief summary of the interview**

Throughout the interview John presented as an outgoing, talkative, confident and relaxed individual. He cooperated throughout the session and was keen to take part in the study.

The interview revealed that John is coping with his academic demands at present, and works well under pressure in order to submit all the work and projects required of him. In the school setting he gets on well with his peers but at times doubts their abilities. He has ambivalent feelings towards his educators, and does not feel totally accepted by them. In these situations John responds with a negative attitude and behaviour.

At home, John has a closer relationship with his father and sees him as a role model. John believes he needs to achieve and perform in his tennis in order to win his parents' time, attention, love and pride – and if he does not achieve, he feels he has let his parents down. His relationship with his younger brother is a love-hate relationship where they move from closeness to distance and back.

On the sports field, John is committed to his tennis which builds his self-esteem and fulfills him to a certain extent. With regard to John's friendships he has a best friend with whom he can share everything and he is a great support. John also tends to enjoy friendships and the company of girls at school. His view of the opposite sex seems to be rather chauvinistic and focused on physical appearance.

(b) High School Personality Questionnaire

The High School Personality Questionnaire was completed by John on 31 January 2007 at his school. I was responsible for the administration thereof. Table 5.4 provides the scores that John obtained in the questionnaire.

Table 5.4 Profile of John's High School Personality Questionnaire

Factor	Low Score Description	Standard Ten Score (Sten) Average										High Score Description
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
A	Critical, Reserved, Cool						•					Warm, Soft-Hearted, Participating
B	Dull, Less Intelligent					•						More Intelligent, Bright
C	Emotionally Immature Unstable				•							Emotionally Mature, Stable, Realistic
D	Deliberate, Stodgy, Placid						•					Unrestrained, Nervous
E	Obedient, Mild, Dependent								•			Assertive, Aggressive, Rebellious
F	Sober, Silent, Serious										•	Happy-Go-Lucky, Enthusiastic
G	Casual, Quitting, Undependable			•								Conscientious, Persevering
H	Timid, Threat-Sensitive, Shy					•						Venturesome, Thick-Skinned
I	Practical, Tough-Minded						•					Tender Minded, Sensitive, Protected
J	Vigorous, Goes Readily with Group						•					Individualistic, Obstructive, Reflective
O	Secure, Resilient, Confident					•						Discouraged, Worrying, Self-Reproaching
Q$_2$	Group Follower, Values Social Approval					•						Make Own Decisions, Resourceful
Q$_3$	Careless, Ignores Standards, Lax			•								Self-Controlled, Self-Respecting
Q$_4$	Relaxed, Composed					•						Tense, Driven, Irritable
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Each of the factors mentioned in the High School Personality Questionnaire profile is represented by a bipolar continuum of which the two extreme poles are described on the left-hand pole (representing a standard score of 1 to 4) and the right-hand pole (representing a standard score of 7 to 10). It is of vital importance to guard against the assumption that the right-hand or 'high' pole is 'good' or that the left-hand or 'low' pole is 'bad'. Different performances and purposes may require the left and sometimes the right-hand pole to be advantageous. Each factor is indicated by an alphabetical letter as stated in the profile.

John's significantly high and low primary factor scores are discussed briefly below:

Table 5.5 Significant high scores (standard sten scores of 8, 9 and 10):

FACTOR	STEN	DESCRIPTION
Factor E	8	This high score may be indicative of *dominance* including aspects such as self-assertiveness, aggression, competitive, stubborn, arrogant, independent, stern, rebellious, headstrong and/or demanding admiration.
Factor F	10	This high score may be related to *carefreeness* including aspects such as being impulsive, careless, cheerful, talkative, frank, expressive, lively and/or alert.

Source: Visser et al (2003)

Table 5.6 Significant low scores (standard sten scores of 1, 2, and 3):

FACTOR	STEN	DESCRIPTION
Factor G	3	This low score may reflect being *opportunistic* and having *low ego strength* which includes aspects such as being fickle, frivolous, self-indulgent, slack, undependable, and/or not accepting general moral standards and rules.
Factor Q_3	3	This low score may be indicative of *low self-sentiment integration* or *lack of control* which incorporates aspects such as being lax, following own urges and disregarding social rules.
Factor C	4	Although this score was not significantly low, it still fell in the low range and due to its close link with the topic of the study, it has been included in this description/ This score may be indicative of reasonable emotional immaturity and instability as well as *low ego strength* which incorporates aspects such as being easily perturbed, being confused easily, evading responsibilities, tending to worry, as well as getting into fights and problem situations.

Source: Visser et al (2003)

The following second-order factor scores were calculated from John's primary scores:

- Anxiety:

$$= \frac{(11-C) + D + (11-G) + (11-H) + 0 + (11-Q_3) + Q_4}{7}$$

$$= \frac{(11-4) + 6 + (11-3) + (11-5) + 5 + (11-3) + 5}{7}$$

$$= \frac{7 + 6 + 8 + 6 + 5 + 8 + 5}{7}$$

$$= \textbf{6.4}$$

The second order factor score of 6.4 was obtained as the measure of anxiety and can be considered to be an average score. This may indicate that John experiences reasonable, average levels of anxiety. However, according to Visser, et al (2003:40), the factor C scores need to be considered when interpreting anxiety as a second order factor. The low factor C score (sten 4) which John obtained may indicate that his successful adjustment in the future could be hampered.

- Extraversion:

$$= \frac{A + F + H + (11-J) + (11-Q2)}{5}$$

$$= \frac{6 + 10 + 5 + (11-6) + (11-5)}{5}$$

$$= \frac{6 + 10 + 5 + 5 + 6}{5}$$

$$= \textbf{6.4}$$

John's second order factor score for extraversion also fell in the average range. It therefore appears that he may be considered to be neither an extroverted nor an introverted type of person, but leans slightly more to being extraverted.

- **Brief summary of John's High School Personality Questionnaire profile**

John's profile reveals a number of aspects concerning his personality structure such as his emotional immaturity and low ego strength. This corresponds to the data obtained during the interview with John. John shows his assertive, aggressive and rebellious behaviour which at times can be experienced negatively by his educators and peers who

irritate him. He has an enthusiastic and happy-go-lucky attitude toward his social interactions and at times his schoolwork. He has an undependable and casual approach to activities which do not interest him or which appear to be threatening to him, and he can be careless and lax. Characteristics of low ego and superego strength were found in the interview and in John's High School Personality Questionnaire.

(c) The Sacks Sentence Completion Test

The Sacks Sentence Completion Test was administered on 14 September 2007 at the school John attends. John was presented with sixty incomplete sentences and was instructed to complete these by filling in the initial idea that came to his mind. In the section that follows the beginning of the sentence is displayed in normal font and John's responses were typed in italics. When John had completed the test, his responses were placed in fifteen categories which each comprised four sentences. As was discussed in 4.2.2.3, an assessment rating score of (2, 1, 0 or X) was assigned to each category after a global qualitative evaluation was made thereof. For each category, an interpretative summary is also provided.

Table 5.7 John's responses to the Sacks Sentence Completion Test

ITEMS	CATEGORIES	RATING
14, 29, 44, 59	1 Attitudes towards mother: ▪ My mother *is strict.* ▪ My mother and I *don't always get along.* ▪ I think that most mothers *are overprotective.* ▪ I like my mother but *sometimes she can irritate me.*	*Rating:* 1
	Interpretative summary: It appears that John rejects and depreciates his mother to a certain extent, whom he considers over-demanding.	
1, 16, 31, 46	2 Attitudes towards father: ▪ I feel my father seldom *shouts at my brother and I.* ▪ If my father would only *get me more shoes.* ▪ I wish my father *would send me to America to play tennis.* ▪ I feel that my father is *really cool.*	*Rating:* 0
	Interpretative summary: John seems to admire his father and at the same time measures his love at times by his material provision for him.	

12, 27, 42, 57	3 Attitudes towards family unit:	Rating: 0
	▪ Compared with most families, mine *is pretty normal.*	
	▪ My family treats me like *fairly and gives me my space.*	
	▪ Most families I know *are nice.*	
	▪ When I was a child, my family *spoilt me.*	
	Interpretative summary:	
	John appears to have a positive experience of his family and experiences it we an average family.	
10, 25, 40, 55	4 Attitudes towards females:	Rating: 1
	▪ My idea of a perfect woman *thin, tall and a good looking face.*	
	▪ I think most girls *are fairly hot.*	
	▪ I believe most women *are unhappy with the way they look.*	
	▪ What I like least about women *is their attitude.*	
	Interpretative summary:	
	John seems to be rather chauvinistic regarding women, and focuses predominantly on their physical appearance where he has high expectations.	
11, 26, 41, 56	5 Attitudes toward heterosexual relationships:	Rating: 1
	▪ When I see a man and a woman together *I laugh.*	
	▪ My feelings about married life *that it limits you.*	
	▪ If I had sex relations *I would make sure I knew the person.*	
	▪ My view of sex *a thing which satisfies humans.*	
	Interpretative summary:	
	John's view of heterosexual relationships shows reservations about a committed relationship.	
8, 23, 38, 53	6 Attitude toward friends and acquaintances:	Rating: 0
	▪ I feel that a real friend *doesn't tell your secrets.*	
	▪ I don't like people who *think they are cool.*	
	▪ The people I like best *are girls.*	
	▪ When I'm not around my friends *I get frustrated.*	
	Interpretative summary:	
	John appears to wait for approval of others before committing himself emotionally, and finds socialisation with friends to be very important.	
6, 21, 36, 51	7 Attitude toward seniors at school or work:	Rating: 0
	▪ The men over me … *(no answer)*	
	▪ In school, my teachers *are mostly good ones.*	
	▪ When I see the principal coming *I get nervous.*	
	▪ People whom I consider my superiors *are my parents.*	
	Interpretative summary:	
	John seems to accept authority figures.	

4, 19, 34, 48	8 Attitude toward subordinates: ▪ If I were in charge of the school *I would ban homework.* ▪ If people work for me *I would make sure they work properly.* ▪ The people who work for me *don't like me.* ▪ In giving orders to others I *am reasonable.*	*Rating:* 1
	Interpretative summary: It appears that John feels capable of doing a good supervisory job but has some misgivings regarding assuming an authoritarian or leadership position.	
13, 28, 43, 58	9 Attitude toward friends at school or at home: ▪ At work/school, I get along best with *the girls.* ▪ Those I work with are *often stupid.* ▪ I like working with people who *have a sense of humour.* ▪ People who work with me usually *enjoy my sense of humour.*	*Rating:* 1
	Interpretative summary: John seems to have some difficulty with his work and does not trust his friends to depend on them.	
7, 22, 37, 52	10 Fears: ▪ I know it is silly but I am afraid of *the dark.* ▪ Most of my friends don't know that I am afraid of *heights.* ▪ I wish I could lose the fear of *height.* ▪ My fears sometimes force me to *back away.*	*Rating:* 2
	Interpretative summary: John appears to have overwhelming fears which impact on him.	
15, 30, 45, 60	11 Guilt feelings: ▪ I would do anything to forget the time *I fell in a pool.* ▪ My greatest mistake was *… (no answer)* ▪ When I was younger, I felt guilty about *… (no answer)* ▪ The worst thing I ever did *was swear at a teacher under my breath and she heard.*	*Rating:* 1
	Interpretative summary: Guilt feelings seem to concern John related to regrets about his past behaviour.	
2, 17, 32, 47	12 Attitude towards own abilities: ▪ When the odds are against me *… (no answer)* ▪ I believe that I have the ability to *become a good tennis player.* ▪ My greatest weakness is *staying up late.* ▪ When luck turns against me *I try harder.*	*Rating:* 0
	Interpretative summary: John seems to be confident in his ability to overcome certain obstacles and in such circumstances is inspired by them to apply greater effort.	

