# AN INTERVENTION PROGRAMME

# FOR

# IMPROVING INTER-CULTURAL

# RELATIONSHIPS AMONG

# GRADE SEVEN PUPILS

by

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# DECLARATION

I declare that *An intervention programme for improving inter-cultural relationships among grade seven pupils* is my own work and that all the sources which I have cited or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

# SUMMARY

The aims of this research are to develop an intervention programme to facilitate improved cross-cultural peer interactional patterns and implement it. An initial investigation was launched to determine the extent of dysfunctional relationships between pupils in a desegregated school.

Available literature was consulted to obtain information about cognitive, affective, physical and social development of adolescents and fundamental aspects of peer group relationships and their relevance in improving cross-cultural relationships. The data were collated and the principles extracted formed the basis of the designed intervention model and the activities and goals incorporated in it. The model consisted of eight interpersonal problem-solving group sessions, centred on developmental levels to be addressed by activities designed around a theme directed to achievement of goals (adequate cross-cultural communication, development of trust, increased sensitivity) which support the primary aim of improved cross-cultural relationships.

A qualitative research study, namely action research was undertaken and the intervention programme was implemented. The participants in the programme comprised eight carefully selected grade seven pupils. This researcher (facilitator) adopted the role of participant observer and recorded her observations concerning the interactions within the group and between herself and the group. The group sessions were videotaped and analysed by the researcher as well as by an outside expert. The group sessions were analysed according to the aspects of positive relationships and the expected outcomes.

Guba's model was used to confirm the trustworthiness of the research. The continued effectiveness of the programme was evaluated six months later from answers to a questionnaire obtained from former group members. The group members could relate to people of other cultures better than before. This contributes to an acceptance of and respect for cultural diversity in macro-society.

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CHAPTER ONE

1    PROBLEM STATEMENT, AIMS AND PLANNING OF THE STUDY

1.1    INVESTIGATING THE PROBLEM

### 1.1.1    Introduction

One has to go a long way back in South African history to find an example of children of different races learning together in a classroom. The earliest Dutch schools in the seventeenth century Cape initially allowed children of different colours to share the same school desks. Now, after centuries of segregated education, children are once again sharing the classroom as the doors slowly creak open in the new South Africa (Morrel 1991:65). Historically, South African school policy was based predominantly on a segregated school system. The rationale behind this policy of segregation was to keep intact and preserve cultural diversity among the many races within the country. This resulted in very little cross-cultural contact.

Merely desegregating schools and accepting language and cultural diversity does not necessarily mean that children, who in most instances still live in segregated neighbourhoods and have had no or very little previous cross-cultural contact, will automatically be able to interact positively with each other. In order for this system of multicultural education to be actualised, it is important that children are able to form cross-cultural relationships without any reservations.

### 1.1.2    Awareness of the Problem

During 1991 schools officially became desegregated. Children from diverse language

and cultural backgrounds were admitted to what had been previously exclusively Indian schools. With the dawning of this new and exciting era of multicultural education, the access to equal educational opportunities was welcomed. This roaring current of change also brought with it unforeseeable challenges (Le Roux 1993:3).

Placing children with diverse language and cultural backgrounds in the same classroom seemed to give rise to a number of cross-cultural misunderstandings. Among these cultural chauvinism, that is rejection or arrogance towards another's culture, can be cited as one of the most damaging factors to cross-cultural relationships. The inferior status attributed to one culture, coupled with self-assertiveness by another culture, reinforces negative stereotyping, consequently increasing the potential for cross-cultural conflict. On further observation, I deduced a number of reasons that seemed to contribute to negative interactional patterns. Among these the following could be cited: deficits in intercultural communication skills, self-consciousness, peer rejection, distrust, own group preference and a general withdrawal from the educational encounter.

The fact that Black pupils tended to communicate in their own language, which was not understood by other groups of pupils, seemed to further compound the communication problem. Having in most instances lived in separate neighbourhoods and attended monolingual schools, entry into the multicultural school environment was a 'foreign' phenomenon to many pupils. In order for the educational encounter in a desegregated society to be successful, individuals must be able to relate to each other as the social life of an individual cannot be actualised without communication (Le Roux 1993:8). I soon realised that if pupils are unable to interact positively with each other, academic success will be jeopardised and negative self-actualisation will make it difficult for these pupils to coexist in a multicultural society.

## 1.1.3 Exploration of Terrain

South African society has been described as a cultural kaleidoscope, or a cultural microcosm of the world. Throughout our history many South Africans have regarded the range of cultures as a great problem. Many misunderstandings have been caused by fear and rejection of other people's ideas and beliefs. Indeed for each of us there are many ideas and actions of other people that we disapprove of. However, at other times we condemn people because we are ignorant of their motivations and the meanings behind their statements or actions (Coutts 1992:34-35).

Culture is a very complex human phenomenon which does have a profound influence on the teaching-learning process (Lemmer & Squelch 1993:15). A child does not live in isolation, but in a family with a complex social, economic and cultural environment. The quality of experiences within his or her home environment directly influences education, as each child brings into the classroom his own cultural heritage. Both Black and Indian peer groups are deprived as a result of living isolated lives and of being separated from their peers on the basis of ethnic policies which treated separateness as normal and any inter-ethnic contact and experiences as exceptional (Le Roux 1993:31-33).

Being from a different cultural group, Black children are not sufficiently exposed to English. Therefore, interacting through the medium of a 'foreign' language, such as English for example, will influence their interactional patterns. This lack of proficiency in the English language could result in Black pupils receiving different treatment from their peers in the classroom (Klein 1993:130). Peer acceptance can be a source of great support during school years and provides valuable experiences for growth in the cognitive, social and emotional domains. It is now equally clear that social relationships can be a great source of anguish for some children and problems

with peer relationships can lead to experiences that may be damaging both in the short term as well as over a period of many years, which may extend well into adulthood (Cowie, Smith, Boulton & Laver 1994:2).

If children are not able to break through these barriers and form positive cross-cultural peer relationships, then self-actualisation within a multicultural classroom context may become problematic. In a society divided according to cultural heritage, children would be expected to attend monocultural educational institutions, therefore decreasing the likelihood of intercultural contact. This has resulted in ignorance of each other's cultures. To be able to connect, individuals need to be made aware of each other. Unfortunately the lack of awareness among different cultural groups within a multicultural context has not allowed for bonding to occur. This has resulted in negative cross-cultural interactional patterns between Indian and Black groups of pupils in schools. Therefore, the need arises to create an awareness among pupils so that they will be able to connect with each other.

In view of this an initial investigation was conducted to determine how Indian and Black pupils related to each other in a desegregated school context.

## 1.2    INITIAL INVESTIGATION

### 1.2.1    Focus Group Interview with a Group of Grade Seven Indian and Black Pupils

#### 1.2.1.1 Introduction

Focus groups, in this case, can be described as meetings of pupils and a teacher, who represent a larger group reflecting the social climate of the environment in which

interaction takes place, and which are organised for the purpose of obtaining information, generating ideas and assessing materials. Focus groups are able to provide not only a way of acknowledging the range of diversity within the school population, but also a direct means of encouraging inclusion, adjustment and refinement that differences among culturally different individuals may create (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:96-97).

The research on interpersonal relationships between Indian and Black pupils in a school which was previously exclusively Indian was based on information gathered in a focus group interview with a group of grade seven Indian and Black pupils at an English medium school.

The group consisted of five Indian boys and five Indian girls and a like number of Black boys and girls.

The primary school can be divided into three phases, that is the pre-primary phase, the junior primary phase and the senior primary phase. Children in the senior primary phase are between 12 and 14 years of age. Children in the latter phase are also in their early and middle adolescence. This researcher decided to use the term 'grade seven pupils' as the investigation took place in a school context where this is the acceptable term to refer to children in this phase. She decided to confine the focus group to grade seven pupils, as they are the most senior pupils in the school where she teaches. They are in the light of their seniority, verbally more able to express their views. Because she teaches these children, this researcher knew that they would feel at ease with her and that a relationship of trust had already developed, which would make the sharing of information easier. It was also more practical to use the pupils in this researcher's class, as they would be available and time would be saved by conducting the interviews in the school where she teaches.

The focus group was used to establish the degree of cross-cultural involvement, acceptance and understanding for those different from oneself, the quality of communication, the existence of stereotyping, sensitivity and respect for others and the degree of trust between Indian and Black pupils. This information enabled this researcher to determine how both cultural groups experienced their interaction and attributed meanings to the cross-cultural relationships in which they found themselves.

A deductive approach was used in the initial investigation. The educational categories of *acceptance, understanding* and *trust* were used to determine the quality of the relationships between the cultures as the categories were developed to illustrate the essences in educational relationships. To be able to *understand* each other, people should be able to *communicate.* Understanding between cultures can not take place if a particular culture is *stereotyped. Sensitivity* for another culture's way of existing is necessary for *understanding, becoming involved, accepting and communicating* with others.

## 1.2.1.2    Determining the trustworthiness of the data collected from the focus group

In order to develop a more trusting relationship with the focus group, group members were made to feel comfortable. This researcher was both honest and open to questioning concerning the role of the group in the investigation and the collection of information. Furthermore, in order to determine whether a reciprocal trusting relationship had in fact developed, pupils were continually asked how they felt about being part of the group and every attempt was made to explain the importance of the trustworthiness of their responses. The necessity for determining their attitudes to

other cultures in terms of developing better cross-cultural involvement, understanding and patterns of communication was also explained. It was stressed that there was a genuine need to be able to tell how relationships with other cultures were being experienced.

Data were classified according to the explained categories and summarised. This allowed main ideas, significant trends and patterns that repeated themselves to emerge. (This process is indicated in Appendix ). The focus group was used as an initial information-gathering source which helped determine the depth of the problem presented. Repetetive patterns of data collected supported the credibility of the findings in the focus group.

In order to obtain the above information with regard to the quality of cross-cultural functioning pupils were asked to express their feelings by completing or commenting on the following statements.

It was expected that information of the nature of the relationship between Black and Indian pupils related to the aspects referred to in brackets after each statement would occur in the discussions.

a.    All pupils, irrespective of cultural grouping are afforded the same degree of participation in school activities (acceptance).

b.    Pupils from different cultures need to adjust to the dominant school culture (involvement and acceptance).

c.    I have sufficient knowledge about how pupils from other cultures spend their

time after school (understanding and communication).

d.   My biggest problem with pupils from other cultures is that ...(acceptance, understanding, stereotyping and trust).

e.   Prior to school integration I have had cross-cultural contact with same age peers (involvement and communication).

f.   Pupils belonging to a particular group can generally be assumed to have the same characteristics (stereotyping and sensitivity).

g.   Language is sometimes a problem in cross-cultural communication (involvement, communication and understanding).

h.   Pupils should be allowed to communicate in their own language if they so wish (involvement, communication, understanding and trust).

i.   Pupils from another culture different from mine are generally trouble makers (stereotyping, understanding and trust).

j.   The reason why I have not as yet made Black/Indian friends is that ....(involvement, communication, understanding and acceptance).

k.   By learning about other cultures, understanding between groups can be created (understanding, involvement, communication and trust).

l.   Harmony within the school environment can only be created if we revert to a monocultural environment (acceptance, involvement, stereotyping and trust).

### 1.2.1.3   Summary of the focus group interview with grade seven Indian and Black pupils

Black pupils expressed their *disappointment at being excluded* from most of the school activities both in and outside the classroom. For instance, when responsibility was delegated, their Indian peers were given preference. Even though some of them had been attending the school for approximately three years, they had not been

chosen as school prefects. They felt that they were not given equal opportunities to participate in sporting activities. They were of the opinion that they had been *overlooked in preference* of their Indian peers. They felt that they would excell in netball and soccer if they were *given the opportunity* to participate in these activities. They had been allowed to participate in the annual athletic events, but as yet no Black girl or boy had captained any four of the teams which represented the school. These *feelings of isolation, rejection and alienation* did not appear to surprise their Indian peers. The Indian pupils were of the opinion that *the school was 'their school'* and as Indian pupils outnumbered Black pupils *it was right that they were given more opportunities to participate in the activities of the school.* If they transferred to other schools, they would accept that they would not be automatically placed in positions of responsibility as they would initially be 'outsiders'. It would be unfair *if their positions were usurped by 'new pupils' who received preferential treatment.* A further reason advanced for their *reluctance to share* was that Indian pupils had in the past collected money to purchase sports equipment and clothes.

Both groups of pupils were *unaware of how pupils from other cultures spent their time after school. No cross-cultural friendships* existed in the school. After school each group of pupils went their separate ways.

*Indian pupils resented the fact that* their Black peers *communicated in Zulu.* They assumed that they were being *gossiped* about because they were unfamiliar with the language spoken. Black pupils felt that their Indian peers were *unaccommodating (uncaring).* When they were approached the Indian pupils tended to *physically distance themselves* by walking away. This pattern of behaviour frustrated the Black pupils who retaliated by pushing and shoving which resulted in arguments that *intensified resentment between groups. Prior to school integration no cross-cultural contact was experienced* by any of the pupils interviewed. This was attributed to the

fact that they lived in separate monocultural environments.

Both groups of pupils were of the opinion that *different cultures could be categorised as having the same characteristics.* While Black pupils tended to categorise the Indian pupils in terms of physical attributes, their Indian peers tended to see Black pupils as aggressive. They felt that the Black pupils wanted to pick fights and gang up against them.

A *feeling of alienation* (not being wanted) was expressed by the Black pupils. This was based on the feeling that the Indian pupils made no effort to listen or *encourage communication when spoken to.* An example given here was that they were *not prepared to 'lend things or explain work'.* The indifference to wanting to *engage in communication was frustrating.* This intensified the Black pupils' opinion that it was their 'right' to *communicate in their own language* as their Indian peers were unwilling to talk to them. However, the Indian pupils were adamant *that a common language that was understood by all pupils should be spoken.*

Indian pupils defended their non-involvement in cross-cultural friendships on the basis that avoidance would prevent cross-cultural conflict occuring. They felt that *Black pupils were trouble-makers* who 'ganged up' on them and took sides even if they were not present when an incident happened. The Black pupils responded that *Indian pupils were racist* because they *'were all the same'* and were unwilling to share or lend their things. Social distancing revolved around *blaming each other for* things that the other was not willing to do.

The Indian pupils felt that if they *could revert to a monocultural system of education*, harmony could be created within the school environment. *Great uncertainty and insecurity was expressed about wanting to learn about Black culture.* This was based

on the belief that if they learnt about another culture, they would become assimilated into that culture. *If cultural groups were kept intact there would be less opportunity for cross-cultural conflict.* Black pupils were of the opinion that they should be able to *learn about one another so that misunderstandings could be resolved.* They felt that consequently they would *learn what was acceptable and what was unacceptable. They accused their Indian peers of being unsympathetic* because they told them to go back to their schools. They travelled long distances to learn English so that they would be able to attend higher institutions of learning. They felt that they *should be able to attend schools with their Indian peers.*

The above information was tabulated according to the chosen categories.

| CATEGORIES | INDICATING EXPERIENCES OF PUPILS |
|---|---|
| INVOLVEMENT | *Exclusion from sporting activities<br>*Isolation/rejection - team captain<br>*Physical distancing<br>*Dis-involvement prior to school integration<br>*Attribution of blame - feelings of alienation<br>*Defensiveness - attitude arising from dis-involvement<br>*Unwillingness to share<br>*Lack of acceptance of differences |
| ACCEPTANCE | *Preference in delegation of responsibilities<br>*Lack of adjustment - ownership of school<br>*Self distancing - attribution of aggression<br>*Social distancing - inability to identify<br>*Harmony - revert to monocultural environment<br>*Right to dominant positions |
| UNDERSTANDING | *Alienation - school seen in terms of culture<br>*Unaware of lifestyles<br>*Unwillingness to cooperate/listen<br>*Insistance on use of common language<br>*Inability to empathise with plight of others<br>*Transfer of blame for not being understood |

| COMMUNICA-TION | *No cross-cultural friendships<br>*Walking in different directions - no intermingling of cultures<br>*Unaware of how time spent after school<br>*Suspicion at not understanding language<br>*Frustrated at not being understood<br>*Indifference to engaging in conversation |
|---|---|
| STEREOTYPING/ SENSITIVITY/ RESPECT | *Insensitive to needs - participation in activities<br>*Lack of surprise at exclusion of one culture<br>*Preferential treatment<br>*Categorisation of groups<br>*Stereotyping - aggressiveness/uncooperative<br>*Lack of acknowledgement of diversity - school perceived in terms of culture |
| TRUST | *Exclusion from positions of trust - prefects<br>*Distrust of language<br>*Insecurity about wanting to learn about other cultures<br>*Fear - reversion to past<br>*Distrust - fear of displacement of position |

## 1.2.1.4   Interpretation of the above Data

The history of racial segregation can be seen to be reflected in our present pattern of cross-cultural social interaction. This can be characterised as group-distancing or cultural isolation.

It becomes evident from an interpretation of the data that Black pupils are culturally isolated. The general feeling among these pupils was that they are not afforded sufficient opportunities to participate in school activities. They saw Indian pupils as being favoured. The Indian pupils not having been sufficiently exposed to Black culture were unable to connect or bond with their Black peers. The impression was created that the school was still seen as an Indian School. This attitude did not allow for accommodation of different cultural groups, but rather required that Black pupils adjust to the dominant cultural norms. A lack of awareness of different cultures

compounded the problem of disinvolvement which led to increased misunderstandings between Indian and Black pupils. Therefore, rejection and lack of acceptance were common. Furthermore, the problem seemed to be aggravated by the insistence of Black pupils on speaking their own language in cross-cultural company. As Indian pupils were not familiar with the language spoken, the general belief was that their Black peers were gossiping about them. This fostered an emotionally charged climate which was conducive to distrust which seemed to result automatically in negative reactions to cross-cultural contact.

Black pupils were of the opinion that they were disadvantaged in their communication with their Indian peers who, in turn, made no effort to understand them. This often provoked them (Black pupils), subsequently creating cross-cultural conflict between the two groups. Indian pupils felt that it was better not to get involved in cross-cultural contact and by such self-distancing they hoped that conflict situations could be avoided. Conversely Black pupils felt that the need existed to learn about each other's cultures, so that a better understanding between the groups could be created. In this respect, Indian pupils displayed uncertainty because they believed that cultural integration would result in cultural assimilation and that this would lead to the loss of their cultural identity. This feeling of being overwhelmed was a reflection of uncertainty and insecurity and intensified reservations about wanting to become involved with those who were different from themselves. This feeling of being overwhelmed seemed to result in stereotyping which has resulted in a disfunctional interpersonal relationship pattern between Indian and Black groups of pupils.

As can be seen in Figure 1, the interpretation of the preliminary data in the initial investigation obtained from the abovementioned focus group concerning Black/Indian peer relationships clearly illustrates the perpetuation of a negative cycle
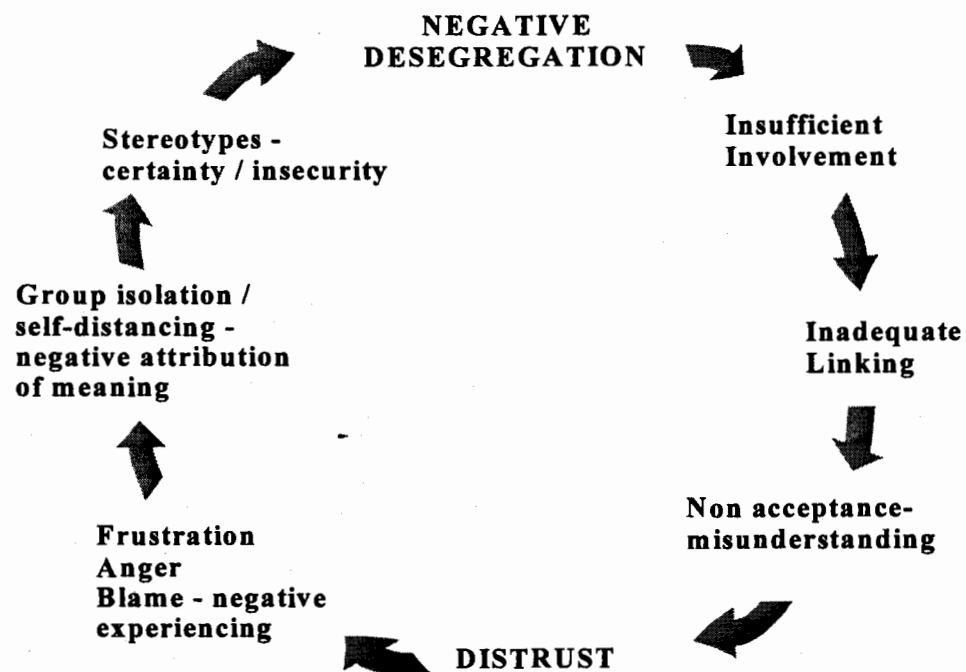
## 1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The abovementioned information led this researcher to pose the following question. Can the relationships between grade seven Indian and Black pupils from different cultures be improved by exposing the children to each other in an interactional group context?

## 1.4 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The aims of the research project are to develop and implement a programme that will allow for the development of more positive cross-cultural peer interaction.

The research design which will be used, will now be defined.

## 1.5 THE RESEARCH DESIGN EMPLOYED

The research consists of a literature study and an empirical study. In the literature study information on the developmental aspects and peer relationships of grade seven pupils and on groups for adolescents will be gathered with a view to designing a programme which could change the negative relationships between a group of Indian and Black grade seven pupils.

Qualitative research in which action research will be undertaken, will form the empirical section of the study. The methods used for data gathering and data analysis will be described in chapter two.

### 1.5.1    Trustworthiness of the Research

Several strategies as discussed by Krefting (1991:222) will be implemented to ensure the trustworthiness of the study. This will be discussed in chapter two.

### 1.6    EXPLANATION OF TERMS

### 1.6.1    Intervention Programme

An intervention programme can be defined as a process which focuses on the alteration of the group processes in order to help members achieve their desired goals (Toseland & Rivas 1984:236). In the case of this research this entails the creation of more positive interpersonal relationships by means of introducing cross-cultural communication skills.

### 1.6.2    Multicultural Education

According to *Education for All* as cited in *Comparative Education* (1988:101) there are many definitions of multicultural education. Multicultural education can be defined as a method for preparing all children for life in a multicultural society in which cultural diversity and the pursuit of equal education opportunities are accepted and valued. Further, multicultural education can be defined as an education appropriate to a multicultural society (*Comparative Education* 1988:101). Suzuki (Le Roux 1997:30) states that multicultural education empowers learners to understand and appreciate their own cultures as well as the cultures of others and to accept cultural diversity as a result of which ethnocentrism and cultural prejudices are overcome.

### 1.6.3 Adolescence

Rice (1992:70) defines adolescence as a period of physical and sexual maturation. However, there seems to be general disagreement as to the beginning and ending of this stage of life. While Gerdes (1989:21) estimates that adolescence occurs between thirteen and eighteen years of age, Papalia and Olds (1993:13) set this period at between twelve to twenty years of age. However, more recent authors such as Louw (1996:377) state the age at which adolescence begins varies from eleven to thirteen and the age at which it ends varies from seventeen to twenty-one. Therefore, it can be estimated that the onset of adolescence could occur anywhere between eleven and twelve years of age. Research cited by Robinson (1995:254) recognises adolescence as a marked period of time when the struggle to define the self and to arrive at an adaptive level of connectedness with, as well as independence from, others is particularly salient. Hall (Louw, Van Ede & Louw 1998:368) describes this period in terms of 'storm and stress'.

Adolescence is the developmental stage between childhood and adulthood. Since adolescence is seen as a growth process towards adulthood and adulthood is seen in all cultures as the ultimate goal of human development, the term can be applied to all cultures (Louw et al. 1998:384).

### 1.6.4 Relationships

The words 'relationship' or 'relation' refers to the connection between two points of reference. This may be an associative connection between two objects or between an object and its properties (Vrey 1979:20). Relationships can further be explained as an attitude which a person adopts, one that can be adopted only by a human being because only human beings have freedom of choice. Because he enjoys this freedom

of choice, man can adopt attitudes towards phenomena. Man 'relates' himself to the things around him and to his fellow human beings (Landman, Van der Merwe, Pitout, Smith &Windell 1992:105). Du Toit and Kruger (1991:10) see relationships as a bipolar connection between poles, points of support or references.

## 1.6.5    Prejudice

It becomes necessary in this research project to discuss prejudice as until 1991 South Africa society had been segregated along racial lines. This created a marked and persistent difference in socio-economic positions, occupational experiences and access to other resources. Consequently this resulted in entrenching differences between races, in family structures and in modes of socialising children (Blau 1981:2).

Prejudice refers to positive or negative evaluations or judgments of members of a particular group and does not necessarily originate because of particular characteristics of individual members (Feldman 1985:159). According to Lemmer and Squelch (1993:16) prejudice can be defined as follows.

a.    A preconceived opinion against or in favour of a person or a thing.

b.    A judgement or opinion formed beforehand or without due examination of the facts.

c.    An unfavourable opinion or feeling formed beforehand or without knowledge, thought or reason.

d.    Unreasonable feelings, opinions or attitudes, especially of a hostile nature directed against racial, religious or national groups.

## 1.6.6    Culture

Culture can be defined as the body of learned beliefs, traditions, principles and guides for behaviour that are shared among members of a particular group. Culture serves as a road map both for perceiving and interacting with the world. Because culture is dynamic and ever-changing, the road map can lead in different directions. Culture is a strong determinant of behaviour, beliefs, attitudes and values (Abbey, Brindis & Casas 1990:8). Culture may also be defined as a process of adaptation to the environment (Van der Horst 1993:32). Goodenough (Bennet 1990:46) explains further that

> A society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order
>
> to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and to do so in any role that
>
> they accept for any one of themselves. Culture being what people have to learn
>
> as distinct from their biological heritage must consist of the end product of
>
> learning. Put more simply, culture is the total of how we live and what it is that
>
> distinguishes us from others.

Le Roux (1997:8) describes culture as that which we consider as important (values), what we accept as truth (faith) and how we believe we should do things (norms).

The formation of relationships is an extremely important aspect of the socialisation of children. Consequently children need to gain insight into relationships if they are to develop into well-adjusted individuals in an integrated society.

## 1.6.7    Cross-cultural

This term refers to interaction across cultures, from one to the other.

### 1.6.8    Multicultural

Multicultural refers to all the possible cultures and cultural mixes (Hessari & Hill 1989 : xiii) and can be defined as the inclusion of all racial and cultural groups (Lemmer & Squelch 1993 : 3) that result in a 'rich mix' of cultural diversity (Coutts 1992 : 83).

### 1.6.9    Intercultural

Intercultural can be defined in terms of the 'I - You' relationship which is the most fundamental human relationship. 'I, become I as a result of my relationship with you'. In this relationship with you, I allow you to differ from me because that is your right. Intercultural contact based on this premise must therefore enable intercultural understanding which will increase respect and allow for a realisation and appreciation of our common aspects, but at the same time it allows for diversity (Martin Buber as cited in Le Roux 1997 : 108). Therefore, while still maintaining own cultural integrity, selective steps are taken to become part of a larger society (Abbey & Brindis 1990 : 9-10).

### 1.6.10    Interpersonal (behaviour/attitudes/attraction)

The act of being human is found in these interpersonal factors, since no human being exists alone (Hsu as cited in Dwivedi & Varma 1996 : 21). Interpersonal can be defined as possessing human factors. This includes both negative and positive human behaviour. Negative interpersonal behaviour and attitudes are the result of enculturation and socialisation which may lead to children acting in a discriminatory manner to other individuals or groups of individuals (Lynch 1987 : 2). According to research cited in Toseland and Rivas (1984 : 215), how people think and feel will

also have a direct bearing on how they behave (interact) towards others. If thinking and feeling result in interpersonal attraction the tendency to evaluate another person in a more positive way exists (Papalia & Olds 1988 : 633).

## 1.6.11   Problem-solving groups

A problem-solving group can be defined as a systematic approach to solving a problem. The process of which can be generalised in a range of present or future situations and ultimately become part of the individual's coping mechanisms. The problem-solving procedure is based on behaviour modification and is viewed primarily as a learning experience, with the group facilitator taking an active role in passing on the technique (Gillis 1997 : 47). Toseland and Rivas (1984 : 265) explain the problem-solving group in terms of engaging in a complex set of functions which vary with the type of problem facing the group.

## 1.6.12   Socio-economic standards

According to Coutts (1992 : 98) groups of people tend to share broadly identifiable social and economic (wealth) levels in society. At the lower levels people are rooted in poverty (the culture of poverty), others have menial, poorly paid manual jobs (working-class culture), while others tend to be more affluent and better educated (middle-class culture). Each group can be expected to have different interests. Their view of education may also differ. There is generally not much sympathy or empathy between social classes and even within social classes, race has caused further divisions.