9, 24, 39, 54	13 Attitude towards the past:	
	- When I was a child *I played in trees.* - Before the war, *I was happy* - If I were young again *I would play more tennis.* - My most vivid childhood memory *is playing soccer.*	*Rating:* 0
	Interpretative summary:	
	John appears to feel he was well adjusted and has a memory of accomplishment.	
5, 20, 35, 50	14 Attitude towards the future:	
	- To me the future looks *bad because of what scientists believe is going to happen to the earth.* - I look forward to *December holidays.* - Some day I *will become a pro tennis player.* - When I am older *I want to be a pro tennis player.*	*Rating:* 0
	Interpretative summary:	
	At times, John seems to be unsure of himself, but he is generally optimistic.	
3, 18, 33, 49	15 Goals:	
	- I always wanted to *become a professional tennis player.* - I could be perfectly happy if *I was playing tennis right now.* - My secret ambition in life *is music.* - What I want most out of life *is to be really happy.*	*Rating:* 1
	Interpretative summary:	
	John appears to identify happiness with personal achievement.	

- **Interpretive summary of the Sacks Sentence Completion Test**

Based on the responses obtained in the test, the following summarising deductions were made of the fifteen categories. John had a rating of 2 (severe disturbance requiring therapeutic aid) on one of the categories, a rating of 1 (emotional conflicts that able to handle without therapeutic aid) on seven categories, and a rating of 0 (no significant disturbance) on seven of the categories.

When looking at John's Sacks Sentence Completion Test profile globally, John struggles to a large extent with his attitude and perception of females, as well as heterosexual relationships, fears and guilt feelings. The perhaps distant relationship that John has with his mother could possibly have impacted on his relationship with other women. However, the interview with John indicates that he finds greater comfort and acceptance in socialising with girls at school than boys. This may possibly signify his need for a close, accepting and nurturing relationship with his mother.

John's responses indicate some adjustment problems. In particular, he has the emotional inability to address his fears and feelings of guilt. John's fear of heights could possibly be indicative of a fear of losing control of his impulses (Abt & Bellak, 1959:389) and this could link with his High School Personality Questionnaire Q_3 score where he describes himself as lax.

In section eleven of the Sacks Sentence Completion Test, John refrained from answering two of the questions relating to guilt feelings. This too may link together with section ten where he stated that he 'backs away' due to his fears. It also links with his low Factor C score on the High School Personality Questionnaire where he tends to avoid problem situations that are confrontational to him. His 'backing away' approach also presents as a problematic coping style.

There is a conflict between two of his responses, namely item 47 and 52. In item 47 John stated that, "When lucks turns against me I try harder," and in item 52, "My fears sometimes force me to back away." Here we can also incorporate his measure of Factor G on the High School Personality Questionnaire which presented John as casual, someone who easily quits, and undependable. This may therefore indicate that when John is confronted with a tense, unsettling and provoking situation, he may respond by quitting. However, when he is confronted by a familiar situation, feels confident in and is not threatened by, such as his tennis, he may then try harder.

His response to item 47 mentioned above when linked to item 17 'I believe I have the ability to become a good tennis player' is in line with his high Factor E score of assertiveness. However, his guilt and fears are not acknowledged although it appears that John is aware that he is not emotionally strong. Therefore, he probably utilises the coping style of withdrawing in most threatening and challenging situations.

5.3.1.3 Synthesis and conclusion of the case study: John
When bringing together the information obtained from John's High School Personality Questionnaire, Sacks Sentence Completion Test and interview, John can be described as an outgoing and social individual who enjoys interacting with female peers. His relationship with his mother appears to be rather distant at present and he enjoys a close bond with his father. John has a need to achieve in order to receive esteem from

others, in particular his parents. His relationship with his educators seems to be ambivalent and he shows a rather rebellious attitude at times.

John stated that he prefers working under pressure and this fits with his scores on the High School Personality Questionnaire factors G and Q_3 which indicate that he is casual, undependable, careless, and lax. John does, however, show dedication and commitment toward his tennis which could also be a safe haven for him to release his frustrations, tensions and build his esteem simultaneously.

His factors C and G on the questionnaire also indicate his low ego and superego strength which manifests through emotional immaturity, quitting behaviour and being undependable. This corresponds with his Sacks Sentence Completion Test items where he indicated a number of adjustment problems including his inability to address his fears and guilt which results in a problematic coping style of withdrawal or "backing away". Tennis may be the activity he turns to in order to escape.

From the above mentioned information, it does not appear that John would excel in a leadership position but rather would enjoy to be part of the team and follow a more relaxed, casual and happy-go-lucky approach. However, despite the negative attributes which John displays, he does have the potential to excel and grow. This may be dependent on how he addresses his fears and guilt feelings in the future, and the provision of unconditional acceptance from his significant others.

When relating the information obtained regarding John's ego strength to Loevinger's stages of ego development as discussed in 2.2.3.3, he functions on level E2 or the impulsive stage. John functions as an individual who is dependent on others. He reacts to the opinions of others. His perception of good people as those who give, share and provide for him, and of bad people as those who are mean and do not share and provide for him is in line with his view of authority, especially of some of his educators as shared in the interview. John's understanding of rules is poor. Such behaviour is characteristically normal for the very young child, but can be problematic in adolescence and adulthood.

5.3.2   Case study two: Steven (high ego strength)

5.3.2.1 Biographical information

Name:	Steven (pseudonym)
Gender:	Male
Chronological age:	15 years, 02 months
Home language:	English/Afrikaans
Grade:	Nine (9)

Ego and superego strength on High School Personality Questionnaire:

Factor C:	Sten 8
Factor G:	Sten 8

5.3.2.2 Interpretation of assessment media

(a) Interview

The interview with Steven was conducted by myself on 07 September 2007 and took place at his school in Pretoria. A full transcription of the interview is included as annexure B.

In the interview Steven presented as being a quiet, reserved, and rather introverted young man. However, he was extremely polite and well-mannered and was confident in his responses without expanding and talking a lot. He was dressed in school uniform and was neatly groomed. Generally speaking he came across as someone who is concerned about his appearance and takes pride in himself.

Throughout the interview it emerged that Steven is a very diligent, dependent, and reliable leaner. He has a very positive attitude and outlook toward school, his educators, as well as his peers. Steven also receives positive feedback from his teachers and does not appear to have difficulties with those in authority.

Steven's positive and determined outlook helped him to adapt to a new school setting in the previous year, and the shift to English as medium of instruction. Steven has adapted and coped well with this adjustment.

▪ **Additional biographical information**

Steven is the eldest child of three children. His parents are married and he lives in a stable home environment. Steven lives on the estate neighbouring the school he attends in Pretoria. He attended a different school for his primary education where he was educated in Afrikaans. He enrolled at his current school in January 2006 in order to begin his secondary education at a new school and is now in Grade 9. Steven has not failed or repeated a grade.

▪ **Family and environmental background**

Steven's parents have provided a nurturing and caring home for him and his two siblings. His father is employed as a chief executive officer for a large company in Pretoria, and his mother is a stay-at-home mom. Steven has a close relationship with both of his parents but seems to have a stronger bond and connection with his mother at present. His mother spends a lot of time and energy with her children and interacts often with them in the afternoons after school. His father works long hours in order to provide for the family. As a result he has less time at home with the children during week days. Steven longs for a more active and interactive relationship with his father where they could spend more time together.

Steven's relationships with his siblings are good. Steven has a younger brother in grade 6 and a younger sister in grade 2. His relationship with his brother appears to be closer than that with his sister which he feels is due to their age and common interest in extramural activities. Steven's relationship with his sister is different: he feels more of a role-model and protector than a 'friend'.

The neighbourhood in which Steven and his family live is an elite estate with large gardens and safe roads where the children are able to roam and explore in safe and secure grounds. As mentioned earlier, the estate is adjacent to the school Steven attends.

▪ **Academic image**

According to Steven he is coping well at school with the academic demands and has very positive experiences regarding school, his peers, and his teachers. Steven experiences his educators as approachable, extremely competent and having an interest

in him. He therefore holds them in high esteem and views them as very helpful to him and other diligent learners. Both Steven's mother and father play an extremely supportive role in his academic progress.

Steven is not entirely sure which career he would like to pursue in the future but enjoys working with his hands in practical areas. Despite his uncertainty about which career he would like to follow, he shows strong determination and perseverance to reach goals and ideals that he sets for himself. His favourite subjects at school include science, mathematics and accounting. Steven thus enjoys subjects that entail non-verbal reasoning, analysing, scientific thought, and abstract thinking. Steven is at ease to approach his teachers for additional explanations of the learning material.

Based on the above, it appears that Steven functions on the level of formal operational thought, the stage of cognitive development in Piaget's theory which follows concrete operations.

Formal operational thought enables adolescents to study successfully in learning areas such as algebra, chemistry, philosophy and literature. In view of the fact that Steven enjoys mathematics and science, one can assume that he can utilise a hypothetical-deductive method of thought where he inspects the data and then hypothesises that a specific theory may explain that data. According to Piaget, the ability of hypothetical-deductive thought is the basis of scientific thinking and experimentation (Berk, 2005:247).

▪ **Emotional image**

Adolescence encompasses a time of adjustments and therefore has an impact on the adolescents' emotions. The child also has to move from being a young child to a teenager.

Steven can be described as an emotionally well-adjusted, mature and sensitive individual. Steven's sports activities and achievements as well as academic diligence and positive attitude present as areas which boost his confidence and help him achieve balance. Steven appears to be content about who he is and optimistic about his future.

With regard to interpersonal relations, Steven interacts very well with his family, close friends, peers, and teachers. Steven feels that he needs more time to trust and open up to new people but comes across as a very respectful, polite and warm young man. Steven's relations with others in his social world, particularly his family and friends, are important to him and provide him with a safe place in which to explore his characteristics, strengths and weaknesses through socialising.

- **Metaphor**

Steven was asked during the interview to describe himself in terms of a metaphor in order to explore his self-image. The metaphor was chosen as it is a projective medium which is non-threatening.

Steven chose to describe himself as "a car because I know where I am going, and I have a lot of energy and determination to get there. I have motivation and keep my eyes focused ahead." Steven continued to describe the car as one which does not need to fill up often and is able to go far on one tank of fuel, and as a regular four-by-four vehicle because it is "tall and can drive over obstacles and is strong". Steven's metaphor indicates that he experiences himself as an individual who tends to be focused, determined, emotionally strong, responsible, and enduring.

- **Physical image**

During adolescence a number of physical changes take place, especially during early adolescence. There is a great amount of growth and transformation in the physical appearance where the adolescent moves to a phase between childhood and adulthood. The period of adolescence may be a common stage which all persons need to venture through before reaching adulthood; however, this experience is unique for each individual. For some adolescents there is a great amount of competition where boys and girls compare themselves with one another to see how they measure up. The rapid growth which takes place and the characteristics thereof affect almost every part of the adolescents' body.

Steven appears to be content with his physical appearance and does not present as concerned about his physical image at present. His sport contributes to his physical appearance where he is fit and slim, and also boosts his confidence. Steven presents as

an adolescent who enjoys the outdoors and being active which helps him to de-stress and unwind from daily pressures and demands.

▪ **Cognitive image**

The interview with Steven indicates that he is an extremely motivated, determined and focused learner who realises that to attain his goals and dreams he needs to apply himself wholeheartedly to academic and other areas or challenges in his life. Although Steven does not have a set career ideal in mind, he is motivated to do the best he can to have options open to him when he decides which career field to follow. Steven's sport, especially swimming, requires and receives his commitment, focus, dedication, time and energy. When Steven has a goal, he does not appear to be deterred from following it.

Together with Steven's dedication, intrinsic motivation, and commitment, he has unconditional support and encouragement from his family and teachers in order to accomplish his goals. Steven considers both his mother and father as his sources of inspiration: his mother is largely his emotional and moral support; his father supports his academic work.

Steven therefore appears to have positive family and educational dynamics, which, together with his own deep internal willpower and focus to succeed, are extremely favourable aspects which will assist him in achieving his ultimate goals in the future.

▪ **Moral image**

Moral development includes the process whereby children learn principles which enable them to judge behavioural patterns as being "bad" or "good", "acceptable" or "unacceptable", and, as a result, direct their behaviour accordingly. The ability to differentiate between right and wrong is to a great degree considered the most important developmental task of adolescence.

Steven's formal-operational level of thought, dedication to provide the best of himself in order to reach his goals, together with his concern for fairness in group work make it likely that he engages in sound moral reasoning. He is also very respectful and feels rules are there for a reason set by those he trusts and whom he considers to know better. Therefore, he has a positive approach to rules and authority figures. His need to

achieve his goals and dreams, both short and long-term, could have a double-sided motivation: firstly, to achieve for himself, and secondly, to gain the approval and pleasure of his significant others.