### 1.6.13  'Black' and 'Indian'

This researcher uses the terms 'Black' and 'Indian' merely as a device to distinguish between the two groups of pupils. The pupils at the school, for example, are not only representatives of Zulu and Tamil cultures but represent other groups as well. The term 'African' was rejected because many individuals from different cultural groups in South Africa see themselves as 'Africans'.

### 1.7  PLANNING THE RESEARCH STUDY

An exposition of the chapters to be included in this dissertation, as well as a résumé of the contents of each, follows .

### CHAPTER ONE

In chapter one this researcher discusses becoming aware of the problem to be investigated, the terrain of the problem to be investigated, the initial investigation undertaken the formulation of the problem statement and the aims of the investigation. The research design to be implemented is discussed briefly and the relevant terminology is explained.

### CHAPTER TWO

In this chapter the empirical research design to be used in the collection and analysis of data concerning cross-cultural relationships between grade seven Indian and Black pupils is discussed. The student will discuss the qualitative research method. The method for selecting participants and the design which includes observation and videotape recording to collect and analyse data are described. Ethical considerations

and the trustworthiness of the research are discussed.

## CHAPTER THREE

In chapter three the different developmental aspects, that is cognitive, physical, social and affective aspects of the grade seven pupil will be discussed in order to provide insight into the importance of peer relationships and the necessity for their formation. Emphasis will be placed on the implication of these developmental aspects for social interaction in a multicultural context. The aims of socialisation will also discussed in the light of available literature.

## CHAPTER FOUR

Chapter four will consist of literature research. In the literature study this researcher will discuss who the grade seven pupil is, the formation of relationships, the characteristics of positive relationships, the importance of peer relationships between grade seven pupils, the structure of the peer group, conditions for acceptance in the peer group, functions of the peer group and the similarities and differences of peer relationships between different cultures. All these aspects will also be discussed also in terms of their relevance in multicultural relationships and in the context of the multicultural school.

## CHAPTER FIVE

In chapter five the characteristics of positive relationship formation will be discussed with reference to Black and Indian peer groups. The discussion will focus on groups for adolescents, with particular reference to the advantages of using an interpersonal problem-solving group to improve cross-cultural relationships between adolescents.

Group goals and the skills which facilitate group processes, namely linking, trust and empathy, will be discussed from the perspective of their applicability in the group sessions.

**CHAPTER SIX**

In chapter six the intervention model for improving cross-cultural relationships and the methods to be used in the interpersonal problem-solving group sessions will be discussed.

A detailed exposition of the planning of sessions one to eight will be given. Each session will consist of a theme, levels to be considered, a process and the expected outcomes (goals) based on data collected from available literature. This researcher will take cognisance of the relevant levels and invents processes and activities aimed at attaining the expected outcomes (goals).

**CHAPTER SEVEN**

In chapter seven, the empirical study and the use of the intervention model devised for improving cross-cultural relationships between grade seven Indian and Black pupils will be discussed. The interactional processes between Indian and Black pupils in the interpersonal problem-solving group, and between the group members and the facilitator during the eight sessions, will be described.

**CHAPTER EIGHT**

In this final chapter a synopsis of the research programme will be given. A synthesis of findings concerning the changes in relationships between Indian and Black grade

seven pupils, obtained from the data collected during the empirical study, will be discussed. The realisation of the group goals identified in chapter five will be described. This researcher will analyse the results of the questionnaire to be completed by the former group members six months after they disperse in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme.

# CHAPTER TWO

## 2      EMPIRICAL RESEARCH DESIGN

### 2.1      INTRODUCTION

Creswell (1998:47-68) describes and defines five traditions of qualitative research as follows:

1.  A biography is a study, use and collection of life documents that describe turning-point moments in an individual's life. The writer tells and describes the stories of others.

2.  The phenomenological study describes the meaning of the lived experiences for several individuals about a concept or phenomenon. Phenomenologists explore the structures of consciousness in human experiences.

3.  A grounded theory study is a study in which theory is generated or discovered.

4.  An ethnography is a description and interpretation of a cultural or social group or system.

5.  A case study is an exploration of a 'bounded system' or a case (or multiple cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context.

Recent developments in qualitative research identify action research as another type of research (Zuber-Skerritt:1992:11). The research undertaken in this study fits into

the framework of action research, as it consists of developing a programme for improving relationships between Indian and Black children. The ultimate aim of action research is to improve practice in a systematic way (Zuber-Skerritt:1992:11).

Action research is historically credited to Kurt Lewin in the post-World War II 1940's. It emerged from the field of sociology. Action research has the potential to improve practice or provide people with a deeper understanding of a process, in this case the cultural relationship between Black and Indian grade seven pupils. Some researchers argue that it is possible to generalize the results of action research case studies by accumulating and synthesizing the findings.

The following are characteristics of action research:

- it reflects the dichotomy between theory and practice;

- its ultimate aim is to improve practice and to suggest and make changes to the environment, context or conditions in which that practice takes place and which impedes desirable improvement and effective future development;

- it is participative and collaborative, as the researcher is not considered an outside expert, conducting an enquiry with 'subjects', but interacts with and for the people (in this case children) concerned;

- the approach is not hierarchical, but the children and the researcher concerned are equal 'participants' contributing to the enquiry; and

- the solutions based on the views and interpretations of people involved in the inquiry are important.

The strategy of action research has three phases, namely conceptualization, implementation and interpretation (Mc Lean:1995:7). It is imperative to conceptualize the research before it has begun. In this case the conceptualization stage is the literature study in which the aspects for the development of a programme to improve

relationships between two cultures are the initial research process (the focus group), theoretical study and the development of a programme for intervention. The implementation phase has three components: evaluating the outcome, identifying a standard for comparison and comparing the current performance with the standard. In this study the research outcome will be evaluated by obtaining feedback from the pupils concerning their experience of another culture in the group. Comparing the way the group felt before the programme and after the programme will form the comparison with the standard behaviour. The group's behaviour before the intervention programme, as investigated by means of the focus group, may be viewed as the standard. Interpretation forms the final phase of action research. In the case of this particular study, this researcher will interpret the research data by analysing and evaluating the information gathered during the interactional group sessions.

## 2.2  EMPIRICAL RESEARCH METHODS

### 2.2.1  Methods of Collecting Data

A programme aimed at improving relationships between grade seven Indian and Black pupils will be designed and applied.

Data pertaining to the principles related to adequate functioning in adolescent peer groups will be collated from existing literature to ensure that these principles will be applied in the programme.

The empirical design comprises the application of the programme as a means of obtaining data which will reflect the desired improvement of relationships between grade seven Indian and Black pupils.

The following methods will be used to collect data during the interaction between the Indian and Black pupils.

● field notes;

● observation; and

● video-tape recordings.

Each of the methods is now briefly discussed.

### 2.2.1.1 Field Notes

Although this researcher will use video-tape recordings to watch and analyse the group sessions after each session, it is realised that it will be useful to jot down impressions such as intonation, ideas or observations at a particular moment during the group sessions, as those will be the attribution of subjective meaning to the situation.

According to Wilson (1989:434-435) field notes are important in order to remember observations during the research process. Notes can simply be taken during the process on paper or in a notebook. Jotting down a phrase or word in the presence of the participants is often enough to remind the researcher of his or her observation. This process ensures that correct and sufficient detail are noted.

Wilson (1989: 435) differentiates between three types of field notes:

a.   The description of events through watching and listening and theoretical notes to derive meaning from the observational notes. This includes the process of interpretation, inference, conjecture and hypothesising to build an analytical

scheme.

b.  Methodological notes, which are instructions to oneself, critiques of one's tactics and reminders about methodological approaches.

c.  Personal notes, that is notes about one's own reactions and reflections and experiences.

## 2.2.1.2  Observation

Observation is the ability to see, examine and record information (Seaman 1987:251). Observation is in some ways rather like breathing: life depends on it and we do it all the time, usually without reflection. The observational skills of watching, listening, counting and identifying patterns of social interaction are processes we take for granted, although we would quite literally be lost without them (Shakespeare, Atkinson & French 1993:47).

A distinction must be made between *simple observation* and *participant observation*. *Simple observation* involves the unobtrusive and systematic observation of the phenomenon of interest. *Participant observation* requires that the researcher joins the group of people who are being studied in order to observe and understand their behaviour, feelings, attitudes and beliefs better (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:43). Participant observation (a more complex type of observation) allows the researcher to become an insider. It allows for a deeper insight into the research problem as the researcher is able to enjoy the confidence of the participants and share their experiences (Bless & Higson-Smith 1995:105). It may be said that participant observation provides the researcher with an opportunity to become a 'trusted person'. Participant observation enables the researcher to become an integral part of the

subjects' social settings and consequently he or she is able to learn directly how the actions of research participants correspond to their words, observe patterns of behaviour and experience the unexpected as well as the expected. Consequently, the researcher develops a quality of trust with the research participants which motivates them to confide that which they might otherwise not (Glesne 1999:43). Therefore, the researcher becomes closer to the people being studied and may be in a more advantageous position to understand what is actually occurring. For example, a researcher interested in studying friendship patterns between individuals may be a participant observer in the group of friends and so learn directly about the relationship patterns among the friends. Conversely, the researcher's presence in the group may influence the activities of the individuals being studied and the observed behaviour may not be a true reflection of how they would have behaved, had the observer not been participating in their activities. This distortion of typical behaviour is not only a result of participant observation. Non-participant observers can evoke reactive behaviour on the part of those being observed which will reflect their influence. However, if the observation is carried out over long enough periods, subjects' reactions to being observed decline to the extent that they no longer jeopardise the validity of the observations (Feldman 1985:29). Although most human observation of people involves some degree of participation and involvement, participant observation is different because the observer must to some extent remain detached in order to ensure objectivity, while being sympathetic and empathetic (Shakespeare et al. 1993:45-48).

According to research cited by du Plooy (1997:106) a further problem encountered in participant observation is that the subjects of the observation may shift their attention to the research project and no longer act spontaneously. It is also possible that researchers may become so immersed in the interests and viewpoints of the participants that they lose their objectivity and scientific detachment. Consequently,

it is necessary for researchers to perform a dual role: one in which they experience the activities of the group and the other in which they observe and record their experiences.

In this research study this researcher will assume the role of a participant observer. As facilitator of the group she will be ideally positioned to observe the changing relationships between Indian and Black students. At the same time she will also be able to observe the effect of her conduct on the group members.

After each session she will record her observations of the behaviour of the group members.

### 2.2.1.3    Videotape Recordings

The use of videotape recordings can enhance observation and they can be used in a variety of ways. Videotape recordings are invaluable aids for micro-analyses. They are also invaluable for the evaluation of specific aspects of everyday interaction (Glesne 1999:51). According to Bottorf (De Vos 1998:329) videotape recordings are a tool for direct observation of behavioural and human experiences as they occur in daily life in various settings and contexts. Furthermore, they are useful for recording interpersonal exchanges. An added advantage is that non-verbal communication, which may contribute significantly to data collection, can be recorded (Oliver 1999:102).

Moreover, the use of videotape recordings as a technique for collecting data has two major advantages. These are density and permanence. Density refers to the density of data gathered by videotape recording, which is greater than that of any other kind of recording. Permanence refers to the use of videotape recordings by researchers to

review events when necessary in a variety of ways (real time, slow motion, frame by frame, forwards and backwards).

This researcher will record all the interpersonal problem-solving group sessions on videotape. This will enable her to obtain relevant data after a considered evaluation of the verbal and non-verbal interaction between the group members and between the group members and herself. The changes in the interactional relationships between Indian and Black pupils, as well as her own conduct, will be observed and reviewed. This will enable her to analyse her own behaviour and, if necessary, alter it in further sessions to obviate any negative tendencies, which may develop.

## 2.2.2    Data Analysis

Data analysis is determined by the information obtained from the data collection resources. In this research project, these resources are observation and videotape recordings.

The data collected will be analysed from the following perspectives:

- the role of participant observer as reflected in field notes (See 2.2.2.1);

- the viewing of videotape recordings.

## 2.2.2.1    The Role of Participant Observer

This researcher, who will also be the group facilitator for the activities of the members of the group to be selected as participants in the programme which will be implemented to improve cross-cultural relationships, will assume the roles of participant and observer, by virtue of her interaction with the group members. Consequently, this researcher will be able to obtain a more complete description and

a deeper understanding of the opinions of the group members.

The record of this researcher's experiences and observations made after the conclusion of each session will be an integral part of the process of analysis. These data will be evaluated to obviate any negative behaviour on the part of this researcher in subsequent sessions, which may have an adverse effect on the attainment of the aims of this research project.

The data collected and those obtained from the literature study will be interpreted and analysed by this researcher. This will enable her to compare and draw inferences, which will lead to meaningful conclusions.

## 2.2.2.2 Videotape Recordings

The data collected on videotape recordings will give this researcher the freedom to analyse them at her leisure.

After the conclusion of each session the videotape recording of that session will be viewed. Verbal and non-verbal interactions between the group members and between the group members and this researcher will be analysed to confirm that the outcome of each session correlates with the identified aims of that session. Data will also be analysed to assist this researcher with the planning of the ensuing session so that its activities and aims will be coordinated and directed towards the attainment of the predominant aim of improving the relationships between Indian and Black pupils.

After the research study is completed, all the interpersonal problem-solving group sessions will be evaluated as an entity. This will enable this researcher to analyse the processes which occur during the sessions and enable her to ascertain whether

relationships between Indian and Black pupils improve.

## 2.3   TRUSTWORTHINESS

The purpose of this discussion is to illustrate the manner in which this research will be approached and implemented. The discussion in this section pertains to 'trustworthiness' which is an important aspect of all research.

Walsh and King (1993:397) state that although quantitative and qualitative researchers use very different styles of research, the standards of good research design and scientific inference apply to both. Terms such as 'validity' and 'reliability' are typical terms used in quantitative research. The term 'trustworthiness' is the acceptable term used for this aspect in qualitative research.

Fitch (1994:34) states that the notion of 'evidence' is challenged to its core by the possibility of 'objective' examination of social life. Candour about the researcher's identity and role in the scene studied are highly valued kinds of evidence. Fitch (1994:34) avers that almost no amount of evidence can totally substantiate the claim about a 'social world', but he identifies the following criteria (Fitch 1994:36-37) for qualitative data to be admissable as evidence for claims about social life.

1.   The researcher should have been deeply involved and closely connected to the scene, activity or group studied.
2.   The researcher should achieve enough distance from the phenomenon to allow for recording of action and interpretation.
3.   Claims should be saturated in data.
4.   Data should come from publicly accessible observation records.
5.   Tight links between concrete events and interpretations of them are preferable.