With regard to his religious views Steven shared in the interview that he is a Christian and attends church regularly.

- **Brief summary of the interview**

Throughout the interview Steven presented as a positive, friendly, respectful, motivated and well-cared for young man. He settled into the interview situation with ease, and despite not being very talkative, he displayed a quiet and calm confidence, and emotional maturity. Steven appears to be a very enthusiastic and directed individual.

Steven's family dynamics and environmental background are intact and supportive, except for his need to spend more time and have more interaction with his father, especially on a non-academic level. Steven's family plays a very significant role in his life and he has an extremely close bond and appreciation for his mother's unconditional support. Steven constantly rationalises his father's need to work long hours to provide for the family, and still longs for more time with him. The socio-economic status of Steven's school places pressure on Steven's father to provide, especially as his mother is not employed. Steven recognises both of his parents' dedication, support, and provision for him, although it may be expressed in different ways. Steven's positive and enriching family situation appears to have a strong impact on his overall functioning.

In summary, Steven's functioning according to his different personal aspects are an expression of a well-adjusted early adolescent who is a conscientious learner, a dedicated sportsman, has a positive outlook on life, is extremely determined, and has intense internal motivation to reach his goals.

(b) High School Personality Questionnaire

The High School Personality Questionnaire was completed by Steven on 31 January 2007 at his school. I was responsible for the administration thereof. Table 5.8 provides the scores that Steven obtained in the questionnaire.

Table 5.8 Profile of Steven's High School Personality Questionnaire

Factor	Low Score Description	Standard Ten Score (Sten) Average										High Score Description
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
A	Critical, Reserved, Cool				•							Warm, Soft-Hearted, Participating
B	Dull, Less Intelligent									•		More Intelligent, Bright
C	Emotionally Immature Unstable								•			Emotionally Mature, Stable, Realistic
D	Deliberate, Stodgy, Placid									•		Unrestrained, Nervous
E	Obedient, Mild, Dependent								•			Assertive, Aggressive, Rebellious
F	Sober, Silent, Serious					•						Happy-Go-Lucky, Enthusiastic
G	Casual, Quitting, Undependable								•			Conscientious, Persevering
H	Timid, Threat-Sensitive, Shy						•					Venturesome, Thick-Skinned
I	Practical, Tough-Minded				•							Tender Minded, Sensitive, Protected
J	Vigorous, Goes Readily with Group					•						Individualistic, Obstructive, Reflective
O	Secure, Resilient, Confident			•								Discouraged, Worrying, Self-Reproaching
Q_2	Group Follower, Values Social Approval								•			Make Own Decisions, Resourceful
Q_3	Careless, Ignores Standards, Lax			•								Self-Controlled, Self-Respecting
Q_4	Relaxed, Composed					•						Tense, Driven, Irritable
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

Each of the factors mentioned on the profile is represented by a bipolar continuum of which the two extreme poles are described on the left-hand pole (representing a standard score of 1 to 4) and the right-hand pole (representing a standard score of 7 to 10). It is of vital importance to guard against the assumption that the right-hand or 'high' pole is 'good' or that the left-hand or 'low' pole is 'bad'. Different performances and purposes may require the left and sometimes the right-hand pole to be advantageous. Each factor is indicated by an alphabetical letter as stated in the profile.

Steven's significantly high and low primary factor scores are discussed briefly below:

Table 5.9 Significant high scores (standard sten scores of 8, 9 and 10):

FACTOR	STEN	DESCRIPTION
Factor B	10	This high score could be reflective of *abstract thinking and high intelligence* which includes aspects such as high general mental capacity, being insightful, fast-learning and/or intellectually adaptable with a healthy intelligence.
Factor C	8	This high score may be related to *emotional stability* and *high ego strength* including aspects such as emotional maturity, emotional control, stability, constant interests, as well as being realistic, calm, responsible, and/or showing restrain in avoiding problem situations.
Factor D	9	This high score may reflect *excitability* which includes aspects such as impatience, attention-seeking, prone to jealousy, self-assertiveness, self-interest, nervousness, and/or being easily confused.
Factor E	8	This high score may be indicative of *dominance* including aspects such as self-assertiveness, aggression, competitive, stubborn, arrogant, independent, stern, rebellious, headstrong and/or demanding admiration.
Factor G	8	This high score may be related to *conscientiousness* and *high ego strength* which includes being dutiful, persevering, moralistic, consistent, determined, emotionally disciplined, orderly, conscientious, and concerned about moral standards and rules.

Source: Visser et al (2003)

Table 5.10 Significant low scores (standard sten scores of 1, 2, and 3):

FACTOR	STEN	DESCRIPTION
Factor O	3	This low score may be reflective of *self-assurance* including aspects such as cheerfulness, vigor, opportunism, energetic, fearless, and being complacent.
Factor Q_3	3	This low score may be indicative of *low self-sentiment integration* or *lack of control* which incorporates aspects such as being lax, following own urges and disregarding social rules.

Source: Visser et al (2003)

The following second-order factor scores were calculated from Steven's primary scores:

- Anxiety:

$$= \frac{(11-C) + D + (11-G) + (11-H) + 0 + (11-Q_3) + Q_4}{7}$$

$$= \frac{(11-8) + 9 + (11-8) + (11-6) + 3 + (11-3) + 5}{7}$$

$$= \frac{3 + 9 + 3 + 5 + 3 + 8 + 5}{7}$$

$$= \mathbf{5.1}$$

Steven's second order factor score for anxiety was 5.1 which is considered to be average. This may indicate that Steven experiences reasonably common levels of anxiety. According to Visser, et al. (2003:40), factor C needs to be taken into account when interpreting the anxiety second order factor score. Steven's significantly high C score (8) may indicate that Steven presents as emotionally stable, mature for his age, calm, responsible and has the ability to adjust to facts as well as face reality.

- Extraversion:

$$= \frac{A + F + H + (11-J) + (11-Q2)}{5}$$

$$= \frac{4 + 5 + 6 + (11-5) + (11-7)}{5}$$

$$= \frac{4 + 5 + 6 + 6 + 4}{5}$$

$$= \mathbf{5}$$

A second order score of 5 for extraversion was obtained by Steven. This can be considered to be an average score which may indicate that Steven tends to be neither introverted nor extroverted but leans very slightly more toward being an introverted type of person.

- **Brief summary of Steven's High School Personality Questionnaire profile**

Steven's profile presents personality characteristics including being cool and reserved. This may correlate with him being more introverted; being an extremely intelligent

learner which correlates with his academic performance and dedication at school; being emotionally mature and stable; being assertive, conscientious, and persevering; having a practical approach, as well as being resourceful, secure, confident and resilient. These aspects correlate with the interview that was conducted, where Steven commented:

> I am dependable at school with my work, and at home, and with my sports. If someone asks me to do something and I say I will do it then I will do it… I'm more calm and not easily troubled.

He also described an ideal person as someone who is fair and works together as part of the team and puts the team above themselves. Steven's low factor Q_3 score, however, does not seem to fit with his profile by presenting him as careless and lax. His high factor D which suggests a possible nervousness could be related to his anxiety in meeting new people, as he also expressed in the interview:

> Once I get to know someone then yes (I am a people person) but it takes a while for me to get comfortable with someone … I trust people too easily and then can get hurt so I rather take time to get to know them.

(c) The Sacks Sentence Completion Test

The Sacks Sentence Completion Test was administered on 07 September 2007 at the school Steven attends. Steven was presented with sixty incomplete sentences and was instructed to complete these by filling in the initial idea that came to his mind. In Table 5.11 the beginning of the sentence is displayed in normal font and Steven's responses were typed in italics. When Steven had completed the test, his responses were placed in fifteen categories which each comprised four sentences. As was discussed in 4.2.2.3, an assessment rating score of (2, 1, 0 or X) was assigned to each category after a global qualitative evaluation was made thereof. For each category, an interpretative summary is also provided.

Table 5.11 Steven's responses to the Sacks Sentence Completion Test

ITEMS	CATEGORIES	RATING
14, 29, 44, 59	1 Attitudes towards mother: ▪ My mother *is very loving and gives up a lot of her time to drive me around and help me.* ▪ My mother and I *have a very good relationship.* ▪ I think that most mothers *are afraid for their children to grow up and go into the world.* ▪ I like my mother but *sometimes she can be irritating and too up close.*	*Rating:* 1
	Interpretative summary: Steven expresses positive feelings towards his mother and is able to see his mother's faults but accepts them and tolerates their differences. Possibly he is overprotected by his mother.	
1, 16, 31, 46	2 Attitudes towards father: ▪ I feel my father seldom *arrives after work before seven at night.* ▪ If my father would only *come home a little earlier every night, but I know he works hard so we can have a good life.* ▪ I wish my father *could be home earlier at nights.* ▪ I feel that my father is *very hard working and loving.*	*Rating:* 1
	Interpretative summary: Steven admires his father but wishes that their relationship was closer.	
12, 27, 42, 57	3 Attitudes towards family unit: ▪ Compared with most families, mine *is very close together and have a lot of quality family time.* ▪ My family treats me like *I am a mature person who can make decisions but also needs help with everyday problems.* ▪ Most families I know *are well off and close to each other.* ▪ When I was a child, my family *stayed in a smaller house and had two dogs.*	*Rating:* 0
	Interpretative summary: Steven appears to have a favourable feeling toward his family and is aware that his family recognises him as a mature person.	

10, 25, 40, 55	4	Attitudes towards females:	
		▪ My idea of a perfect woman *is a woman who is independent, funny and attractive.* ▪ I think most girls *are intelligent and special in their own unique way.* ▪ I believe most women *are beautiful and special in their own unique way.* ▪ What I like least about women: *they sometimes have mood swings but only some women some times.*	*Rating:* 0
	Interpretative summary: Positive feelings, acceptance, and respect shape Steven's attitude to women.		
11, 26, 41, 56	5	Attitudes toward heterosexual relationships:	
		▪ When I see a man and a woman together *I feel that things are as they should be.* ▪ My feelings about married life *is that it is good to be so loving and committed to one person.* ▪ If I had sex relations *I would stay true to the one person but I believe that sex should wait until marriage.* ▪ My view of sex is *that sex should be waited for until marriage.*	*Rating:* 0
	Interpretative summary: Steven has a positive view toward heterosexual relationships and high moral standards.		
8, 23, 38, 53	6	Attitude toward friends and acquaintances:	
		▪ I feel that a real friend *should support me and guide me when I need guidance.* ▪ I don't like people who *are selfish and arrogant.* ▪ The people I like best *are people who are funny and trustworthy.* ▪ When I'm not around, my friends *carry on as usual.*	*Rating:* 0
	Interpretative summary: Steven expresses mutual good feelings between himself and his friends.		
6, 21, 36, 51	7	Attitude toward seniors at school or work:	
		▪ The men over me *help me in any problems that I might have.* ▪ In school, my teachers *are very good teachers and help me with anything, they are also very kind.* ▪ When I see the principal coming *I quickly check if my shirt is tucked in and greet him.* ▪ People whom I consider my superiors *are my parents, grandparents and teachers.*	*Rating:* 0

	Interpretative summary:	
	Steven expresses no conflict with authority figures and feels accepted by those in authority.	
4, 19, 34, 48	8 Attitude toward subordinates: ▪ If I were in charge *of the school I would reward good behaviour and results more often.* ▪ If people work for me *I will make sure that they are happy and comfortable as possible.* ▪ The people who work for me *will be well treated and respected.* ▪ In giving orders to others I *try to sound not too bossy and spread the work evenly.*	*Rating:* 0
	Interpretative summary: Steven appears to feel comfortable and well accepted by his subordinates.	
13, 28, 43, 58	9 Attitude toward friends at school or at home: ▪ At work/school, I get along best with *my two best friends, Hugo and Serena.* ▪ Those I work with are *usually good workers who will not let me down and will contribute.* ▪ I like working with people who *don't let me down and contribute to the task at hand.* ▪ People who work with me usually *think I am a good leader and listen if I speak.*	*Rating:* 0
	Interpretative summary: Steven seems to express mutual good feelings toward his peers and also has confidence in his peers.	
7, 22, 37, 52	10 Fears: ▪ I know it is silly but I am afraid of *touching spiders.* ▪ Most of my friends don't know that I am afraid of *meeting new people and being extraverted.* ▪ I wish I could lose the fear of *meeting new people.* ▪ My fears sometimes force me to *face them head on and try to overcome them.*	*Rating:* 1
	Interpretative summary: It appears that Steven has a possible fear of self-assertion which is fairly common and not pervasive. However, in his High School Personality Questionnaire profile he had a sten of 8 on factor E which suggests assertiveness. This may therefore be situation dependent.	