The strategies of Guba's model (Krefting, 1991:222) for trustworthiness will be used in this research study. The criteria are set out as follows:

| Criteria | Qualitative Approach |
|---|---|
| Truth value | Credibility |
| Applicability | Transferability |
| Consistency | Dependability |
| Neutrality | Confirmability |

Each of the aspects which evaluates trustworthiness in this research study will now be discussed.

## 2.3.1 Credibility

● **Protracted interaction in the field**

It is incumbent on researchers to provide sufficient time and opportunities for observation and the creation of a relationship based on trust. The purpose of this is to enhance rapport. The researcher knows the respondents, as they are in her class. She will conduct initial interviews with the respondents and as a result of these encounters links will deepen. Eight group sessions will be conducted in which a heightened level of trust will hopefully be achieved.

● **Reflexivity**

This strategy pertains to an evaluation of the researcher's background, perceptions and interests in relation to the research process (Krefting 1991:218). This researcher

will constantly assess whether her personal interest and values impact on the research process. Reviewing the group sessions an videotape will ensure that this researcher will remain aware of possible prejudices and assumptions. The implementation of this strategy will ensure that this researcher does not become too involved with or familiar with the respondents. She will try not to confuse her experiences with those of the pupils.

● **Peer group evaluation**

This strategy is aimed at having the content of the research examined by, for example, a colleague to obtain his or her opinion concerning its acceptability (Merriam 1995:54-56). The researcher could also discuss the research process with impartial colleagues (Krefting 1991:219). This researcher will give the videotapes to a colleague to examine whether the predetermined aims are achieved. She will also ask a colleague to test the programme designed on another group of pupils.

● **The authority of the researcher**

The *credibility* of research is affected by the position of the researcher in relation to the research. In this instance the researcher is a teacher (Mouton 1998:5) and it is from the perspective of this position that her credibility to conduct and interpret this research should be evaluated. As an educator in a multicultural school this researcher is familiar with the phenomenon being investigated. Furthermore, in her capacity as an educator at the institution in the context of which the research will be ·conducted, she is familiar with and has had prolonged contact with the research subjects.

● **Triangulation**

A further criterion for establishing the *reliability* and *validity* of research is *triangulation*. Triangulation means using different types of theories, data collection techniques, analysis or researchers for examining the same variable. It is a specific use of multiple indicators (Newman 1997:1). Triangulation implies an integrated approach. This involves combining different methods in the same research to reveal different dimensions of the same phenomenon. Knowledge of these dimensions helps to reduce the shortcomings of each method and may be used to double-check findings by examining them from several vantage points. The integration of different methods makes it possible to weave between different levels of meanings (Fitzpatrick, Secrist & Wright 1998:28).

According to Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor and Tindall (1996:145) it must be recognised that all researchers' perspectives and methods are value-laden, biased, limited as well as illuminated by their frameworks, particular focus and blind spots. Therefore, the use of a combination of methods potentially facilitates more valid interpretations. Essentially this means that evaluation improves when diverse indicators are used. The greater the diversity of indicators, the greater the researcher's confidence in evaluation. Through triangulation researchers can overcome the bias implicit in single methods (Denzin as cited in Patton 1990:464).

## 2.3.2 Transferability

One other aspect which will contribute to the *trustworthiness of research* is the consideration of whether the *results* of research *can be applied in practice* (Brockopp & Hastings-Tolsma 1989:212). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985:125) the onus of transferring research results is on the researcher who subsequently wishes to apply them. The responsibility of the designer of the research project is to provide a sufficiently 'thick' description (Newman 1997:1) to make this possible. In this

research programme the model devised from data which will be obtained from a study of available literature will be applied with a view to improving relationships between Indian and Black grade seven pupils. The data obtained by means of participant observation and by evaluating videotape recordings of the group sessions will be analysed and recorded in notes. The interactional processes will be discussed critically. The model will subsequently be tested independently by a colleague to assess whether the findings corroborate those of this researcher.

## 2.3.3  Dependability

*Dependability* is primarily concerned not with that which is being measured, but with how well it is being measured (De Vos 1998:86). In quantitative research, reliability usually refers to the extent to which independent administrators of the same or similar instruments consistently obtain the same or similar results under comparable conditions. *In qualitative research variability can be expected because the instruments being assessed are the researcher and the participants whose behaviour can vary markedly.* Qualitative research emphasises the uniqueness of the human condition and consequently it seeks to clarify variation rather than replication. Therefore, trustworthiness should be explained in terms of either the participants or the researcher or the context.

According to Krefting (1991:221) the following strategies should be considered:

● The exact methods of data gathering, analysis and interpretation should be described: this researcher will attempt to do this.

● Using a code-recode procedure on the data during the analysis phase of the study. This researcher will use this method after each group session.

- Peer group evaluation: as discussed in 2.3.1, this researcher will use this method in her research.

- Triangulation will be done: the different perspectives on the data already represents this strategy.

## 2.3.4 Confirmability

- **Neutrality**

The *neutrality* of research is the degree to which research findings are exclusively the result of the conditions of research and participants' contributions, and are not affected by other motivations, biases and perspectives (Lincoln & Guba 1985:301). This researcher will ensure that she will not influence the beliefs or perceptions of the participants in the research by constantly re-evaluating her relationship as facilitator by viewing videotapes, reviewing notes and discussing her experiences. Consequently, the contributions (data) of the members of the interpersonal problem-solving group will not be compromised. This concurs with a fundamental tenet of qualitative research, namely that the neutrality of the data is of greater importance than the neutrality of the researcher (Lincoln & Guba 1985:299).

- **Reflexivity**

*Reflexivity* is an important component in establishing the *confirmability of research*. Reflection is arguably the most distinctive feature of qualitative research. It is an attempt to elucidate the process by which the material and analysis are produced. The researcher and researched are seen as collaborators in the construction of knowledge (Banister et al. 1996:149); that is, the construction of knowledge is viewed as a

cooperative venture (Shakespeare et al. 1993:54). Reflexivity is simply disciplined self-reflection which comprises *personal* and *functional reflexivity* (Banister et al. 1996:149-151). These may be defined as follows:

- Personal reflexivity is acknowledgement of who you are (your individuality as a researcher and the influence of your personal interests and values on the research process). It reveals rather than conceals the level of personal involvement and engagement in the research.

- Functional reflexivity is a continuous, critical examination of the research process to reveal its assumptions, values and biases.

To establish checks between subjectivity and objectivity in the research process it becomes necessary for the researcher to do more than merely observe. This will require that the researcher question, affirm and ask for clarification while collecting information. Consequently, a balance between subjectivity and objectivity will be maintained, while the central status of the researcher in interpreting the data collected will be unaffected.

● **Audit trailing**

Krefting (1991:221) describes the audit strategy as the major technique for establishing confirmability. This means that a clear trail will be left of all the research decisions from the initial data-gathering process to the final results of the study. In order to ensure that continuous and critical examination of data will occur while directing and shaping the course of the research, this researcher's personal influences, values and decisions on the interpretation of information will be monitored with a view to assuring the trustworthiness of the eventual outcome of the study. Personal notes will be taken to ensure clarity of purpose, reanalysis of material

and the development of alternative interpretations and explanations if necessary. Videotape recordings will be made of the interactional processes between members of the group and between the group members and this researcher. These will be viewed and evaluated after each session.

- **Peer group evaluation**

The videos will also be of use when the efficacy of the research model is evaluated with an independent educator, who will be asked to evaluate it in a programme to improve cross-cultural relationships. Knowledge constructs will not be obscured by personal bias, values and/or judgements.

## 2.4 CHOICE OF PUPILS FOR GROUP SESSIONS

In quantitative research the aim is to dfaw a representative sample in a random manner in order for the results of the research study to be generalised. This however is not the aim of qualitative study. In a qualitative study an individual, case or situation is studied.

In this qualitative study eight pupils will be selected to participate in the problem-solving group sessions. The pupils will be selected as follows:

- Pupils in grade seven, that is between the ages of twelve and fourteen years will be selected. The reason for this is that during that phase (the early and middle adolescent phase) peer group interaction becomes very important to the pupils.
- Pupils will be from the same socio-economic level, as this will create understanding for one another's circumstances.
- Pupils will have to declare their willingness to participate in the programme, as

there is no way in which pupils may be forced to attend the after-school sessions.

● Pupils will have to be able to communicate, therefore their ability to converse in English will be important, as they will have to share their experiences.

● Pupils will be chosen from the class which this researcher teaches at school, as a relationship of trust already exists between the researcher and the pupils. This is an important factor in ensuring trustworthiness (Krefting, 1991:217).

The primary school can be divided into three phases, that is the pre-primary phase, the junior primary phase and the senior primary phase. Children in the senior primary phase are between 12 and 14 years of age. Children in the latter phase are in their early and middle adolescent years. This researcher decided to use the term 'grade seven pupils' when referring to the children as the research took place in the school setting where this is an acceptable term to use.

## 2.5    ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this research project interpersonal contact with a group of adolescents will take place. Consequently, it is imperative that this researcher (facilitator) adhere to ethical principles. Ethics can be defined as a set of moral principles which are suggested by an individual or group, are subsequently widely accepted and which define rules and behavioural prescriptions concerning conduct to experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students (De Vos 1998:24). The various ethical considerations will now be discussed.

### 2.5.1    Psychological Abuse, Stress or Loss of Self-esteem

Social researchers may place people in stressful, embarrassing, anxiety-producing and/or unpleasant situations. Researchers learn about reactions to extreme stress and

anxiety in humans by simulating situations in which these reactions are provoked. Consequently, this type of research could make the researcher prone to callous and manipulative attitudes and behaviour (Newman 1991:446-448).

This researcher will at all times be mindful of the nature of the research programme and her responsibility for the psychological well-being of her subjects. She is conscious that the research participants should not be subjected to emotional stress. The researcher will intervene and correct any misconceptions which may arise so that no ill-feelings between cultural groups will develop.

### 2.5.2 Privacy, Anonymity and Confidentiality

Privacy implies the element of personal privacy, while confidentiality indicates the handling of information in a confidential manner (De Vos 1998:28). According to Newman (1991:452-453) researchers invade a person's privacy when they probe into his or her beliefs, background and behaviour in a way that reveals private details. Confidentiality means that a researcher is responsible for protecting all data collected from being divulged to others in such a way that anonymity is compromised (Brockopp & Hastings-Tolsma 1989:150; Newman 1997:452). Research subjects who are videotaped must consent and confidentiality must be maintained (De Vos: 1998:330). They must also be assured that should they agree to being videotaped, they can request that it be discontinued or suspended (De Vos:1998:330).

Participants in this research programme will be assured that all data collected is confidential and that their anonymity will be protected. They will be assured that the data collected will be used for the purpose of this research and they will be encouraged to discuss their opinions and emotions honestly.

The permission of the research subjects will be obtained prior to videotaping them and this researcher will ascertain if they have any objections to this method of data collection. They will be informed of their right to withdraw from the research programme without jeopardy.

This researcher is sensitive to the multicultural nature of the group and will withhold personal views and/or refrain from making value judgements. Cultural diversity will be respected.

Finally, the group will be provided with a relaxing, pleasant, safe and secure environment.

## 2.6    CONCLUSION

In this chapter empirical research methods were described. The techniques for collecting data were discussed and their applicability to this research design and programme were briefly stated. The principles for ensuring the trustworthiness of research were discussed. The responsibility of researchers to adhere to ethical principles was discussed and the ethical measures to be used by this researcher were described briefly.

CHAPTER THREE

## 3   DEVELOPMENTAL ASPECTS OF THE GRADE SEVEN PUPIL

### 3.1   INTRODUCTION

Development involves changes in the individual's physical, social, cognitive and affective behaviour. Understanding such developmental changes assists all members of society to become better informed (Hetherington & Parke 1993:2). In this instance this applies to the grade seven pupil. Equipped with such knowledge the researcher is able to see the individual in perspective. Consequently intervention in dysfunctional peer interactional patterns is facilitated.

Many authors have regarded the ages twelve and thirteen as the beginning of adolescence and as key developmental ages (Ralph, Merralls, Hart, Porter & Tan Sue-Neo 1995:110). Adolescence stands out as a fascinating, interesting and challenging period of human growth and development. It is a period of great physical, social, emotional and physiological change (Mwamwenda 1995:63).

The individual is not an isolated, lonely being — he or she is a social being who is able to communicate with his or her fellow human beings (Le Roux 1993:9). Therefore, the environment is of overriding importance for social interaction. A child is entirely dependent on his or her environment, having only the potential for becoming human, he or she needs a human environment to do so (Pringle 1993:15). From the moment we are born, we begin a lifetime of interdependence. Social interactions fulfil our intrinsic need for companionship, stimulation, feedback and a sense of belonging. However, no one facet of development occurs independently of

the others. For instance, the individual's ability to make friends is considered to be a social skill, but is also affected by other developmental processes, such as cognitive, affective and physical development. These developmental aspects will influence what approach individuals use, how they adapt to social situations and how they feel about the social encounters they experience (Kostelnik, Stein, Whiren & Soderman 1993:2).

The individual can only discover who he is (individual identity) through social involvement with others. Through such co-involvement, self-actualisation can be reached (Landman et al. 1992:85). Therefore, the individual needs to become physically and mentally (cognitively) involved with his or her environment. By means of this involvement he or she comes to know (understand) what is expected of him or her. Through this emotional (affective) communication with his or her environment he or she is able to experience a feeling of warmth and acceptance or a feeling of isolation and rejection. Depending on this emotional (affective) experience, he or she is able to understand and attribute meaning to situations and relationships that he or she is involved in.

Figure 2 represents the highly complex nature of interaction between the individual's physical, social, cognitive and affective behaviour.

Figure 2. Development Interaction Model.