15, 30, 45, 60	11 Guilt feelings:	*Rating:*
	▪ I would do anything to forget the time *I fell out of a tree I was climbing to impress a girl.*	1
	▪ My greatest mistake was *telling a girl that I loved her but she then took it wrong and hurt me.*	
	▪ When I was younger, I felt guilty about *eating the last of the cake.*	
	▪ The worst thing I ever did *was lie to my dad and he punished me and boy I can still remember.*	
	Interpretative summary:	
	It seems that Steven has certain regrets regarding the past and appears to be slightly bothered at times by them.	
2, 17, 32, 47	12 Attitude towards own abilities:	*Rating:*
	▪ When the odds are against me *I try my hardest to succeed.*	0
	▪ I believe that I have the ability to *do anything that I put my mind to.*	
	▪ My greatest weakness is *that I trust people too easily and through that get hurt.*	
	▪ When luck turns against me *I try my best to get back up and try again until I succeed.*	
	Interpretative summary:	
	Steven appears to have confidence in his ability to overcome obstacles, and is inspired by them to apply greater efforts.	
9, 24, 39, 54	13 Attitude towards the past:	*Rating:*
	▪ When I was a child *I used to build tents out of blankets in the house.*	0
	▪ Before the war, I *try to resolve matters or problems by talking.*	
	▪ If I were young again *I would try to play with more friends.*	
	▪ My most vivid childhood memory *is when I went to America for a wrestling camp.*	
	Interpretative summary:	
	Steven seems to feel well adjusted and has a positive outlook. His memories are of accomplishments and fun.	
5, 20, 35, 50	14 Attitude towards the future:	*Rating:*
	▪ To me the future looks *very bleak because in my opinion the government is not working well together.*	0
	▪ I look forward to *getting my car and drivers' license.*	
	▪ Some day I *want to be very rich.*	
	▪ When I am older *I want to have a lot of money and friends.*	

	Interpretative summary:	
	Steven appears to have an overall optimism, but at times can be unsure or concerned about the state of affairs in the future. He does appear to feel confident about achieving his materialistic goals.	
3, 18, 33, 49	15 Goals: ▪ I always wanted to *own my own gaming computer.* ▪ I could be perfectly happy if *I could learn to be a bit more outgoing and meet new people.* ▪ My secret ambition in life *is to become very rich and retire young.* ▪ What I want most out of life *is to make a lot of friends and be happy and have enough money to retire young.*	*Rating:* 1
	Interpretative summary:	
	Steven seems to identify happiness with material success.	

▪ **Interpretive summary of the Sacks Sentence Completion Test**

Based on Steven's responses obtained in the test, the following concluding deductions can be made:

Of the fifteen categories, Steven obtained a rating of 1 in five of the categories of attitude toward his father, mother, fears, guilt feelings, and goals. In these areas Steven does appear to have emotional conflicts but appears to be able to handle them without therapeutic aid. In the remaining eleven categories Steven had a rating of 0 which therefore expresses that he has no disturbance in these areas. In none of the categories did Steven obtain a rating of 2 which signifies severe disturbance requiring therapeutic aid in order to handle the related emotional conflicts of that category.

Considering Steven's Sacks Sentence Completion Test profile globally, it appears that he is functioning well in a healthy family unit, although he does wish to interact more and spend additional time with his father who works long hours. Steven's family unit seems to be reasonably intact and sound.

Steven's relationships with his parents, authorities, peers and friends appear to be positive and healthy. On an interpersonal level, he seems to have a sensitive nature and shows acceptance of others, especially women. He also has an optimistic outlook on

heterosexual relationships where he includes high personal moral values. A theme which was revealed in the test was Steven's desire to be able to interact more freely with those he does not know and be more outgoing. He also showed distrust after being hurt by people. He appears to be confident about taking a leadership role and values fairness and equality.

A few minor regrets regarding certain aspects in the past seem to have emerged in the test. However, he does not appear to have any serious guilt feelings. In conclusion, Steven presents as an extremely committed, motivated, optimistic and confident learner who is determined to make a success of his academic, sport and future career aspirations.

5.3.2.3 Synthesis and conclusion of the case study: Steven

A number of themes surfaced in Steven's High School Personality Questionnaire profile, Sacks Sentence Completion Test, and interview, and will be discussed here.

Steven presented as a respectful, motivated, calm, confident, directed, determined and motivated person in the interview. This correlates with his high ego and superego strength in the High School Personality Questionnaire factors C and G. Steven's profile also highlighted characteristics such as being cool, reserved, assertive, conscientious and persevering. These aspects appear to be evident in his dedication to his swimming as well as his academic work and interaction with his peers and educators.

The Sacks Sentence Completion Test and interview indicate that Steven has a healthy family unit which provides him with support and acceptance. He also has positive relationships with his peers, those in authority and his educators. He is respectful to both his superiors and peers. This fits with a leadership role in which Steven seems to feel confident.

Steven's low factor A score on the High School Personality Questionnaire correlates with his fear of meeting new people which was expressed in the Sacks Sentence Completion Test as well as the interview. This could possibly be due to distrust in people after being hurt, as also stated in his test in category thirteen. This correlates with factor D score which signifies nervousness, which may be in relation to meeting new people. His high

factor E score indicates assertiveness. Relating this to his factor A and D score therefore suggests that these factors and characteristics are situation dependent: he is nervous in situations with unfamiliar people, but assertive in situations that he is familiar with.

In general Steven appears to have a calm confidence and strong determination in all he sets out to achieve. He is resourceful and focused in reaching his goals. Steven has difficulties such as nervousness about meeting new people and possible distrust in people due to a past hurt. However, his coping mechanism and defence style is that of a healthy functioning individual. Steven's Q_3 score (according to his profile was a sten of 3) indicating carelessness, ignoring of standards, and a lax attitude, was dismissed by Steven when discussing his profile. He did not feel this score reflected who he is, as he felt that he was a sten 7 or 8 which reflected self-control and self-respect.

When relating Steven's level of ego development to Loevinger's stages, it appears that he is on the conscientious stage (E6). His ability to self-evaluate and his efforts to achieve goals, attempting to live up to ideals, and improving the self corroborates this stage. Steven's priorities are appropriately considered in moral decisions and issues as set out by this stage. Persons at this level, as does Steven, think beyond his or her own personal concerns to those of others and society at large.

5.3.3   Summary of both respondents

The qualitative research did not aim to compare the two participants who formed part of the case studies, but rather indicate the two life worlds of the learners. Moreover, it was decided to include the two specific learners as part of the investigation based on the grounds of their divergent measure of ego strength based on the High School Personality Questionnaire. Therefore, in this section the aim is to present some of the most prominent differences which emerged between the two participants in relatively broad outline. It should be noted that a scientific comparison cannot be made between the two respondents; however, an attempt was made to compare the data obtained on a qualitative level. Furthermore, the data presented is not for the purpose of generalising the results and findings to other learners.

When looking at their home contexts, Steven and John both come from homes where they are the eldest child, both have a younger brother, and both sets of parents are in their first marriage. Steven's parents are similar to John's in that both of their fathers work long hours and travel to Johannesburg for work. However, there is a difference with regard to the availability of their mothers. Steven's mother devotes her afternoons and free time to driving Steven to his swimming lessons six days a week and supports him by giving of her time and energy to do so. Steven and his mother also have a very close bond and he has an extremely positive view of his mother and of women in general. John's mother on the other hand appears to spend her time at home and John relies on others for transport to and from his tennis coaching six days a week. John's perception and relationship with his mother and women in general seems to be more distant and at times negative. When comparing sibling relationships, Steven has a good relationship with both of his younger siblings and more so with his younger brother who takes part in swimming training with him. John's relationship with his younger brother appears to be more strained in that he appears to find him more annoying and irritating, and does not share the same interests with regard to extra-mural activities. John and his brother are rather competitive about spending time with their parents. Both learners share a bilingual home background, where Afrikaans and English are spoken.

The social context that the two learners live in is affluent; both fathers work hard and long hours in order to provide for their families. They attend the same independent school and both appear to be well cared for. Their socio-economic status is similar. In the interviews, both Steven and John shared that they are Christians and attend church.

The personality styles of the two learners differ in that John is more extroverted, social and talkative whereas Steven is more introverted, quiet and sensitive. They both had a confidence about themselves. However, it appeared that Steven's confidence was intrinsically motivated and John's confidence was extrinsically based. These basic differences in personality impact on their interpersonal relationships. Steven has a close circle of friends whom he enjoys and feels safe with. John is a very social and outgoing person who views himself as being friends with everyone and enjoys the company of girls. When looking at characteristics relating to ego development according to the High School Personality Questionnaire factors C (ego strength) and G (superego strength), it seems as if the low and high ego strengths impact differently on their lives.

Steven is more responsible, conscientious, reliable, consistent, emotionally mature, emotionally stable, able to distance himself from problem situations, and in general a very dependable individual. He also sees rules as purposeful and necessary, and complies with these rules. Steven's significantly low Factor Q_3 (sten 3) does however seem to be contradictory where it presents him as being careless, ignoring standards and being lax. This also does not seem to corroborate the information obtained in the first interview and follow-up interview conducted with Steven.

John is more easy-going, lax, happy-go-lucky, leaves things until the last minute, is rebellious at times, is troubled easily, worries about things, and when frustrated reacts in an emotional manner. He views rules as being necessary but should be given leeway in certain instances. The rules he agrees with are the same ones he violates on occasion. He also obtained a low Factor Q_3 score (sten 3) which is in line with his careless and lax approach to aspects such as his projects and academic work which are left until the last minute. John's impulsive, overconfident, thoughtless, easily troubled, easily excited, and easily irritated behaviour results in quick reactions. The result of his acting out and moods are dependent on other people, and thus unpredictable as are his relationships. However, his commitment lies in his sport.

In the school context John and Steven both appear to be intelligent learners who are achieving well academically despite their sporting demands and long hours of training. However, Steven is a much more diligent and conscientious learner who has a high respect for and good relationship with his educators. John seems to be more lax with regard to school work and has a rebellious attitude towards a few of his teachers. He is inclined to 'back-chat' them and has in the past sworn at a teacher. If a teacher is not fond of John, he forms a negative attitude toward her. Both Steven and John enjoy mathematics as their favourite subject and are logically minded. Steven particularly enjoys science and accounting.

John and Steven are both extremely sporty individuals who have a passion for their specific sports; tennis and swimming respectively. They are both extremely dedicated and committed to their training and attend coaching six days a week. High motivation is displayed by both Steven and John. However, John is motivated extrinsically to receive

recognition and esteem from his family, friends and peers; Steven is motivated intrinsically in order to achieve for himself and do his best.

5.4 CONCLUSION

Chapter five included the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the empirical research results. A discussion of the quantitative research data as well as the analysis of the data which transpired from the qualitative research methods was presented.

Chapter six which follows consists of a discussion of the results of these analyses. The focus of the chapter will be on the design and implementation of guidelines and strategies which educational psychologists may utilise in the domain of ego development.

CHAPTER 6

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The good life is a process,
not a state of being.
It is a direction,
not a destination.

Carl Rogers

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter five the presentation and analysis as well as interpretation of the results of the empirical research were discussed in detail. Chapter six aims to provide a broad overview of the entire study and on the basis of this, recommendations have been made to educational psychologists in addressing the phenomenon of ego development specifically related to learners in the early adolescent stage.

This study endeavoured to find answers to the following problem:

What is the role and functioning of ego development in grade nine learners and what are the implications for personality development?