INVOLVEMENT

TRUST

A

AB

B

COGNITIVE

ATTRIBUTION
OF
MEANING

PHYSICAL

SOCIAL

AC

BC

UNDERSTANDING

AFFECTIVE

C

EXPERIENCING
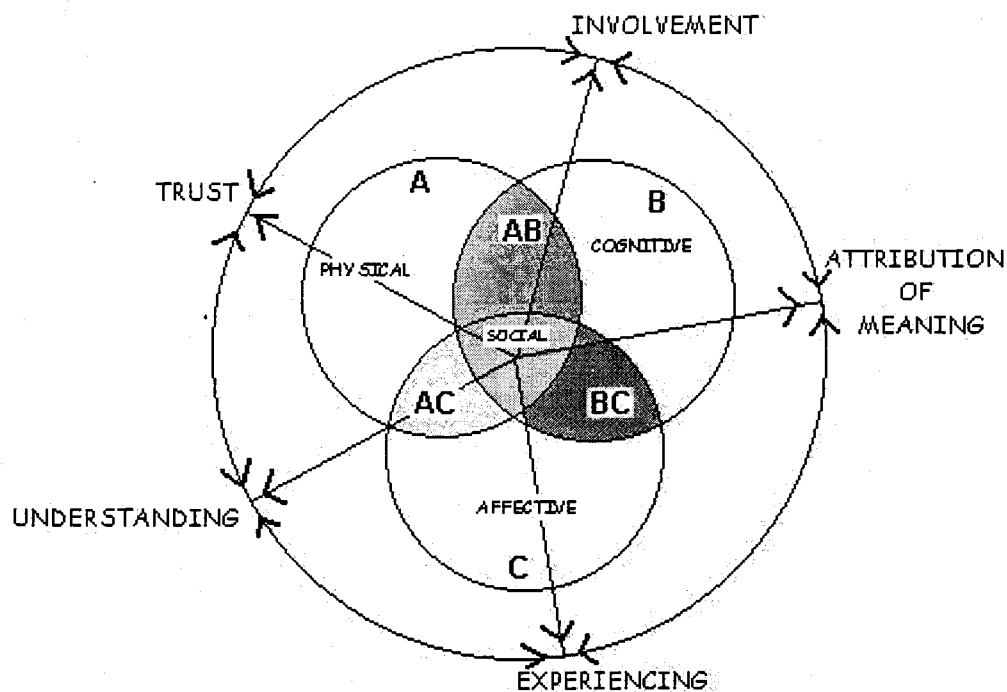
In order to understand the individual in totality, it becomes necessary to discuss some of the developmental aspects relevant to this research.

## 3.2 PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

### 3.2.1 Definition of Physical Development

Physically, adolescence commences with a pre-pubertal growth spurt and ends with the attainment of full physical maturity. Although physical maturity is difficult to define with precision, it usually refers to a person reaching the limit of his or her genetic potential for endocrine development, skeletal growth and height (Hamachek 1990:106).

### 3.2.2    Physical Development in Grade Seven Pupils

One of the earliest and most obvious physical changes of adolescence is the growth spurt which begins in early adolescence. The growth in height is accompanied by an increase in weight and changes in body proportion (Rice 1992:174). Although the physical changes of this time of life are dramatic, they do not suddenly emerge complete at the end of childhood (Papalia & Olds 1993:483). Usually girls experience change and accelerated growth at about the age of twelve until about the age of eighteen, roughly two years ahead of boys. Boys experience similar changes at about the age of fourteen until the age of twenty-one. When girls experience their growth spurt, they become taller than their male peers, who not only catch up but also grow to be taller than the girls during their belated spurt of growth (Mwamwenda 1995:63).

This stage of physical development in adolescence includes several distinctive periods of developmental change. Firstly, pubescence or pre-adolescence refers to the two years preceding puberty and to the physical changes occurring during that time. Secondly, puberty follows pubescence and is marked by specific indicators of sexual maturity (Hamachek 1990:106).

The pubertal phase generally occurs between the ages of eleven and fifteen, although individual differences may occur (Louw 1996:383). These biological processes which signal the end of childhood produce rapid growth not only in height and weight but changes in body proportions and form as well (Papalia & Olds 1993:483).

During adolescence the most noteworthy physical changes which occur are those influenced by genetic, endocrine (the secretion of growth hormones), environmental (socio-economic status and education) and emotional factors (for example serious psychological tension can disrupt nutrition and also lead to a large overproduction of

adrenal steroids, which inhibit the secretions of growth hormones) (Louw 1996:385-387).

These physical changes which occur also influence the individual's behaviour both directly and indirectly. Directly, physical development determines what the individual can do. If, for example, individuals are well-developed for their age, they will be able to compete on equal terms with their peers in games and sport; if not, they will be handicapped in competition and may be excluded from the peer group. Indirectly, physical development influences attitudes towards self and others (Hurlock 1978:108). At this stage of development, the adolescent is acutely aware of his physical development and it is not always easy for adolescents to accept the changes they experience. As they reach sexual maturity many adolescents become dissatisfied with their physical appearance while others are quite happy with the way they look (Mwamwenda 1995:68). In order to form an idea of his identity he or she now has to integrate these changes into his or her existing identity to form a unified whole. He or she has to maintain a feeling of continuity, that is a feeling that he or she is still the same person (Louw 1996:387).

Based on research cited in Louw (1996:387) and Mwamwenda (1995:68), the adolescent's body image, that is his or her view of his or her body, is linked to his or her self-esteem and is also determined by his or her experience of how other people perceive him or her. Therefore, his or her peers' perception of him or her becomes particularly important to the adolescent. He or she conforms not only to the social behaviour of his or her peers but also to their norms concerning physical appearance and skill. The degree to which the adolescent manages to conform to the norms of his or her peers determines how the group will behave towards him or her and how he or she will view and assess himself or herself. Because of the profound physical changes, adolescence is a critical period in the development of the self-concept. If his

or her family's and peers' attitudes are positive these will contribute to a positive self-concept. Conversely, if these attitudes are negative, they will contribute to a negative self-concept. In addition to forming attitudes about themselves on the basis of what they are told about themselves, the adolescent's views of his or her physical change will be coloured by how well he or she is prepared for such changes and whether or not these changes fulfil his or her childhood expectations of himself or herself (Mwamwenda 1995:68).

### 3.2.3 Implications of Physical Development for Social Interaction in a Multicultural Context

Adolescents are aware of physical changes in their appearances and the desire to associate and compare themselves with their peers is very important at this stage of development. The physical environment that the individual finds himself or herself in also has important implications for physical growth. Even though the environment may have prepared the individual for the physical changes which occur, it is important to remember that physical appearance, that is physical attractiveness, is also determined according to the type of environment in which we find ourselves. Therefore, that which may be attractive to one culture may not necessarily be so to another.

Due to South Africa's history of racial segregation, which to an extent is still reflected in contemporary society, individuals during their formative years have had limited exposure to cultures different from their own. Even the aspect of physical development needs to develop through a process of interaction with the environment. Limited cross-cultural social interaction resulting from exposure to a monocultural environment during the developmental stages makes it difficult for individuals from different cultures to perceive similarities which exist between all human beings.

Therefore, how each cultural group perceives the other group and measures up to the standard set by the other group may become problematic within a multicultural school context. It is during this stage of development that individuals are required to collaborate with same-age peers in activities which encourage the ability to communicate.

Adolescence is a period of self-awareness, during which the individual adjusts to the physical changes which are occurring and therefore needs to feel accepted by his or her peers. Such acceptance encourages self-esteem. However, if groups are perceived as 'different', problems relating to social interaction may result. Consequently one group may be accorded negative peer status. If such peer rejection occurs individuals become socially isolated through avoidance or aggression. If individuals are made to feel uncomfortable or insecure in their social interactions discriminatory treatment will not enhance self-esteem. Once self-worth is questioned negative self-appraisal may result. Therefore, it is necessary that groups learn how to interrelate in multicultural contexts where the yardstick for measurement of the self can no longer be of a monocultural nature. An awareness and appreciation for differences can be fostered by encouraging same-age activities and tasks by means of social involvement.

## 3.3 COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

### 3.3.1 Definition of Cognitive Development

Cognitive development is the development of a person's mental capacity to engage in thinking, reasoning, knowledge acquisition, remembering, organising, information, analysis and problem solving (Mwamwenda 1995:89). Put more simply, cognitive development refers to all those psychological abilities associated with thinking and

with knowing (Fontana 1995:49).

### 3.3.2 Cognitive Development in Grade Seven Pupils

Before adolescence children are largely concerned with the here and now, with what is apparent to their senses and with problems that can be solved by trial and error. During adolescence most individuals become more adept at dealing with problems on an abstract level (Salkind & Ambron 1987:523).

The onset of adolescence usually sees the emergence of what Piaget calls the *formal operational phase*. According to him this new stage of development which follows the concrete operational phase begins at about eleven to twelve years of age (Clarke-Stewart, Friedman & Koch 1985: 336; Woolfolk 1990:47; Fontana 1995:57; Hamachek 1990:123). This formal operational stage is the final stage in the developmental programme. Though children's thinking may still differ from the adult's in degree, it now begins to resemble it in kind (Fontana 1995:57).

Attaining the formal operational stage gives the child structure and organises his or her mind. In the earlier stage of the concrete operational phase, children can think logically only about that which is concrete, that is, about the here and now. However, with the onset of adolescence a new ability emerges, the ability to reason abstractly and in terms of verbally stated hypotheses. Instead of only concrete experiences, the child can see infinite possibilities in his or her thinking (Papalia & Olds 1993:515). The dominant mode of thinking that can be recognised during this stage of cognitive development is abstract thinking (Mwamwenda 1995:97). This ability enables the individual to formulate new relations between the real and the possible (Hamachek 1990:123). The development of cognition opens many new doors. It enables children to think more scientifically. Consequently they are now able to develop concerns

about social issues, solve problems and consider propositions which are contrary to facts (Woolfolk 1990:47; Biehler & Hudson 1986:556). According to Dignan (Hauser 1971:1) identity evolves through social interaction, therefore it follows that if the individual experiences positive social interactions, he or she will view himself or herself more favourably and he or she will develop a positive idea of who he or she is. Having attained positive self-esteem, he or she is able to develop a positive concept of self.

Although adolescents are now better able to understand another's point of view, they are still likely to assume that the other person's perception is the same as their own. Hamachek (1990:126) has identified this phenomenon as a new expression of egocentrism, which is the tendency to assume that others think and feel the same as you do. This assumption typifies the egocentric quality which is characteristic of adolescent thinking.

Finally, it has to be remembered that intellectual growth like all other aspects of growth takes time. It takes a certain amount of experience of life and living to fully appreciate the idea that people have differing ideas and ways — that there can be different, but equally good, solutions to the same problem. Adolescents are in the process of gaining this experience. It is part of growing up — in this case intellectually (Hamachek 1990:126).

### 3.3.3    Implications of Cognitive Development for Social Interaction in a Multicultural Context

Through interaction with those different from ourselves, cognitive growth, that is knowledge about others, can be developed. Cognition has to do with how a person thinks and such thinking can be either overtly or covertly expressed through our feelings and attitudes. Our attitudes are learnt (cognition) and developed by the

environment in which the individual exists. Through our interaction with the environment we gain knowledge which guides our thinking. It follows that if children are isolated from cultural groups which are different from those to which they belong, the interactional experience necessary to gain knowledge about others (understanding) will be deficient. Consequently individuals become selective in their perceptions about those different from themselves. These perceptions of other races and cultures determine the type of relationships formed between individuals and, by extension, between groups.

The way in which we come to know and understand others is through social cognition. The environment in which we find ourselves provides the stimuli for determining our perceptions of others. Therefore, if the environment does not provide the necessary stimuli to develop knowledge (understanding) of those different from ourselves, it can be said that our social cognition about different cultures is deficient. Consequently limits placed on intergroup contact will lead to social categorisation and selective perception which will hamper the formation of cross-cultural relationships.

## 3.4 AFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT

### 3.4.1 Definition of Affective Development

Affective development can be defined as the growth of that area which is concerned with feelings and emotions associated with human behaviour (Fontana 1995:157; Reilly & Lewis 1983:197).

### 3.4.2    Affective Development in Grade Seven Pupils

Individuals laugh, cry, show fear, anger, love and affection. Such actions are used to communicate feelings (Hetherington & Parke 1993:208). Feelings communicate either positive or negative well-being and form part of the affective domain.

The affective domain is rather different from the cognitive domain. It refers not only to classroom learning but to all those values and attitudes which children derive from the institutions of which they are members. However, the affective domain must not be seen as something separate from the cognitive domain as affective factors interact with and are modified by cognitive factors. Nevertheless these factors are functionally independent (Fontana 1995:159-160 & 185).

The affective domain plays an important part in a young person's development. With regard to affective development in early adolescence, it is necessary to note that this period is a time of change and redefinition. Adolescents experience the problems and stresses of day-to-day living for the first time and might have difficulty coping with them (Hamachek 1990:120).

This is also a period for the development of self-identity or self-concept. This self-concept is a conscious, cognitive perception and evaluation by individuals of themselves. In other words, this is a time of development of an awareness of who and what one is. It describes what individuals see when they look at themselves, in terms of their self-perceived physical characteristics, personality, skills, traits, roles and social status (Rice 1992:246).

Erikson (1983:131) refers to this stage of adolescent identity development as the estrangement stage of 'identity confusion'. Therefore, the search for a self-concept

that fits is a major psychological growth spurt during adolescence. Adolescence is primarily a 'break-up' period — a time for breaking up the familiar patterns of behaviour of childhood and preparing new patterns of behaviour for adulthood. This is the 'identity versus identity confusion' stage in which adolescents leave a very dependent stage of their development and prepare for a different stage, one that demands and reinforces independence. Adolescence is a period of transition during which new expectations emerge (Hamachek 1990:122).

Once self-conceptualisation has taken place adolescents must come to terms with self-esteem. What self-worth do they perceive? Does self-appraisal lead from self-acceptance and -approval to a feeling of being self-worthy? If this is so, the adolescent has enough self-esteem to accept and live with himself or herself. There must be a corollary between self-concepts and -ideals before an individual can develop self-esteem. Rosenberg (Powell 1983:52) states that some consistency is needed between the individual's view of himself or herself and the view that significant others have of him or her. If there is discord between self-view and the view which others have of an individual, difficulties relating to self-esteem and identity formation can arise.

Self-concept is not an innate quality but is learned through interaction with significant others. Even if it were an inborn quality it would be subject to environmental or pedagogical modification (Mwamwenda 1995:369). In view of this, it is important to note that adolescents from working-class homes generally have a lower self-esteem than children from homes higher on the socio-economic scale. This may be so because adolescents from working-class homes have constant reminders of their own supposed 'inferiority' in the form of dilapidated environments, limited facilities, older school buildings and so on (Fontana 1995:266).

However, feelings of conflict and anxiety during this stage can be overcome. According to Carl Rogers (Rice 1992:247) the end point of personality development is a congruence between the phenomenal field and experience and the conceptual structure of the self. This results in freedom from internal conflict and anxiety. Therefore, who individuals discover they are and what they perceive themselves to be begin to merge and they are therefore able to accept themselves without conflict. Their self-perceptions aid relationships with others and bring about self-acceptance and self-esteem. Psychological maladjustment occurs when the self-image reflected in relationships with others and the self-image they have of themselves or after which they strive diverge.