6.2 OVERVIEW OF THE INVESTIGATION

In an effort to address the research statement mentioned above, an extensive literature study was conducted in order to investigate the various aspects regarding ego development, including:

- Historical perspectives of ego development;
- Recent perspectives and research relating to ego development;
- Definitions of ego development;
- Causes and results of ego development;
- Characteristics of ego development; and
- How ego development relates to the adolescents' global development.

The literature discussion was followed by an investigation of the developmental factors that occur simultaneously during the period of adolescence and the relation of this to ego development. This was followed by an empirical investigation including both quantitative and qualitative data collection in which the following media were applied:

- The High School Personality Questionnaire on one hundred and ten grade nine learners;

- ▪ Case studies with two grade nine learners which included:
  - ▫ Interviews;
  - ▫ Sacks Sentence Completion Test; and
  - ▫ High School Personality Questionnaire which had been conducted together with the selected group.

6.3 SYNTHESIS OF SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

6.3.1   Main findings and concluding summary of the literature study

A number of findings from the literature study regarding ego development have been summarised in 6.3.1.1.

6.3.1.1 Ego development as a multi-faceted phenomenon

(i)   Historical perspectives

The historical perspectives of ego development were viewed from three main theorists, namely Sigmund Freud, Erik Erikson and Jane Loevinger. The literature that was presented gave different angles of the definition of ego and ego development. The psychodynamic view of Freud and Erikson understood the ego as being the regulator of the personality and this is still acknowledged in tests such as the High School Personality Questionnaire. Erikson did expand on Freud's work by including levels of psychosocial development which progressed into late adulthood. Erikson also included social skills and crises taking place within his theory of psychosocial development which individuals need to resolve positively in order to attain the pertinent ego strengths which accompany that developmental stage. Jane Loevinger had a new angle on ego development which distinguished ego development as being an individual's character development that takes place through a process and includes both positive and negative characteristics, depending on whether this is on par with the individual's general developmental level.

(ii)   Recent perspectives

Recent literature, research and perspectives on ego development tend to be more agreeable with Loevinger's theory and definition which view ego development encompassing character development. This recent research has also linked the

phenomenon of ego development with the developmental domains of adolescence. This will be expanded on in the section that follows.

(iii)   Developmental domains

Adolescents experience extensive developmental changes in all aspects and domains of their lives. It is therefore an intense stage of simultaneous adjustments. Although the developmental domains are categorised into general areas such as physical, cognitive, emotional and social spheres, it should be kept in mind that these adjustments take place concurrently and the adolescent learner always needs to be seen as a unique individual.

(a)   Physical domain

As noted in 3.2.1, the main physical changes which take place during adolescence includes the growth spurt; primary and secondary sexual characteristics; motor development; body image; as well as hormonal changes. In recent research physical characteristics and development appear to be closely linked with ego development where higher ego strength was associated with a stronger overall sense of positive self-worth. There were also links between physical fitness, health and coordination abilities contributing to high ego strength as well as genetic factors on ego development.

(b)   Cognitive domain

The cognitive domain, as discussed in 3.2.2, encompasses aspects such as intelligence, formal operational thought, thinking skills, processing information, and creativity. Connections between cognitive development in adolescence and ego development were linked to academic achievement as well as associated ego development with inner control. Erikson related the individual's creative abilities with solving developmental crises. A link between high ego strength and an internalising cognitive style and greater competency as well as recognising strengths was found.

(c)   Social domain

Social development in adolescence, as was noted in 3.2.3, incorporates the impact of the adolescent's parents' parental style; wrestle for independence; peer

group formation, pressure and conformity; relationships with friends of the opposite gender, personality development, as well as identity formation. Erikson clearly linked the process of ego development with social development through his psychosocial theory. The role of society and the environment was therefore seen as being crucial in optimal ego development. Loevinger too viewed the family as being a vital influential factor as a context for ego development during adolescence. It was also noted that the social aspects of interacting with peers, participating in structured activities, as well as healthy parenting, are contributing factors of socialisation which are interlinked with ego development.

(d)   Emotional, moral and religious domain

As discussed in 3.2.4, emotional, moral and religious developmental aspects in adolescence include emotional maturity, intensified emotionality, religious awakening, reservation and revival, as well as the acquisition of values. Ego development was associated with greater emotional diversity and emotional conflict. A link between ego development and greater nurturance, interpersonal sensitivity, empathy and valuing the uniqueness of others was also found.

Moral development was related to ego development by Freud who viewed the superego as functioning according to moral principals and bringing about guilt feelings should one have immoral desires. Loevinger's stages also reflect aspects of moral development.

In 3.2.4.3, it was noted that adolescents who are involved in a religious community are more directed to community service as well as responsible behaviour which is also linked with moral behaviour.

(iv)   Causes of high and low ego strength

The causes of high and low ego strength were associated with aspects including the parenting style, parent-child relationships, genetic factors, environmental factors, communication styles and role-modeling behaviour as relayed by the adolescents' parents.

(v)   Results and outcomes of high and low ego strength

The results or outcomes of high ego strength encompass products such as positive self-worth, an internalising cognitive style, ability to acknowledge strengths, and a greater competency. A link between increasing ego development and an internal academic locus of control, solid learning direction, a higher class rank, as well as academic achievement has also been noted.

(vi)   Behaviour that can be expected as a result of high or low ego strength

Behavioural problems as well as aggression in childhood and adolescence have been linked to inversely related ego level attainment in young adults. In the case of either under or over control during childhood or adolescence, this could impact on the individual's functioning and therefore his or her ego development.

Popularity during adolescence was positively correlated with ego development where such individuals experienced secure attachment and adaptive relations with their mothers and friends, the ability to control impulse, being able to take various views within conflicting situations, as well as incorporating and balancing the needs of others and the self.

6.3.2   Main findings and concluding summary of the empirical investigation

In the empirical investigation of this study, a number of central findings were made. These findings have been summarised in 6.3.2.1 and 6.3.2.2.

6.3.2.1 Quantitative research

The quantitative research endeavoured to investigate the main research problem namely:

What is the measure of ego development of a group of young adolescents?

The data was collected by means of a group administered questionnaire in the form of the High School Personality Questionnaire. One hundred and ten grade nine learners who attended the same independent school took part in the investigation. The learners were aged between thirteen and fifteen years. The results of the investigation were presented in chapter 5.

Two factors of the High School Personality Questionnaire were the focus of the study, namely factor C and factor G, which measure ego and superego strength. As stated in 5.2.3 ego strength has to do with the emotional stability or self-regulation of a person, and superego strength has to do with the character development of a person. Therefore, it was evident from the results of the quantitative research that 19% of the learners lacked emotional control and stability, as well as the ability to handle frustration. However, 32,7% of the respondents had a stronger measure of dynamic integration of their personal and interpersonal attributes relating to emotional control, discipline and stability. When looking at superego strength, 37,3% of the respondents appear to lack conscientiousness as well as have difficulty with the acceptance of social norms. Whereas 23,6% of the respondents seem to have characteristics of perseverance, moralistic behaviour, responsibility, and accept social norms.

6.3.2.2 Qualitative research

Two respondents of the population group which took part in the quantitative research were selected in order to conduct in-depth case studies.

One of the respondents who presented as a learner with low ego and superego strength (John), and one of the respondents who presented as a learner with high ego and superego strength (Steven) were selected according to the criteria set out in 4.2.2.1. The inclusion of both learners in the case studies was subject to their personal willingness to participate and their parents' consent.

(i)   Main findings and summary of the low ego strength learner: John

Taking into account the interview which was conducted with John as well as the Sacks Sentence Completion Test and his High School Personality Questionnaire profile, a number of themes were evident, some of which will be briefly touched on in this summary. In general it appeared that John is situated in an emotionally intense life-world. His home circumstances seem to be positive in the respect that he is well provided for and supported by his parents. However, it seems that he has to achieve and excel in order to gain his parents' esteem and therefore there is conditional acceptance which naturally creates pressure to achieve.

John is coping well at school but prefers to work under pressure and has a lax and laidback approach to his academic work. His attitude to a number of his educators seems to be negative and rebellious. This impacts on his academic self-esteem which appears to be dependent on his teacher's attitude and acceptance of him.

The personality assessment revealed that John has low ego and superego strength, is assertive, aggressive, enthusiastic, nonchalant, careless, undependable, has a lack of control, as well as a tendency to quit easily and disregard rules.

John's Sacks Sentence Completion Test revealed some adjustment problems, specifically pertaining to emotional inability to deal with his fears and guilt feelings as well as a possible coping style of withdrawing when he is faced with situations which are threatening to him, whether it is conscious or unconscious.

(ii)   Main findings and summary of the high ego strength learner: Steven
Summarising from Steven's interview, High School Personality Questionnaire profile and Sacks Sentence Completion Test, a number of key findings are presented in this brief summary.

Based on the interview conducted with Steven, it is evident that he has a stable and well adjusted home environment where he experiences support and unconditional acceptance from his family members. In general Steven seems to be functioning healthily in his social context except for his fear of meeting new people which may be due to a possible distrust in people caused by past hurts. However, he has a very positive approach to his peers, authorities, educators, and subordinates. Steven seems to have strong leadership abilities despite his lack of confidence in meeting new people. He presented as being an extremely dedicated, responsible, and reliable individual who is intrinsically motivated.

Judging from Steven's personality profile, it revealed characteristics of being reserved, calm, extremely bright, emotionally mature, assertive, conscientious, persevering, practical, secure, confident, resourceful, as well as high ego and superego strength. His profile also revealed a nervous tendency, which could be related to his fear of meeting new people and past hurts within his interpersonal relations. His sports, specifically

swimming, also appear to provide him with a secondary gain of receiving attention from his family and friends, where he feels recognised.

The Sacks Sentence Completion Test revealed that on an interpersonal level Steven upholds positive relations with his family members, authorities, friends and peers. He also projected an ease and acceptance toward being in an authoritative or leadership position.

Comparatively speaking, Steven appears to be a learner who is emotionally grounded and confident; who is not swayed easily by his emotions but who reacts to situations in a contained and respectful manner. He is also a very dependable person who takes his responsibilities and word seriously, and has high morals.

Although a scientific comparison between the two respondents cannot be made, an attempt was made to compare the data on a qualitative level, which however, cannot be generalised to other learners. John appears to be swayed by emotions and his reactions are influenced by various circumstances. His emotions influence his behaviour and self-esteem which then impact in different areas such as his attitude to academics, peers and those in authority. His approach to rules and moral standards seems to be conflicting. He believes rules are standards and serve a purpose but in practice he feels they should be given leeway and rebels against them.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the foregoing literature study and empirical investigation have provided a basis from which the following recommendations are proposed to parents, educators, as well as persons working in the field of psychology of education whereby ego development among early adolescent learners may be addressed operatively:

- Encourage parents or significant others in the learner's life to create a structured home environment where there is nurturance and unconditional acceptance. Family activities and interaction which is a time of relaxation and fun appears to be a strong influential factor in ego strength.

- Parents and educators should be understanding where they listen to the learner's reasons for reacting or behaving in certain ways. Learners should be encouraged to express their feelings in a contained and mature manner. Through actively listening to the learners, underlying conflicts that may be creating their negative behaviour are likely to come to fore. Learners can also be referred to the school counsellor or psychologist should therapeutic measures be necessary.

- Parents and educators should encourage learners to have a well balanced lifestyle where they are esteemed for their strengths, and encouraged to build on their weaknesses, whether it be in academics, sports, cultural activities, et cetera.

- It is vital that the parents and educators as well as other staff at the school set an example to the learners by their behaviour and maturity. How teachers and parents react and treat their children or learners is often what they model.

- Establish a system within the school system where learners who endeavour to display positive behaviour are rewarded on a regular basis in order to reinforce such behaviour positively.

- Educators should be trained to deal with learners who are emotional and act out in an uncontrolled manner, by not retaliating by bullying those learners and putting them down but rather by getting to know them better and encouraging them to react in more positive and respectful ways.

- Life skill lessons are suggested to focus on the adolescents' numerous changes and stresses that they deal with during their developmental changes in adolescence. This may enable learners to feel more comfortable by knowing they are not alone, and that they have moral support of their peers and educators. A programme should be drawn up to deal with the various domains of development and how they impact on the adolescent learners.