Irrespective of what culture an individual belongs to, there is a tendency for individuals to compare and contrast themselves with other groups of individuals. The resulting comparison normally favours the group to which the individual belongs. However, once groups are perceived to be meaningfully distinct from one another intergroup bias ensues in the form of discrimination. Such intergroup bias can result in lower levels of self-esteem. According to Mullen, Brown and Smith (Argyle & Coleman 1995:68-70) it is possible that low-status groups or individuals could then aspire to groups which have been accorded higher status. If an individual is accepted by the group then his or her self-concept will be bolstered (Baron & Byrne 1994:485). However, as the self-concept is the focal point of relationships it can also be negatively affected by group rejection (Vrey 1979:4) . It is during the affective stage of development that the adolescent in his relationship with significant others forms his self-identity and is able to answer to question, 'Who am I?' Therefore, a sense of belonging is a valuable factor in an individual's social integration, morale and self-esteem (Searcy 1994:27). It follows that if cross-cultural relationships are experienced negatively, in that one group is offered higher status than another, the possibility exists that an individual will not want to identify strongly with his or her

own group. Furthermore, when the perception of an individual's relationship with others does not correlate with his or her self-perception of that relationship, it is doubtful that a positive self-identity can develop. Unfortunately, individuals who develop negative attitudes inevitably fail to create a satisfying, productive life. Negative attitudes are inaccurate and self-defeating and can result in maladjustment, which in turn results in a feeling of helplessness (Comer 1992:273). This is closely linked to failure which leads the individual to believe that his or her life is meaningless and results in alienation and despair (Kruger, Smit & le Roux 1996:70). Consequently it is not difficult to see how such alienation can impact negatively on cross-cultural relationships and the development of a positive self-concept.

### 3.4.3 Implications of Affective Development for Social Interaction in a Multicultural Context

Individuals are always engaged in interaction with their environment. The type of stimuli provided by the environment will to a large extent determine how they feel about themselves. As individuals are aware of themselves in relation to others, they are able to make comparisons. Self-worth grows in accordance with self-perception as compared to others. Through such perceptions knowledge is gained about the self as well as others.

In order for self-acceptance to develop, the individual needs to be accepted by the significant others with whom he or she interacts. Therefore, the degree of security and respect afforded by the environment will help determine the level of self-acceptance, which is the foundation of self-worth and subsequent self-esteem. Therefore, it is necessary that individuals engage in mutually rewarding relationships. Reciprocal acceptance between the individual and his or her peers is a prerequisite for the development of positive self-esteem. However, when self-esteem is threatened by

prejudicial attitudes discrimination sets in. In this type of relationship one group is presumed to be 'superior' to the other and mutual acceptance cannot develop as no constructive self-evaluation can be expected to develop in an environment in which race or culture is discriminated against.

Every individual wants to mature into a self-reliant, self-accepting adult and has the capacity to engage in a mutually rewarding relationship. How the individual perceives himself or herself and how he or she is perceived by others will determine the level of self-worth. If comparisons are favourable, a positive feeling of self-worth and in turn self-esteem develops. Such positive perceptions will shape and determine positive identity formation. Conversely, if the stimuli provided by the environment (peers) are unsupportive or lack sensitivity, self-esteem will be negatively affected.

How individuals perceive themselves will determine how they behave. If self-comparisons are positive and an individual can perceive similarities to others, positive feelings towards the self and others develop. The individual is able to interact positively with his or her peers. Self-acceptance and acceptance by others facilitates the development of self-worth and positive self-esteem. This, in turn, helps to develop a positive social identity which enables the individual to determine who he is and assists the development of self-identity. Therefore, how a person perceives himself or herself and, in turn, is perceived by others within a multicultural context is important. If these perceptions are negative, then the development of a social identity as well as group identity can be affected.

## 3.5  SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### 3.5.1    Definition of Social Development

Social development can be defined as the acquisition of the ability to behave in accordance with social expectations (Hurlock 1978:228).

### 3.5.2    Social Development in Grade Seven Pupils

Adolescence is an intensely social period in the developmental continuum. Although most adolescents were also fairly sociable and interactive during their middle-childhood years, the social experience they have as teenagers is accompanied by a large psychological difference, namely an enormous self-consciousness. Preoccupied as they are with their changing bodies and newly acquired social status as semi-adults, younger adolescents constantly tend to monitor their appearance and actions (Hamachek 1990:117). Conformity with peers is reflected in dress, hairstyles, tastes, vocabulary and adornment and gives the adolescent a sense of belonging, which is very important in the development of their social self (Mwamwenda 1995:70).

Until the onset of adolescence, children's dependence on peers has been rather loosely structured. They have sought out playmates of their own ages with whom they share common interests or activities. Children have not depended primarily on one another for emotional satisfaction. Their parents fulfilled this need for praise, love and tenderness. During adolescence the picture changes — there is a need for emotional independence and emancipation from parents and individuals come to depend more and more on their peers for support (Rice 1992:428).

In addition to developing physically, cognitively and affectively the adolescent has

to achieve social maturity. The adolescent's ability to master the developmental tasks associated with social development and the development of independence to a large extent will be determined not only by his physical and cognitive maturity, but also by the social factors such as:

a.   the complexity of the level of modernisation of the society in which the adolescent matures;

b.   the characteristics of his or her sub-culture (ethnic and socio-economic) and attitudes and reactions of society to his or her sub-culture; and

c.   the family structure and parental influence (Louw 1996:415).

At all stages people are influenced by the social group with which they constantly associate and with which they want to be identified. This influence is the greatest during childhood and the early part of adolescence (Hurlock 1978:229). The reason for this is that the adolescent lacks personality definition and a secure identity. Consequently adolescents gather friends around them from whom they gain strength and who help to establish boundaries. They learn the necessary personal and social skills and societal definitions, which help them to become part of the larger adult world, from these friends. They become emotionally bound to others who share their vulnerabilities and their innermost thoughts (Rice 1992:429).

### 3.5.3   The Importance of Peer Relationships in Social Development

It is easier for an adolescent to be accepted by a group if he or she conforms to its ·values, customs and interests and if he or she comes from the same socio-economic background as its members. Adolescents who are accepted by their peers usually have the following characteristics: flexibility, tolerance, sympathy, cheerfulness, self-confidence, initiative and enthusiasm. Acceptance by a group is therefore desirable,

particularly if it is based on mutual helpfulness and support (Louw 1996:423). Through peer association, a variety of competencies develop. Research cited by Henggeler, Schoenwald, Borduin, Rowland & Cunningham (1998:126) lists some of these competencies as gaining perspective, empathy, collaboration in activities and tasks, initiation of interaction and reciprocation. Such peer involvement is important, in that most adolescents appraise their selves and values on the basis of other people's reactions and they are dependent on the approval, support and acceptance of their peers. An unpopular adolescent is often emotionally disturbed, preoccupied with himself or herself and has a negative self-concept. When rejected by the group, his or her social isolation increases and his or her self-confidence declines even further (Louw 1996:423).

Being accepted by the peer group gives the individual a sense of security, belonging and of social-acceptance, which satisfies a basic human need. Individuals who are rejected usually end up lonely and isolated with a keen awareness of those social inadequacies which militate against their group membership (Fontana 1995:310). Individuals who have difficulty initiating or sustaining interaction and mutual give-and-take in relationships rarely achieve positive status from their peers. Some such individuals are simply neglected by their peers, while others are actively rejected. Research indicates that individuals who are neglected appear to be rather inept in the context of social interaction. Individuals who are actively rejected often engage in aggressive and obnoxious behaviour in social contexts. Individuals who are neglected, socially isolated and passive are at risk of subsequent internalising problems. Individuals who are rejected are aggressive in peer situations and are at risk of subsequent externalising problems, such as school failure and delinquency (Henggeler et al. 1998:127).

### 3.5.4 Implications of Social Development for Social Interaction in a Multicultural Context

Lack of involvement between pupils from different cultural groups hampers not only the development of cross-cultural friendships but also appreciation and respect for diversity. If individuals are unable to connect with each other and this results in social distancing between groups of people, the development of understanding, acceptance and trust will be hampered. If the elements of understanding, trust and acceptance are missing, then meanings will be attributed negatively in cross-cultural relationships. Such negative attribution of meanings makes the imputation of blame unavoidable because individuals are unable to accept responsibility towards others and/or for their own actions. Such inability to accept responsibility does not allow for positive self-actualisation to develop in a multicultural context. This then leads to the development of insensitivity to those different from ourselves. Furthermore, avoidance of those different from ourselves does not allow for the development of self-perception in relation to others. The inability to identify with those different from ourselves very often results in cross-cultural conflict. In order to be able eventually to co-exist peacefully as adults within a multicultural context, children need to socialise so that they are able to connect with one another. Therefore, individuals need to be encouraged to see similarities between groups by means of social development. Once understanding between groups takes place then respect for individuality and diversity can be created.

### 3.5.5 Aims of Socialisation

The child is a person, a human being and as such he or she has essential personal needs and aspirations such as the need to be esteemed, accepted and recognised. These needs can only be fulfilled within a human context. He or she also has essential

human social needs, such as togetherness, communication and belonging. To fulfil these needs he or she has to socialise with others by forming relationships (Du Toit & Kruger 1991:60).

Through socialisation the individual acquires knowledge of the rules, attitudes, beliefs, habits, values, role requirements and norms prevailing in the social environment. He or she learns to accept these social norms as his or her own or at least to take them into consideration in his or her behaviour (Louw 1996:10). Therefore, the social aim of education should be to guide individuals in the process of socialisation so that they can eventually, as adults, co-exist comfortably with their fellow men in all social contexts. Through the process of socialisation the individual is helped to become a partner-in-society, that is gradually to adapt to society. Socialisation therefore implies the leading of the individual into society, arousing positive attitudes towards others and a sense of responsibility, that is social conscience (Le Roux 1993:14). The development of a social conscience has now become central to individual development. South African society has become integrated and the young adult has to be taught how to interact within a variety of cultures. If this can be achieved individuals, when they become adults, will be enabled to interact and communicate with each other, which will lead to development of better inter-cultural relationships.

According to Behr, Cherian, Mwamwenda, Ndaba & Ramphal (1989:29) irrespective of the culture that one belongs to , the main purpose of socialisation in all societies is to teach people to live as members of a group, because it is only in groups that human beings can maintain mastery over their environment. Therefore, every society has the same basic goals in socialising its young. Each individual must learn to:

a.    fulfil physical needs in appropriate ways;

b.    control aggression;

c.    master the physical environment;

d.    master the social environment;

e.    perform essential skills;

f.    behave in accordance with society's moral values;

g.    prepare for the future; and

h.    be both an effective individual and an effective member of society.

## 3.6 CONCLUSION

In chapter three this researcher has discussed the various developmental aspects of the grade seven pupil. This discussion centred on aspects of cognitive, physical, social and affective development and provided insight into the necessity for the formation of adequate peer relationships and of the importance of these relationships in developing perceptions of themselves and others. Emphasis was placed on the implication of these aspects for social interaction in a multicultural context. The aims of socialisation were also discussed in the light of available literature. In chapter four the grade seven school phase will be discussed.

All the relevant aspects of the formation, characteristics and importance of peer relationships will be commented on. The structure of, conditions for acceptance in and functions of the peer group will also be described. Throughout the discussion the aspect of multicultural relationships will be borne in mind.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## 4 PEER RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN GRADE SEVEN PUPILS

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

As social beings we are continually interacting with each other in various types of relationships throughout our lives. The formation of such relationships in school plays an important part in our lives, as it is through these peer relationships that we come to know and evaluate ourselves. During this period in our relationships with peers, conditions for acceptance into the group are also established. The functions of the peer group cannot be underestimated because it provides the individual with an arena to test his or her ideas and prepares him or her one day to take his or her place in the larger society. Today South African society is no longer a monocultural society. In order to ensure more positive cross-cultural interaction in the classroom, it becomes necessary to establish the quality of interactions which occur among peers and whether there are similarities and differences in the patterns of peer interactions between different cultural groups.

### 4.2 THE GRADE SEVEN SCHOOL PHASE

The primary school years can be divided into three distinct phases. The first phase is the pre-primary phase. The children in this phase are between five and five and a half years of age. The second phase is the junior primary phase. This phase is made up of children from grade one to grade three and this age group ranges from approximately six and a half to nine years of age. The third phase is the senior primary phase. This phase is made up of children from grade four to grade seven and the approximate age of this group of children is ten to thirteen years of age. The grade seven pupil is an

individual, who has reached the end of the senior primary phase. This period in the life of the grade seven pupil is also the end of late childhood and the onset of early adolescence (Hamachek 1990:108). However, with the implementation of an equal educational system in South Africa and the advent of a multicultural system of education, it is not unusual to find individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds as old as fourteen and fifteen in a grade seven classroom. Such individuals are disadvantaged because they have previously not had access to equal educational opportunities.

Adolescence is a stage in individuals' lives when they are involved in the process of separating themselves from their parents and forming outside relationships (Baron & Byrne 1994:322). Therefore, the importance of good peer relationships cannot be overemphasised. If interpersonal relationships fail, loneliness results and the individual feels alienated from parents, teachers and peers. Among the worst possible consequences are hopelessness and a feeling of despair (Baron & Byrne 1994:322). This has the potential to subvert personal development and self-actualisation. As has already been stated, the need for good interpersonal relationships among adolescents is crucial.

It is necessary to understand how relationships are formed and how they work in order to gain insight into their importance and it is therefore necessary to briefly discuss the formation of relationships.

## 4.3    FORMATION OF RELATIONSHIPS

Human beings are social creatures. The relative defencelessness of the individual, particularly in early childhood, has helped ensure that over the millions of years of human evolution people have formed groups. We live and work in social groups and

there is evidence that isolating the individual from others can lead to severe cognitive and emotional problems. We have been programmed to be gregarious. Therefore, the way in which we experience our lives is determined by the way in which we think other people see us. We are not content with simply living together in our social groups, we also need the esteem and support of the group if we are to develop into happy and well-adjusted people (Fontana 1995:3).

In order to grow up to be well-adjusted individuals we need to gain insight into how relationships are formed and how they work. Individuals have much experience to draw on, although they may not consciously be aware of it. They have experienced some sort of family relationship, have moved into the wider world of school relationships and friendships and have varying degrees of experience of relationships within their own communities (Hessari & Hill 1989:131).