- Learners should be held accountable for their negative behaviour and outbursts of impulsive behaviour. This can be done by means of demerits, community jobs at the school, and involvement in outreaches to less privileged areas in detention times.

- The school should aim to involve parents of all the learners in the various activities offered by the school in order to encourage family participation, family activities, and family values, to inform learners that their school involvement, whether by means of sports, academics, arts, music, et cetera, is important and meaningful.

- Offer parent guidance evenings or workshops in order to provide parents with parenting skills and approaches in order to encourage positive, responsible and reliable behaviour from their children.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

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

- A provincial or national survey regarding the measure of ego development in adolescent learners, and possibly research how this relates to other aspects such as violence, aggression in schools, and other impulsive behaviours such as substance abuse or the lack thereof.

- A study of the family system, parental attitudes and socio-economic circumstances which may influence ego development.

- The establishment of a programme to include either family members or the peer group in building ego strength in adolescent learners.

- An investigation into the influence of the school context including educator attitudes and behaviours as well as the impact of school climate on ego development.

- An investigation into the role or use of ego strength in trauma counselling.

6.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

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

6.7 CONCLUSION

Ego development, especially during the period of early adolescence, has been a very interesting phenomenon to research. A study of the history and development of perspectives and theories regarding ego development has identified numerous characteristics of the topic which indicate how the topic has evolved. It was found that ego development has a two-fold definition: it is the ego's increasing development as a regulating agent, and it refers to character development.

In more recent research on ego development some significant factors that appear to be closely linked with the formation of high ego strength include the learner's family, context, parental involvement, socialisation, as well as intrinsic motivation. High ego strength appears to be characterised by an individual's personality which is capable of exhibiting traits such as commitment, responsibility, perseverance, integrity, empathy, humour, likeability, dedication, courage, loyalty and leadership. Low ego strength on the other hand is exhibited by a learner who has rigid and restrictive defences that consume his or her energy levels, and is dominated by unconscious factors including fears and guilt feelings.

Through the study it has occurred to me that there is a link between the individual's ego development and his or her coping skills and emotional intelligence. Ego development appears to be closely linked with the learner's ability to use healthy coping skills where he or she utilises his or her resources, and stays hopeful and has an emotionally mature approach.

I feel that all individuals have positive potential to embrace the challenges and difficulties which face them. If this potential is utilised together with the support and unconditional

acceptance of their parents or guardians, significant others, and educators which is linked with a stable, nurturing and welcoming life world, I am optimistic that the ego strength of such individuals will increase. As stated in 2.2.3.3, research has shown that ego levels increase from middle adolescence into young adulthood. Therefore, there is a strong likelihood that the group's ego levels may still increase.

The investigation has aimed to provide beneficial insights and guidelines into a complex educational issue. In light of this, it is hoped that this study will serve as a valuable contribution to better understand the phenomenon of ego development as well as the role and implications of ego development in early adolescent learners.

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ANNEXURE A

Interview with low ego strength learner

Interview with John (Low ego strength)

Researcher:	Hi John. Thank you again for being willing to be here this morning. I would like to ask you again for your permission to tape this interview and for it to be used for study purposes of my dissertation.
John:	Yes, no problem.
Researcher:	Thank you. If we can start off by you telling me a bit about yourself so that I can get to know you.
John:	Okay, I'm 15. I really enjoy sports. My main sport is tennis. I do well at that. I also enjoy going to the movies. Ja, um I'm a fit guy. I usually do well at the fitness test at school. I get along with different kinds of people. I don't really have one set of friends. Ja. I don't always get along with my brother.
Researcher:	And is your brother younger or older than you?
John:	Younger. He's nine.
Researcher:	Do you just have one brother?
John:	Ja.
Researcher:	Do you get on sometimes?
John:	Ja, just sometimes he gets on my nerves which I don't enjoy.
Researcher:	And would you say you are quite and outgoing and extroverted person?
John:	Yes, definitely.
Researcher:	Alright, so you say your sports is mainly tennis?
John:	Ja.
Researcher:	And are there any other sports you do?

John: I used to do Northern's swimming. I did soccer. But now I'm concentrating on tennis.

Researcher: And are there any other hobbies that you enjoy doing?

John: Um, I just play tennis every day after school, well Monday to Saturday. I play at Tuks.

Researcher: Sjoe, and who drives you there and back?

John: My gardener drives me there and a guy that lives close to me brings me back.

Researcher: And how long have you been at this school?

John: Since grade one, so this is my ninth year

Researcher: Do you enjoy it here?

John: Ja, no, it's nice here.

Researcher: Is there anything you'd change about the school?

John: If I were to change something I'd probably put a gym here, just like for in the winter treadmills and still bicycles. And I'd put aircons in the classrooms.

Researcher: Is it hot in the classes?

John: Ja, I can't concentrate sometimes.

Researcher: Can you tell me are your parents married or divorced?

John: They're married now for 23 years.

Researcher: And can you tell me a bit about your dad.

John: My dad's an investment banker. He works in Africa and all overseas. He goes away for like 3 weeks in 2 months or something. Ja, sometimes like there are

ITF tennis tournaments in Egypt and Nigeria and stuff, and he takes me with him because he gets free accommodation so he takes me with him to Egypt and places.

Researcher: And your mom?

John: My mom used to be in some insurance business but now my dad's got like a side line business. We buy houses and rent them out. My mom manages that.

Researcher: So your mom works with property?

John: Yes.

Researcher: Can you tell me about your relationship with your dad?

John: Me and my dad are really close. I really enjoy being with my dad. I think I'd rather be with... I see my mom everyday so we kind of get tired of each other... but my dad he works until like 7 at night and goes to work at 5 to miss the traffic on the way to Joburg and stuff so I enjoy going with my dad, and he really supports me with my sport and stuff.

Researcher: So you say he's really supportive of you.

John: Ja. I must say I mean I wouldn't be able to do anything if it wasn't for him because it costs a lot of money. I mean coaching, rackets, strings. That stuffs so expensive.

Researcher: So your dad supports you a lot financially then. That must be cool that you dad supports you a lot. Would you say you are closer with your dad then?

John: No, it's just like I like to be around him more than my mom but not really closer.

Researcher: So if you've got a problem and need to talk to one of your parents, who do you normally talk to?

John: I don't know, for some reason my mom. I don't know. My dad's not really kind

of who you tell your problems.

Researcher: So you have a different relationship with your mom and your dad?

John: Ja. But like my dad doesn't really have a temper but my mom can get stressed out.

Researcher: Is she a bit moody?

John: Ja, especially now because my grandpa died two weeks ago and the house is like really, like my auntie phones, and then everyone's screaming at each other. So I just try to stay out of my mom's way at home.

Researcher: And are you coping alright with your grandpa's death?

John: Ja, he was suffering so it was better.

Researcher: Were you close with him?

John: Ja I was.

Researcher: So it must have been a bit difficult.

John: Ja it was. I mean I miss him but what can you do, everyone's going to die sometime.

Researcher: But you're doing fine?

John: Ja.

Researcher: And you say your relationship with your brother is a bit up and down.

John: Me and my brother are close but sometimes I mean he's like only nine so I want to do different things to him.

Researcher: That's understandable.

John:	And also he gets irritated with me because with my dad I speak Afrikaans and with my mom I speak English and with my brother I English, but sometimes speak to my dad and then I speak to my brother in Afrikaans, he gets irritated with me because he can understand it but he struggles to speak it and he gets shy. Cause I was in an Afrikaans preschool so I learnt Afrikaans and he wasn't. So I think he's just embarrassed because he has an accent.
Researcher:	So your mom is English and your dad is Afrikaans?
John:	Yes but they speak Afrikaans to each other but I don't know why.
Researcher:	You are quite bilingual then?
John:	Ja.
Researcher:	That must help a lot.
John:	Ja, especially at school when everyone stresses so much about Afrikaans it's like my easiest subject.
Researcher:	And is English fine for you as well?
John:	No I suck at English. Ja, I flunked my exam almost – I got 57. Ja but what can you do. My mom put me in my room for the holidays and made me read 'Spud".
Researcher:	So English is a bit more challenging?
John:	Ja, but my dad doesn't really care because he's really Afrikaans so he also struggles with English.
Researcher:	So that you have in common with your dad?
John:	Ja.
Researcher:	With regard to your school work, would you say you are quite an academic achiever, or average, or struggling a bit?

John:	Ja, my average is around 80. I don't know how. You get people who study the whole day and get 60's and then I get home at 7 to half past 7 and get around 80's. Maybe it's just luck or something.
Researcher:	So you have a natural ability?
John:	Ja, I do. I can just get the work in my head easily, especially Maths and EMS (Economic and Management Sciences) with number and stuff. It's easier.
Researcher:	What are your favourite and least favourite subjects then?
John:	Maths is my favourite and English is my least favourite.
Researcher:	How would you describe your relationship with your peers at school?
John:	Well I'm fairly close with everyone in my class, well not really everyone but most of the girls I'm close to them and my friends. But ja there are some people in my class that irritate me and I just want to him.
Researcher:	Is it one person in specific?
John:	Ja, he irritates the whole class so I just tell him to shut up before he says anything stupid.
Researcher:	And how do you cope with him then?
John:	I dunno. The whole class like hates him so I just tell him to shut up.
Researcher:	And does he listen?
John:	Ja, usually he goes and sulks in the corner or something.
Researcher:	Tell me about your relationship with your teachers.
John:	Like most of the teachers don't really have a problem with me. Ms X hated me so I hated her. But now I think we don't really moan at each other anymore. Ms Y, the English teacher, I don't think she's too fond of me. But I don't like

her either.

Researcher: And do you think you are respectful to your teachers?

John: I think I might be a bit disrespectful to those I don't like. Like for example if she says she's not really fond of me then I'll say well I really hate you so. And for instance last week with my grandpa and everything my teachers really irritated me. I can't even think what is said.

Researcher: So their opinion doesn't really bug you?

John: No. not these last few weeks.

Researcher: And with your friends, what is your relationship like with them.

John: With my best friend I tell him everything. My best friend is guy called Henry. I tell him if I've got a problem.

Researcher: And is your close circle mostly guys or guys and girls?

John: Well its pretty much 50-50.

Researcher: So you are quite a social guy?

John: Ja.

Researcher: And on the tennis court, what kind or relationship or attitude do you have?

John: One time I got really aggressive and I broke my racket so that was really bad for me because it cost R2000.00. So it was like 4 years saving money that I gave away right there. So I won't do that again. I'm trying my best. It's not like I have an attitude towards my coach because I mean if I'm going to become pro or whatever they're just going to help me get there so I'll try respect them. But I try really hard and try my best. Obviously you have your off days so you have to have your psychology lesson or something.

Researcher: So do you have a sports psychologist there then?

John: Ja, at Tuks.

Researcher: And does that help?

John: Ja, she's trying to get me a sponsorship now but it doesn't look like its going anywhere.

Researcher: It sounds like you're doing really well with your tennis.

John: I'm trying but it's a bit difficult you buy, like strings it costs you like R150.00 to string a racket but what can you do. So then I need to get sponsorships.

Researcher: Well I hope you find your sponsor.

John: I will. I will.

Researcher: John, if I were to ask you what you are worth in monetary values what would you say?

John: Well I don't think you can put a price on me.

Researcher: So money can't buy a person?

John: No.

Researcher: And if there was a mirror here and I asked you to look into the mirror and tell me what you see there, what would you say?

John: I think... I had my hair cut yesterday but that bloody lady cut my hair too short. Jussi. Cause like the school was moaning about my hair for a long time. It was really long. And I asked that lady to just neaten it up for school but she cut it that much short so she really irritated me.

Researcher: So do you like long hair?

John: Ja, I like my hair long.

Researcher: And what characteristics of yourself would you see in the mirror?

John: I think I'm confident, I'm positive, I'm not really arrogant really.. I don't think. Ja, I'm just I don't care what people say actually.

Researcher: So would you say you know who you are and that's fine?

John: Ja. Ja.

Researcher: What do you think about often in the day?

John: Mostly like girls and how I'm going to get all the work done this year. I've got so many projects due for next week.

Researcher: So is it a bit stressful for you?