It is through group interactions that relationships are formed. It is from the perspective of relationships within the group that the individual becomes involved in his world. Through this involvement the individual is able to understand his place in the world (Vrey 1979:73) and come to the realisation that human existence is co-existence (Landman et al. 1992:106). It is necessary for the child to realise that his or her existence is co-existence so that he or she can orient himself or herself in relation to his or her world. Therefore, it becomes necessary for him or her to understand the significance of people, objects and ideas in his or her world and also himself or herself. This involvement with the world is only possible if the child has formed meaningful relationships (Vrey 1979:77).

It is through this formation of relationships that the child is able to attribute meaning to his life world. The child can only be educated through the effective formation of relationships (Kilian & Viljoen 1974:123). The relationship that is formed may be

seen as an interaction between the child as one pole and the significant other or the object as the other pole. It is only when the individual has assigned meaning to a referent from his own frame of reference that we can speak of a bipolar relationship and this is always a question of dynamic interaction (Vrey 1979:21). It is through this bipolar interaction that the child gradually gets to know himself in the presence of others and it is through this relationship with others that full humanity (adulthood) is realised (Landman et al. 1992:106).

Within the family the child's relationship with his mother or father is the primary anchorage point for further relationships with other people (Vrey 1979:24). The child gets to know his or her brothers and sisters (Du Toit & Kruger 1991:13) and soon thereafter notices other children and also wants to be noticed in return (Vrey 1979:24). This then forms the very beginning of peer relationships.

Figure 3 illustrates the social interactional relationship environment in which the child is centred.

Figure 3. The Child's Social Interactional Relationship Environment.
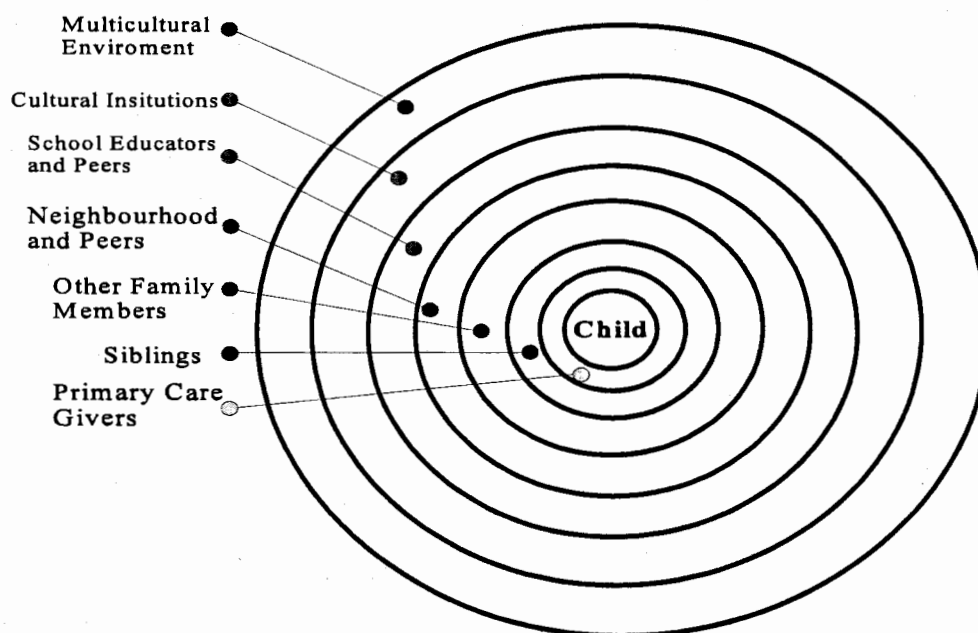


The different relationships, such as parent-child and teacher-pupil relationships, also play an important role in self-actualisation. However, in this research project peer relationships between grade seven pupils will be the subject of investigation.

## 4.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

### 4.4.1 Introduction

Today integrated educational practices are commonly equated with equal educational opportunities. Individuals are treated equally, regardless of race, and the educational encounter takes place within a multicultural context. However, what we fail to take into consideration is the fact that the concepts of integration and desegregation are not necessarily synonymous processes. Desegregation is the mechanical process; it requires the mixing of individuals of different races. Integration is a social process

and may be only a possible outcome of desegregation (Meier, Stewart & England 1989:21-22). It is now this researcher's intention to discuss the relationships between Black and Indian adolescents within the desegregated school context. This will be done with reference to the elements of trust, involvement, attribution of meaning, experiencing and understanding, as these elements form the basis for the foundations of positive relationships.

## 4.4.2 Trust

The element of trust is basic to any relationship formation. In an environment of trust a climate of connectedness is established in which a sense of belonging for each individual and an awareness of reciprocal caring is created. Consequently there is a shared basic purpose to support each other's well-being (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:63). Such trust and unconditional acceptance is vital for positive relationship formation. In creating such trust we need to remember that individuals learn about others from their environment. They learn about their own identities and how others are identified in society. Daily we determine what beliefs and attitudes are acceptable to those around us and in so doing we develop trust or distrust of others (Sleeter 1991:181). According to Lynch (1987:34) it is through such interaction within cultural and social contexts that prejudices may result.

Given our history of a monocultural upbringing and education, it is not surprising that individuals could be unconsciously prejudiced (Foster 1990:66). This often results in both Black and Indian individuals exhibiting own group preference. Such own ·group preference does not allow for positive cross-cultural involvement and this often leads to the formation of preconceived ideas about groups different from our own. Through the formation of preconceived ideas about groups different from ourselves and our backgrounds or our individual personal experiences of the past, we tend to

stereotype. Very often we tend to generalise our feelings and ideas about a particular individual to encompass an entire group of people and in so doing we create distrust of others (Sims & Bass de Martinez 1981:114). It is now commonly acknowledged that prejudice and discrimination divide groups. If such behaviour manifests itself in the school and classroom it undermines positive interaction and breeds insecurity. It follows that if individuals are insecure in their interpersonal relationships, it becomes problematic for them to view themselves positively and form trusting relationships (Willey 1984:6).

The major affective needs of the individual are the desire to be loved, valued, wanted, appreciated and approved of. In an atmosphere of distrust these needs cannot be fulfilled and undesirable emotional disturbances can develop. These reactions are normally expressed as fear, anxiety and jealousy (Dreyer & Duminy 1990:39). It is not difficult to envisage that in such an environment of mistrust the imputation of blame automatically seems to provide an acceptable solution.

### 4.4.3   Value of Trust in Multicultural Relationships

Blame is among the most damaging factors in any trusting relationship, especially between individuals in cross-cultural relationships, as it provokes and sanctions inhumanity. Once blame is apportioned, a cycle of attitudes and actions can emerge in which reciprocal destruction is often only surpassed by the mutual incomprehension of those involved (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:70). Therefore, it is not surprising that when trust is missing in a relationship, respect for individuality and diversity is also ignored.

### 4.4.4   Involvement

One of the strongest human desires is the need to be appreciated (Sims & Bass de Martinez 1981:153). Therefore, we become subjectively involved in the world in which we live. Involvement refers to the human physical and psychological act of being concerned with and giving attention to a person or matter voluntarily. This implies that involvement requires some knowledge because a person cannot become involved in a relationship of which he or she is ignorant and which is unimportant to him or her. An individual becomes involved with a view to greater and deeper knowledge and understanding (Du Toit & Kruger 1991:17-18). Through this involvement the individual is able to experience his or her relationships and attribute meaning to these relationships. Involvement means that individuals are able to see themselves as part of a larger society in which they can identify, empathise and relate to individuals from other groups (Ramsey 1987:3). It is through involvement in such human interaction that the individual is able to reach a degree of independence and control over activities in which he or she engages (Brody 1976:19 & 37).

### 4.4.5   Value of Involvement in Multicultural Relationships

Today both Black and Indian peers are faced with the deprivation which has resulted from living within homogeneous environments. This policy of separateness limited friends to only those individuals with whom the child came into contact (Erwin 1993:183). This made cross-cultural involvement almost impossible. Therefore, it seems that even today racial divisions and inequalities in larger society are also mirrored in children's peer relationships at school (Schrumpf, Crawford & Usadel 1991:56). The consequence of such racial divisions is often avoidance or social distancing of groups. Such lack of involvement is dysfunctional because it limits opportunities for individual growth and development. Consequently the need to

communicate and interact with individuals from other cultural backgrounds within the multicultural context is hampered (Hernandez 1989:4). Contact between Black and Indian groups must be between groups of equal status to ensure that involvement is positive. Involvement between groups of unequal status leads to anxiety and distress in individuals which results in cross-cultural conflict, which often prevails in relationships between Black and Indian groups (Modgil, Verma, Mallick & Modgil 1986:89).

A climate which nurtures the self-worth of each individual and provides opportunities for fulfilment of needs can be created by means of positive involvement, respectful sensitivity to differences, acknowledgement and appreciation of differences, and the ability of conflicting parties to build on one another's strengths (Schrumpf et al. 1991:3 & 5).

### 4.4.6    Attribution of Meaning

Whether we like or dislike someone depends on how we perceive his or her attributes and motivations. How we arrive at our perceptions depends on how we attribute meanings. For example we attribute different reasons to a person's behaviour. And we react depending on the attributions which we make. By discovering meanings and attributing meaning the individual is able to recognise, know, understand and form relationships. As soon as meaning is attributed it directs a person's behaviour (Du Toit & Kruger 1991:16).

We draw inferences about people on the basis of what they do, what they like and in what context their behaviour takes place. Our perceptions of others are the result of an active mental process. We search our memory for experiences which will assist us to categorise clues about the behaviour of others and we interpret these clues

according to our frame of references in order to attribute meaning to that behaviour. The attribution of meaning which we attach to other people's behaviour is very important because it determines how we feel and act towards those people. This attribution of meaning takes place through our social perceptions of things, people, places and objects (Baron & Byrne 1994:129). How we attribute meaning is also affected by our cultural standards (Papalia & Olds 1988:636). According to Van den Aardweg (Du Toit & Kruger 1991:16) because the individual as a whole is always involved in the act of meaning attribution, meanings which he or she attributes are always coloured by affective (emotional), conative (intentional) and other individual qualities. The result of this is the attribution of uniquely personal or connotative meanings. The individual attributes meaning because he or she wants to know and understand (conative) . Therefore, meanings which an individual attributed during his or her involvement with others are subjectively coloured by his or her experiences (Du Toit & Kruger 1991:16).

### 4.4.7    Value of Attribution of Meaning in Multicultural Relationships

The policy of segregation which regulated South African society for many decades is still evidenced by division of racial groups in separate neighbourhoods, which have not yet changed significantly despite the introduction of a non-racial democracy. Consequently, the various racial groups in South Africa have had scant opportunity to establish cross-cultural relationships. According to Citron (Kendall 1983:2) segregation in society will undoubtedly shape our individual attitudes. It seems that both Black and Indian groups who still live in separate neighbourhoods have not had sufficient opportunity to become involved with each other and meet people who are different from themselves. Therefore, the attitudes of both groups would appear to be based on ignorance rising from a lack of cross-cultural contact. As a result groups tend to generalise about and stereotype other groups which leads to the formation of

biased judgements (Eyber, Dyer & Versfeld 1997:20). These biased attitudes seem to result in negative attribution of meaning.

## 4.4.8   Experiencing

A situation can be experienced as pleasant or unpleasant. Pleasant experiences are emotions of love, joy, affection, pleasure, surprise, laughter, trust and enjoyment. Unpleasant experiences are emotions which include anger, pain, fear, dislike and hate (Behr et al. 1989:75).

How an individual experiences his or her relationship with a fellow human being will determine the type of relational outcome which results. Emotions of fear or anger directed by a child or an adolescent at objects, people or places, as a result of information obtained from adults, peers or the media, are not the result of experience but rather of second-hand information. Even so, the fear or dislike and distrust so experienced is real and will result in negative experiencing of situations. It seems that fear and distrust caused by frequent subjection to ridicule and sarcasm will also cause insecurity, incompetence, commitment and an unwillingness to get involved (Behr et al. 1989:75). This too will result in the negative experiencing of relationships.

It is self-evident that fear, mistrust and rejection lead to insecurity. The further a new situation is removed from previous situations, the more bewildering and frightening it is likely to be. For example, an individual from a home or cultural environment which is very different from that of the school may experience the school situation negatively. The additional problems of facing unfamiliar ways of relating or behaving and whether or not the individual will fit in may compound the difficulties. The resulting disorientation and confusion will be great and will result in negative experiencing of relationships (Salzberger-Wittenberg, Henry & Osborn 1990:16).

An individual who experiences situations arising from a relationship as frustrating, disappointing and hopeless will want to escape from this relationship as he or she will not want to be involved in a situation where polarisation is negative. If polarisation is to be positive both parties in a relationship must remain open-minded so that the unknown can be explored. Accepting the challenge to explore the unknown will make new experiences exciting. However, where there is a closed relationship as a result of fear and insecurity the individual may withdraw from the unknown and this may establish a behavioural pattern to the extent that the individual is dominated by incompetence and insecurity (Travers as cited in Behr et al. 1989:76).

### 4.4.9    Value of Experiencing in Multicultural Relationships

The possible reason for negative polarisation in Black and Indian peer relationships may be ascribed to the fact that both groups have been socialised in their formative years with an unexamined set of traditions and beliefs about themselves and a limited knowledge about others as apartheid did not simply seek to divide Black and White (Bowser & Hunt as cited in Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:4) it also created divisions between those it defined as 'non-whites' which resulted in a hierarchy with Blacks at the bottom (Eyber et al. 1997:3). Consequently individuals often still divide themselves by race or culture. These divisions are sometimes fairly rigid and hard to bridge. Black and Indian groups need to become more proficient at interacting in a diverse society and at functioning in a variety of roles. Reducing the distance between groups is an important part of fostering the individual's social development as an individual who for whatever reason is isolated or rejected is at risk both emotionally and educationally (Ramsey 1991:158). Cognitive growth and academic performance are dependent on how the individual experiences the situations in which he finds himself (Rosenthal 1993:112). If cross-cultural involvement within the integrated school environment is experienced positively, then it is more likely that academic

performance will be satisfactory.

A further problem facing pupils today is that when different cultural groups attend a desegregated school, they must be content with the established rights and usage assigned to the dominant cultural group (Rist 1979:99). When Black pupils enter the desegregated Indian schools they too are expected to contend with the established order at the school. However, the term 'relationship' implies that participants play crucial roles in establishing and maintaining the relationship. Relationships not only possess but are explicitly recognised as involving reciprocity. They are seen as requiring give and take and as possessing rights and obligations (Erwin 1993:4 & 65). These interrelated principles of reciprocity and equality are not reconstituted as pragmatic rules of joint activity but as an explicit ideal principle of relationships based on cooperation and equal treatment (McCarthy & Crichlow 1993:122). Once inequality among groups is created, that is when one group is placed in a more favoured position than another, situations may be experienced negatively.