John: Ja, mostly about how I'm going to get through the work.

Researcher: When you said girls – can you tell me a bit more about that?

John: Well like, we always want to be around girls. It's nice you know. Cause you know I've got like a lot of girl-friends.

Researcher: If I were to say you were a metaphor of a house, who would you say helped build this house?

John: Probably my parents, I don't know.

Researcher: And are there any other significant people.

John: Well I'm religious but I don't try and break the rules and stuff.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

John: Yes, I go to the reformed church.

Researcher: Do you enjoy it?

John:	No, id rather go to the NG kerk it's more relaxed. It's not so formal because my dad's reformed so we go there.
Researcher:	And if we go back to the house, would you say anyone's ever kicked in a door or broken a window?
John:	Ja, it irritates me. You'll just like be walking down the corridor and someone will be like just shout an insult at you or something which really irritates me.
Researcher:	And that can be a bit hurtful?
John:	Ja, it breaks you down.
Researcher:	And how do you react?
John:	I dunno, these last few weeks I've been swearing at this one guy.
Researcher:	So they get a reaction from me.
John:	Ja, like this one guy actually irritates me in class. There's this guy who's like quite overweight and then he asks guy in front of me who really irritates me to throw away a piece of paper for him because he was right by the dustbin so he told him he needs the exercise. So I took eraser and threw it at his face. And he started crying and shouting at me. So ja, sometimes I lose my temper.
Researcher:	So it sounds like you'll defend people as well.
John:	Ja, well this overweight guy is a nice guy. He's cool. He's a soft guy so he's not going to stand up for himself. It just really irritates me.
Researcher:	What goals and dreams do you have for yourself?
John:	I want to become a professional tennis player.
Researcher:	Is there a specific tennis player you look up to?
John:	There are a few. I used to like Nadal. Moya. Jokovich – I like his attitude

because he beat Fedderer a few weeks ago. And Roddick. I kinda like Fedderer but he's like so calm so I want to try and do that.

Researcher: And is there any other career you've thought of or is pro-tennis the only way?

John: It's really what I want to do but I thought of being a broker and stuff or something to do with shares and stuff. But ja, a tennis player is what I really want to do.

Researcher: And what brought about your interest in broking?

John: Well me and my dad are always talking about it because my dad is in that business.

Researcher: And if you see yourself being a pro tennis player do you see yourself being married and having a family or do you see yourself being single for a while?

John: Ja, I think the easiest would be single. I mean or otherwise it's just like another pressure you put on yourself.

Researcher: If I were to ask you do describe the ideal or perfect person, how would you describe that person?

John: Someone that doesn't think they're the bomb or whatever, someone who should be confident but not arrogant. Obviously don't want them to be overweight. I can't think what else. Smart probably. Common sense, that's something that you need. Ja, pretty much.

Researcher: And do you think you are quite an intelligent person?

John: Ja, I think so.

Researcher: What does a fulfilled life mean to you?

John: I wanna be forgiven one day and I wanna go to heaven. Um, well knowing that you lived life to the full. So not regretting that you didn't do this or didn't do that.

Researcher: So, would a fulfilled life be different for different people?

John: Ja, like some people are in a wheelchair so they can't do certain things.

Researcher: Do you think you are emotionally more or less stable – on other words, do you
              are quite an emotional person whether it be positive or negative emotions.

John: Ja, ja, I'm quite emotional.

Researcher: And how would you describe that emotional aspect?

John: Like, I get sad. I get very excited for certain things. Or disappointed if I do
              badly.

Researcher: What makes you sad?

John: Like my grandpa. Just certain things.

Researcher: So not all the time – just certain things?

John: Ja just sometimes.

Researcher: And what makes you excited?

John: Well I'm going to nationals now next week Friday I'm leaving. It's in Bloem for
              10 days so I'm going to miss a lot of work that I have to catch up. Ja, so I get
              really excited for that and holidays going to the beach. I get excited about
              that. Ja.

Researcher: And what family activities do you do with your family?

John: Well every Sunday we braai. Like we're building our house at Mabalingwe so
              we're going to be there as a family. And like going out to look for animals and
              stuff.

Researcher: So you do a lot on holidays and then on Sundays you have a tradition?

John: Ja. After like church we go home and chill.

Researcher: And do you think things trouble you easily or are you calm.

John: Ja definitely things trouble me easily. Like if I can't get something right then it like irritates me and goes on in my mind no matter what I do.

Researcher: When you get frustrated do you react in a more controlled or emotional way.

John: Frustrated, emotional.

Researcher: With regard to your interests do you feel you change them often or do you have quite steady interests?

John: My interests stay constant. I enjoy tennis, and music and psp. I like mixit that's cool.

Researcher: And which music bands do you like?

John: I like pop music like top 40 music.

Researcher: Where on a scale of 1 to 10 would you rank yourself with 1 being very undependable and 10 being very dependable and responsible?

John: Probably a 7.

Researcher: Do you tend to worry often or are you more of a chilled person.

John: Worry like about what?

Researcher: Things in general like school, your tennis…

John: Ja, I worry about work and stuff. How I'm going to get it done.

Researcher: In problem situations, do you see yourself as someone who gets involved or someone who avoids them?

John:	No, I get involved.
Researcher:	Do you think are a person who is more of a spectator and watches things or more of a go-getter?
John:	I like being active. Like if we go on holiday I play tennis every single day like for 5 hours.
Researcher:	So you're very passionate about your tennis.
John:	Ja.
Researcher:	And what do you think about moral standards and rules?
John:	I think you don't hit a girl, don't shout at people, don't swear at people, school etiquette, cricket etiquette.
Researcher:	And do you think that stuff is overdone?
John:	I think you should do like on a cricket field you don't swear and on a tennis court you're not supposed to throw your racket. Um, in a classroom sit down and do your work.
Researcher:	So do you think that in different situations different rules apply?
John:	Ja.
Researcher:	And should rules be kept to or should there be a certain leeway.
John:	I mean give them a bit of leeway. I mean a situation can change in a classroom. I mean um maybe you're doing group work, you can't just not talk.
Researcher:	On another scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is being indecisive and struggles to make decisions and 10 is being consistent.
John:	Well I change my mind so it depends. I think things over.

Researcher: So is your mind a busy place?

John: Ja, I don't often think of nothing.

Researcher: And is that a bit tiring?

John: No, it will be like what I'm going to do on the weekend and stuff like that so it's nice.

Researcher: Do you think you are playful and at times thoughtless, or very responsible?

John: No, I mean in class I talk a lot and ja, playful.

Researcher: So you are rather carefree and young hearted and lively?

John: Mmm-hmm.

Researcher: And would you say you are more slack and relaxed, or more conscientious?

John: I often leave projects and things til the last minute.

Researcher: Do you work best under pressure then?

John: I don't like pressure. No one likes pressure but I cope ja.

Researcher: And does it push you a bit harder.

John: Ja, if there wasn't pressure I would leave my work a week or another week. And if its like due tomorrow then I'll do it now.

Researcher: And what do you gain out of tennis?

John: It's something I really enjoy doing. I dunno it's like … it takes my mind off of school and stuff but that's not why I do it. Fitness ja, I'm a fitness fanatic.

Researcher: And if you're good at it, do you think it builds your esteem?

John: Ja. Ja.

Researcher: Does it make your parents proud?

John: Ja, if I do well my parents do well.

Researcher: And if you don't?

John: They still support me. I can see they're disappointed and maybe I should've won that match or whatever. But they keep on supporting me the next time.

Researcher: So does that put a bit of pressure of you?

John: Ja, when my parents are there watching me it's a bit more pressure. I prefer them not to watch me.

Researcher: So you feel like you disappoint them?

John: Ja if you play bad then it's all that money and stuff.

Researcher: So you feel a bit guilty?

John: Ja, if I don't do well.

Researcher: If you could choose a metaphor of yourself and then describe it. For example I am a table because I am solid and grounded. How would you describe yourself?

John: … Okay. I'm like a light bulb because I have my on and off days. And some days I'm in a good mood and some days I'm in a bad mood. Ja, I'm not like always the same.

Researcher: Can this light bulb burn for a long time?

John: Ja. It can burn for a long time.

Researcher: So is it a lifesaver or a normal bulb?

John: A lifesaver.

Researcher: What colour would this light bulb be?

John: … Probably be sun colour or transparent. Like the normal ones.

Researcher: Who turns this light bulb on and off, and pushes its buttons?

John: Anyone that talks to me like or says something positive, or even me. If I think positive it will burn brighter. If I think negative things then I'll be in a bad mood.

Researcher: And where would you place this light bulb – in a building, or room, or school, or house?

John: Probably in a shopping centre where there are lots of people.

Researcher: And is it a single light bulb or in a group of light bulbs (like stadium lights)?

John: I reckon it's on its own. I'm different not the same as the rest.

Researcher: So it's alone?

John: Ja. But not alone like rejected but just alone like maybe unique.

Researcher: Would you say it's a normal or special make?

John: It's a special make.

Researcher: Anything else about this light bulb?

John: I think it shines more than what it's off.

Researcher: So it's in a shopping centre? On display?

John: No I think it's like its doing something for someone like in a passage to give light or something.

Researcher: Is it being used well then?

John: Yes.

Researcher: So do you enjoy church and being involved in a youth group?

John: Ag, its okay. It's not like wow or anything.

Researcher: But you are quite a religious person?

John: Ja. Ja.

Researcher: John, that sounds like the bell for your lesson. Thank you for your willingness to chat and take part in this activity. I really appreciate it.

John: It's a pleasure.

ANNEXURE B

Interview with high ego strength learner

Interview with Steven (High ego strength)

Researcher: Steven I would just like to thank you again for being willing to be here today and I would like to ask you again for your permission to use the information that you will share with me as part of my research and secondly for taping this interview.

Steven: Yes, it is fine with me.

Researcher: Thank you Steven. If you could perhaps start off by telling me a bit about yourself so that I can get to know you a bit better.

Steven: My parents are married. My dad moved to South Africa from Belgium – he grew up there. My mom grew up in South Africa. I have a brother in Grade 6 here in this school and a sister in Grade 2 also in this school. I really like my sports. I do swimming six times a week, wrestling twice a week and also rugby in winter. I also enjoy school... Science, Maths and Accounting especially.

Researcher: And how would you say you do at school – would you say you struggle, or do well, or am an achiever?

Steven: I am coping well.

Researcher: You mentioned that you are quite a sporty person; would you say you have always been interested in sports?

Steven: Yes from young I have done a lot of sports. I used to do cricket. I've always done swimming. I used to play hockey and now I play rugby.

Researcher: It sounds as if you really enjoy your sports and being outdoors. If I had to ask you what your favourite sport was what would it be?

Steven: Swimming. I swim for the school but train with the Centurion swimming club. I swim six times a week and through winter in the heated swimming pool.

Researcher: And is there something you about swimming that you enjoy, or that enthuses you?

Steven:	Always after swimming practice or a gala I really feel good. Feeling like all the frustrations are just out of me.
Researcher:	So do you find that you distress with the swimming?
Steven:	Yes.
Researcher:	And you said that you feel better about yourself; can you explain that feeling to me?
Steven:	I feel better about myself and relaxed and calm.
Researcher:	When you get home after school what do you normally do in your spare time?
Steven:	I usually after school get home and then we change, listen to some music and then go to swimming.
Researcher:	You seem to be very dedicated to your swimming, and it seems that you enjoy being out of the house and active.
Steven:	Yes.
Researcher:	And where do you think you get that from?
	My dad used to do a lot of sport when he was smaller and my mom used to play a lot of hockey.
Researcher:	Do you then also do your sport together with your brother and sister?
Steven:	My brother is also in the same swimming club so we do that together?
Researcher:	And what activities do you do with your parents and as a family?
Steven:	On weekends we play sport together like cricket in the garden with my dad. And normally on weekends we go for a walk around the estate and look at the fish pond or go to movies together and there's also a lake near by. We go there for picnics and stuff.

Researcher: How often would you say you get to do these activities?

Steven: The small activities on weekends and on the holidays we go away to our farm.

Researcher: Is your farm close by then?

Steven: It's about four hours drive.

Researcher: And what do you farm there?

Steven: It's a game farm. I enjoy driving the car there and then going close to animals that you can't see here like lions and elephants.

Researcher: Can you please tell me a bit about your relationship with your parents? You can start with your mom or dad.

Steven: My mom is a housewife so she drops and fetches us from school and takes us to our sports and things.

Researcher: Your mom sounds quite dedicated to you and your siblings.

Steven: Yes, and my dad works very hard as a CEO of a company. He comes home around 6 or 7 at night but he does it so that we can live a better lifestyle.

Researcher: And do you have a good relationship with your mom?

Steven: Yes. In the week sometimes we go to movies at night or go eat something together.

Researcher: So do you feel you have quite an open relationship and can talk with your mom?

Steven: Yes, if I have any problems I share them with my mom.

Researcher: And what is your relationship like with your dad?

Steven: Usually if I have problems at school, he's also very intelligent so I ask him.

Researcher: So if I can check with you, it seems like you have a special relationship with both your parents in different ways: that with your mom you can talk more about things that are happening in your life and more emotional stuff you may be going through, where with your dad its more with the academic side of school and help with that. Is that right?

Steven: Yes.

Researcher: And do you feel like you can approach them both?

Steven: Yes.

Researcher: Can you tell me about your relationship with your brother and sister?

Steven: It's also very good. We also play sports in the afternoon together after school in the garden, and play games in the house.

Researcher: And would you say you're closer to one of your siblings?

Steven: I'm closer to my brother because my sisters little and in grade 2 so there's quite a big age gap.

Researcher: It seems as if you enjoy the interaction with your brother. What role would you say you have with your sister?

Steven: I think I'm sort of a role-model to her so she knows how to behave.

Researcher: And is being her big brother and a role-model a bit of pressure for you?

Steven: No, not a lot.

Researcher: Tell me about your relationships at school and with your class mates.

Steven: It was a bit hard coming into the school only last year because most people already had friends, but in about two or three months I had two to three good friends.

Researcher:	So you were able adjust although it was a bit difficult initially?
Steven:	Yes.
Researcher:	And what would you say was the hardest part of the move to the school: making friends, or the school work?
Steven:	It was very the same but at my old school we had Afrikaans and English first languages and also from an Afrikaans background it was a bit of a change with the languages. But now everything is comfortable.
Researcher:	It sounds to me that you are quite bright that you were able to make the transition from Afrikaans to English being your first language at school now.
Steven:	Yes, and at home we only speak Afrikaans.
Researcher:	What do you think about your teachers?
Steven:	They're very nice and they know what they are doing, and if I have a problem I can go to them after the lesson and ask them.
Researcher:	You seem to be respectful of your teachers. Do you think you are quite a respectful person in general?
Steven:	Yes (with a smile).
Researcher:	Can you tell me a bit about your group of friends?
Steven:	I've got about six or seven good friends. We go to the movies together and do things together, go in our little group in break and just talk.
Researcher:	And is mostly guys or guys and girls?
Steven:	I've got a few girl friends.
Researcher:	And do you have a best friend?

Steven: Most of them are about the same.

Researcher: Can we perhaps go back to your sport, you mentioned that it helps with the de-stressing; do you think it also builds certain aspects?

Steven: Yes I think sometimes people have too much stress and kind of collapse and cant handle it, but with the swimming it's a way that makes me more relaxed.

Researcher: And do you feel pressured in your sport and feel you need to achieve?

Steven: No, I just do it for myself.

Researcher: And what do you gain from yourself?

Steven: The losing of stress and also I want to be swimming good times and get my North Gauteng colours.

Researcher: So it's also a personal achievement and motivation?

Steven: Yes.

Researcher: If I were to ask you Steven, what you think you are worth in monetary value?

Steven: I don't know…I don't know.

Researcher: Perhaps if I was to rather ask you if I was to put a price on you do you think money could buy you?

Steven: No, I don't think money can buy me.

Researcher: If there was a mirror here and you were looking at it, what characteristics would you say you see in it?

Steven: I would see that I am very successful in what I am doing. I can accomplish what I set out to do. I'm not lazy.

Researcher: Another question I would like to ask you is what consumes your thoughts?

Steven: I just think about how my day was and if I watched the news I think about what could go wrong or what they could do better?

Researcher: Can you tell me more about that?

Steven: Like some things with the government they're not working well together or when they do something wrong they don't address the problem.

Researcher: It sounds like you like to analyse things and see how things could be done better.

Steven: Yes.

Researcher: What goals and dreams do you have for the future?

Steven: I'm not sure what I want to do yet but I want to make a reasonable amount of money so that I can retire young and so that I don't have to work as I want to see the world and new places.

Researcher: And is there somewhere in the world in specific where you would like to go?

Steven: I would like to spend some more time in Belgium with my cousins. I only see them every now and then in a few years.

Researcher: So you have been overseas before?

Steven: Yes we went in April.

Researcher: And what do you in enjoy about travelling?

Steven: To see all the places and the history of how the places were made, and also to go to see my family.

Researcher: And what ideas of work do you have?

Steven: I like to work with my hands and also to do tasks and so.

Researcher: At school and at sports do you find you like to take on the leadership role?

Steven: Yes, if there are tasks I like to take the lead and spread the work evenly.

Researcher: Do you think you are quite a fair and democratic person?

Steven: Yes.

Researcher: And do you think you are a people person?

Steven: Once I get to know someone them yes but it takes a while for me to get comfortable with someone.

Researcher: What do you think it is that holds you back?

Steven: I trust people too easily and then can get hurt so I rather take time to get to know them.

Researcher: And if I were to ask you to describe the ideal or perfect person, what kind of person would that be?

Steven: It would be someone who is fair and works together as part of the team and puts the team above themselves.

Researcher: So being a team player and self-less in a way is important to you.

Steven: Yes.

Researcher: What does a fulfilled life mean to you?

Steven: Being happy and having friends and doing well.

Researcher: Do you think you are easily influenced by your emotions, or more in control of them what would you say?

Steven: I am more in control of them.

Researcher: And do you find that you can be easily troubled by things?

Steven: No I'm more calm and not easily troubled.

Researcher: When you get frustrated, perhaps by someone at school, how do you react?

Steven: I will talk to the person and try to sort things out and if the person doesn't listen or wants to fight then I will go to the teachers or principal instead of fighting.

Researcher: With regard to your interests, do you feel that they change often or do you seem to have constant interests?

Steven: They are constant.

Researcher: Where on a scale of one to ten would rank your dependability level with one being undependable and ten being very dependable responsible.

Steven: Ten.

Researcher: In what ways do you think you are dependable?

Steven: At school with my work, and at home, and with my sports. If someone asks me to do something and I say I will do it then I will do it.

Researcher: So your word is very important and means a lot?

Steven: Yes.

Researcher: Do you tend to worry often?

Steven: No.

Researcher: In problem situations do you see yourself as a person who gets involved in the situation or who avoids situations?

Steven:	If there is a problem I will try and work through it and talk to the person but if it is silly then I will avoid it.
Researcher:	Do you think you are a person who is more of a spectator or more of a go-getter?
Steven:	A go-getter (giggle).
Researcher:	What is your opinion of moral standards and rules?
Steven:	I think that rules are there for a reason and they should be obeyed.
Researcher:	And are there times when you think rules can be ridiculous and ignored?
Steven:	Most of the times I think rules are to keep us from getting in danger and to protect us, but if it is silly then I might think about it.
Researcher:	On a scale of one to ten where one is indecisive and ten is consistent where would you rank yourself?
Steven:	Nine because most of the time I am consistent and the same.
Researcher:	If you were to describe yourself and being a more slack and relaxed person or more responsible and conscientious?
Steven:	Responsible and conscientious.
Researcher:	It does seem that you are a very responsible, dedicated and motivated individual Steven.
Steven:	Yes.
Researcher:	Perhaps to end off the session as I know you need to leave soon, I would like to ask you if you could choose a metaphor of yourself, for example I am a table because I am firmly grounded… what metaphor would you describe yourself as?

Steven:	I would say that I am a car because I know where I am going, and I have a lot of energy and determination to get there. I have motivation and keep my eyes focused ahead.
Researcher:	And does this car need to put fuel in often or does it carry on for miles on a tank?
Steven:	It can go far on one tank so it doesn't need to fill up often.
Researcher:	What kind of car would you say it is?
Steven:	It's just a normal car with four wheels perhaps a four-by-four (I don't really know cars that well).
Researcher:	So it's not a fancy or extremely smart car or a sports car?
Steven:	No.
Researcher:	And what is it about the four-by-four that stands out?
Steven:	It is tall and can drive over obstacles and it is strong.
Researcher:	Sjoe it sounds like a very interesting vehicle, thank you for sharing it with me. And thank you for your time this afternoon as I know your mom is waiting patiently for you. I really appreciate your willingness to share of yourself and tell me about yourself.
Steven:	It's a pleasure.
Researcher:	Thanks Steven.

ANNEXURE C

Follow-up interview with high ego strength learner: High School Personality
Questionnaire profile

A follow-up interview was conducted with Steven in order to discuss and get feedback from him regarding his High School Personality Questionnaire profile. This took place on Monday, 15 October 2007. All the factors of the profile that fell either in the below average or above average category were discussed, and the following was the outcome of the interview:

Factor A was a sten of 4, signifying critical, cool and reserved characteristics. Steven agreed with this score and felt that he was a more critical person who is reserved at times, and can be experienced as being more cool, calm and collective.

Factor B was a sten of 10, indicating intelligence and being bright. Steven again agreed with this score and feels that he is a rather intelligent person, but not in a boastful manner.

Factor C was a sten of 8, indicating emotional maturity and stability, being realistic and having high ego strength. Steven was concurred with this score and felt it was true for him.

Factor D was a sten of 9, signifying attributes of being unrestrained and nervous. Here Steven felt that initially he can around new people, he can be confused when he does not understand certain things in class but then asks the teacher to explain, does get impatient with his younger sister if she continually irritates him when she goes on and on and on, is not a jealous person, and can be attention-seeking in that he does well in sports not only for himself but also for his mother and friends to recognise him.

Factor E was a sten of 8, signifying assertiveness, aggressiveness, and rebelliousness. Steven felt that he is mainly assertive in his sport and does not feel that he is rebellious.

Factor G was a sten of 8, indicating conscientiousness, perseverance and high superego strength. Steven agreed with this score as he believes he is a conscientious individual and also perseveres to reach his goals and dreams.

Factor I was a sten of 4, indicating a practical and tough-minded nature. Here Steven again agreed with the score and added that he thinks things through practically.

Factor O was a sten of 3, signifying security, resilience and confidence. Steven agreed and felt that in general he felt secure and confident as he does lack confidence when meeting new people, but other than that he is self-confident.

Factor Q_2 was a sten of 8, indicating the ability to make one's own decisions and being resourceful. Again Steven was in agreement with this score.

Factor Q_3 was a sten of 3, indicating carelessness, ignoring standards, and a lax attitude or behaviour. Steven strongly disagreed with this score and could not explain a time or example of when he was careless, ignored standards or was lax. He felt that he would have placed himself between a sten 7 and a sten 8 as he believes he is more conscientious, responsible, self-controlled, self-respecting and respectful of others.

ANNEXURE D

Correspondence to parents/ guardians requesting permission
to conduct the proposed research

L A Ristow

Intern Educational Psychologist

September 2007

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

Request for Permission for Your Child to Participate in a Research Study

Your permission is kindly requested for your son to participate in a study regarding the topic of personality development among grade nine learners. The aim of this research is to investigate life skills among learners, specifically in grade nine, as well as propose recommendations to professionals working in the field of educational psychology.

The selection of your son to participate in the study was done randomly through from the group of grade nine learners. Please be assured that the identifying information of your son will be kept confidential and will not be divulged in the study.

We/I …………………………….. grant permission for my son   ………………………….. to participate in the study and be included in a case study. This will include approximately one to two sessions together with your son which will be arranged at a time that is convenient to yourself and your child. It will take place on school property.

Kindly mark your response with an X:

YES   ☐

NO   ☐

Thank you for giving this matter your immediate attention. It is much appreciated. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

Yours faithfully,

_____

Liesel Allison Ristow

Intern Educational Psychologist