Therefore, it is important to provide an environment which emanates warmth and security particularly where individuals are expected to fit into newly desegregated environments. The fear of the unknown can cause anxieties which are not conducive to positive experiences. How an individual adjusts to and experiences new situations will to some extent depend on how well he or she has been prepared for such situations. The amount of warmth and security inherent in new situations will determine how relationships in these situations will be experienced and whether polarisation will be negative or positive.

### 4.4.10 Understanding

Cooperative interaction in a relationship means the ability to participate in a common

understanding (Schrumpf et al. 1991:9). Although conflicts are part of the process by means of which individuals come to understand situations and learn how to meet their own needs and accommodate the needs of others, it is also necessary for individuals to know that when they are engaged in conflict they are confronting the reality that their needs and perspectives are not necessarily shared by everyone (Ramsey 1991:164). Children learn about other people and develop their social skills in complex environments (Ramsey 1991:39). When groups of individuals live in segregated neighbourhoods there is little opportunity for interracial contact (Rice 1992:37).

### 4.4.11 Value of Understanding in Multicultural Relationships

Currently many Black and Indian families still live in racially segregated neighbourhoods and socialise within their own racial groups, so that individuals are unlikely to have friends across the cultural divide either prior to coming to school or in their neighbourhoods. This results in a lack of cross-cultural involvement and ensuing misunderstanding which, in turn, may result in own group preference (Ramsey 1991:57). This social distancing often leads individuals to develop misconceptions about those different from themselves (Sleeter 1991:180). Such misunderstandings between groups should be seen rather as an opportunity for getting to understand each other than as a basis for estrangement because positive understanding allows for diversity and the unlearning of stereotypes (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:70). This understanding is a crucial aspect of an individual's social development. The ability to understand another person's point of view is at the heart of friendships and relationships (Morganett 1990:31). The need to break down stereotypes and to be able to communicate across cultures is important in that desegregation does not necessarily result in positive interactional patterns. Such positive intergroup relationships will arise from desegregation only if individuals are

involved in cooperative, equal-status interaction (Sleeter 1991:168). This, in turn, will allow for better cross-cultural understanding.

## 4.5 THE IMPORTANCE OF PEER RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN GRADE SEVEN PUPILS

### 4.5.1 Introduction

A peer can be defined as someone outside the family who is no more than two years older or younger than his equals (Ralph et al. 1995:112). Peer relationships can be further explained as relationships between individuals of the same age group which occur in neighbourhoods, school and social environments. Many factors facilitate the formation of peer relationships. As children grow older, the salience of peers as reinforcing agents and models increases (Hetherington & Parke 1993:464). The peer group is able to contribute not only to the satisfaction of the adolescent's emotional needs but it also serves as an important source of information and socialisation (Louw et al. 1998:449). Research by Cowie and Dodge (Ralph et al. 1995:110) indicates that children with inappropriate or inadequate peer relations tend to remain rejected over time despite changes in relationships and settings. Therefore, the formation of appropriate and adequate peer relationships is of the utmost importance especially in the early years of adolescence when the foundations of these relationships are being formed.

### 4.5.2 The Need for Positive Peer Relationships between Grade Seven Pupils

The peer group is a sort of miniature society within larger society and is generally a constructive factor in the child's development. It is in the peer group that the child

has the opportunity to experiment with various roles, attitudes and skills. It is also within this peer group that the individual learns to handle relationships, get along with people and practise the skills necessary for human interaction (Brunk 1975:145). This is possible as it is by means of peer group relationships that the individual continues to enjoy a protected relationship in societal culture. He is anchored in a peripheral subculture of his own making, which cherishes values and established criteria of status distinct from those of the adult community (Ausubel, Montemayor & Svajian 1977:313).

Forming good relationships with peers is an extremely important aspect of an individual's world. Individuals who have difficulty in this domain are much more likely to suffer from problems in other aspects of their lives, for example they may have a low sense of self-esteem and underachieve academically. Having the capacity to relate well to others is like a passport to self-esteem and respect for others (Cowie et al. 1994:1).

Although the individual comes into contact with peers before adolescence, it is during this period of adolescence that the role of peers is especially critical. It is during this stage of development that peers play a crucial role in the psychological and social development of most adolescents, especially in age-segregated, technologically advanced societies in which entry into the adult world of work and family responsibility is delayed (Conger 1991:280). Research cited by Conger (1991:281) suggests that during adolescence, more than at any other time in life, the young person needs to be able to share emotions, doubts and dreams. Adolescence is ·typically a time of sociability but it can be also a time of loneliness. Consequently being accepted by peers and particularly having one or more close friends may make a great difference in a young person's life.

By the end of middle childhood at the age of twelve to fourteen, or roughly the junior high level (grade seven), the need for approval swings so strongly towards peers that parents and teachers are sometimes alarmed (Reilly & Lewis 1983:268). Research by Czikszentmikaly, Larson, Prescott and Newman (Long 1983:193) reports that adolescents are happier and more relaxed with their friends than with adults and that most of their social interactions during adolescence is with their peers. The research showed that interaction with peers was three times as frequent as interaction with adults. In fact peer interactions constituted the single most frequent activity that adolescents engaged in. Research cited by Shakeshaft, Barber, Hergenrother, Johnson, Mandel and Sawyer (1995:31) is more specific in that it states that peer-to-peer interactions consume a great part of an adolescent's day. It is estimated that while adolescents spend 23% of their waking hours in classrooms, they spend 29% in interaction with peers, nearly twice as much time as the 15% they spend with parents and adults.

Peer relationships are typically characterised by openness, good humour and honesty. Children demonstrate through their interaction with their peers that they are sensitive to others' feelings. Popular children are acknowledged by their peers as being friendly, sociable, kind, competent, willing to help and supportive. For children who do not have this kind of interpersonal experience with peers, school can be a very unpleasant place (Cowie at al. 1994:2).

The peer group provides the adolescent with an arena for much of the learning and developing that occur in all life tasks (Manaster 1989:284). In the shadows of superordinate adults, children cannot gain recognition, play differentiated roles, practise social skills or interact with others, except as dependent and subordinate figures. Conversely, the peer group cannot provide earned or derived status unless it is a superordinate body. However, in contrast to parents, teachers and the adult

community the peer group's authority reflects a superordination by equals rather by superiors (Ausubel, Sullivan & Ives 1980:221). The peer group is so important that it rivals the family and school as a socialising force in the lives of most teenagers (Long 1983:201) and provides the adolescent with the most plausible and natural environment (Kaplan 1986:154). The influence of the peer group increases as the individual advances in years and by the beginning of adolescence it is among the major influences in the individual's life (Brunk 1975:145).

The social goals of adolescents are basically oriented towards the adult world and the chief function of the peer group is to provide an interim status. This becomes evident from the fact that this status dissolves as soon as adolescents are integrated into the wider community. It can also be inferred from the fact that the type of social skills and attitudes necessary for adult socialisation evolve from the social experience of the peer group. In fact, one of the chief functions that both adolescents and their culture attribute to the group is the apprenticeship it provides for adult living. During this period the individual develops the social skills he or she believes will aid him or her when he or she enters the adult arena (Ausubel et al. 1977:313).

### 4.5.3   Peer Relationships in Multicultural Schools

South Africa is a nation characterised by cultural diversity. Previously, individuals were educated within a monocultural school context which allowed for little or no cross-cultural peer contact. Now, however, with the implementation of the multicultural school system, classrooms are becoming more culturally diverse and styles of interaction and resolution of conflict are also becoming increasingly more complex (Weaver 1995:25).

The complexity of integration in the multicultural classroom has recently been

brought to attention by media reports. An article in a February issue of the *Daily News* (1997:17) suggests that stereotyping, cultural chauvinism and a general breakdown in communication contribute to the prevailing disharmony between the diverse cultures. This results in poor peer relationships which encourage own group preference to the extent that individuals who move into other groups are considered to be 'traitors'. Another article which appeared in a March issue of the *Daily News* (1997:12) cites racial intolerance, lack of cooperation and respect for each other's cultures as contributory factors to the wide-spread disharmony within the multicultural school context.

The classroom is a setting in which individuals become socialised. However, because the classroom culture is an extension of the school culture and the dominant mainstream culture, pupils coming from different cultural backgrounds to those of the teacher or the dominant culture seem to experience cultural alienation and discontinuity (Lemmer & Squelch 1993:13). This often seems to result in pupils feeling inadequate in their interactions with their peers. Through their involvement with other groups, individuals receive specific feedback and on the basis of this feedback individuals tend to evaluate themselves (Du Toit & Kruger 1991:42). In many instances this self-evaluation is negative. Because of the need for a greater pupil involvement in a multicultural classroom greater potential for misunderstanding arises (Zukowski/Faust 1989:13-14). In many instances Black pupils are shy to speak out in the classroom and it consequently becomes common for them to form small groups in which they speak their own language (Squelch 1994:4). This seems to aggravate the situation because there is further self-distancing which results in a breakdown of communication and misunderstanding between peer groups. This misunderstanding, in turn, gives rise to mistrust, insecurity and rejection. It seems more often than not that the Black child is engaged in negative peer encounters. In the absence of positive group interaction, it is not difficult to see why groups tend to

distance themselves from each other. This creates a classroom climate which is detrimental to intergroup harmony and consequently is not conducive to self-actualisation. However, the basic formation of peer groups does not differ between cultures. The structure of peer groups and other relevant aspects which will assist in the development of an intervention programme, will now be discussed.

## 4.5.4   Structure of the Peer Group

According to Dunphy (Long 1983:202; Atwater 1983:171; Urberg, Degirmencioglu, Tolson & Halliday-Scher 1995:541) the social structure of peer groups is composed of three basic types of groups namely, crowds, cliques and gangs. The clique is made up of close friends and is quite small, usually having no more than six members. The friends in a clique are most likely to live in the same neighbourhood, be of the same age and sex and share the same ethnic background or religious affiliations. These are the friends one sees on a daily basis and spends the most time with. Activity in cliques tends to occur spontaneously.

The second type of group recognised by Dunphy (Long 1983:202; Atwater 1983:171) and Hurlock (1980:232) is the crowd. Crowds are larger than cliques and average as many as twenty members. They meet primarily for organised social activities such as parties and dances. Crowd activities occur mostly at the weekends in contrast to clique activities of which two thirds occur during the week. Not all of the people in a crowd are close friends, but each of them is someone all the members are at ease with. A crowd is made up of the friends in one's own clique plus members of one or two other cliques. In order to be a member of a crowd one must first belong to a clique, but not all members of a clique are members of a crowd.

Another form of peer group is the gang. Gangs may be differentiated from cliques

and crowds because they have regular leaders, well-defined membership and a clear-cut organisation. While members of cliques have greater mutual affection and spend more time interacting with each other as individuals, gang members seem to focus more on the activities and goals of the group. The gang member is more likely than the clique member to play a well-defined role and adhere closely to the rules of the gang, which tend to be rigidly enforced (Manaster 1989:294).

In keeping with the aims of this research project emphasis is on peer groups formed from cliques and crowds.

### 4.5.5    Conditions for Acceptance in the Peer Group

According to Vrey (1979:101) a peer group is an intimate and select group. Admission to the group depends on mutual choice. Status within the group is defined by the group's values and the individual's role in it. Not all children belong to a peer group of their choice.

The following are some of the conditions for acceptance in the peer group.

a. Intelligence.

Intelligence and academic success are related to achieving status within society and therefore it is likely that this may also be a contributory factor to acceptance by the peer group (MacDonald 1996:6). However, according to Vrey (1979:101) intelligence in itself is not a criterion for acceptance in a peer group but the impression is that peer groups are formed by children of similar intellectual abilities. This may be the case because such children share the same interests.

b. <u>Sociometric status.</u>

Courtney, De Rosier and Patterson (Cairns, Leung, Buchanan & Cairns 1995:1331)
suggest that individuals tend to associate with other individuals who are similar to
themselves in sociometric standing, for example rejected individuals tend to associate
with other individuals who have been rejected. This has a self-perpetuating effect.
Individuals who are unpopular in the classroom may be unpopular on the playground
and vice versa (Ray, Cohen & Secrist 1995:184).

c. <u>Family Background.</u>

Research cited by Vrey (1979:101) suggests that broken homes do not have an
adverse effect on the child's acceptability to the peer group. This is also the case in
respect of the only child. The hierarchical position of the child in larger families also
does not have an effect on the acceptability of the child. A friendly and jovial child
is much more acceptable to the group than one who is aggressive, unfriendly,
uncommunicative and introverted.

d. <u>Social Class.</u>

Evidence is mounting that an individual's ready acceptance by and active
involvement in adolescent peer society are influenced by his or her socio-economic
background (Rice 1992:410). This may be attributed to the fact that adolescents from
low socio-economic environments are socialised differently from middle-class youth.
They have their own manner of dress, speech and behaviour. Those who appear to be
loud, ill-mannered or aggressive are scorned by middle-class society. Low self-
esteem, shyness and withdrawal preclude social group interactions. Further,
inappropriate clothing, inadequate neatness and cleanliness may invite criticism from
the group (Rice 1992:36).

e. Appearance.

Physical attractiveness may influence how peers respond to the individual (Kerns, Klepac & Cole 1996:464). For example a fashion-conscious image is important to adolescents and the peer group may therefore regard a lack of grooming with opprobrium.

f. Physical Skills.

According to Weisfeld and Billings athletic ability is valued and may be high on the peer acceptance list (MacDonald 1996:60).

g. Personality Traits.

There seems to be a tendency among individuals to choose peers who have similar attributes (Hogue & Steinberg 1995:898). Research cited by Cairns, Leung, Buchanan and Cairns (1995:1330) also suggests that individuals tend to affiliate in groups with others who are similar to themselves in various ways, including aggressive behaviour, school affiliations and being dropouts.

Research on the peer group by Donovan, Adelson and Lambert (Louw 1996:413) finds that the adolescent peer group is one of the most important determinants in an adolescent's development of a value system. The group sets standards and behavioural limits to which the individual conforms. This involvement in the peer group serves a number of important functions in the self-actualisation of the individual. However, in addressing multicultural relationships this researcher does not wish to alter natural boundaries but only boundaries based on racial prejudices, as prejudice leads to conflict situations and the subsequent exclusion of individuals or groups of individuals. Some of the positive influences which the peer group exerts on the individual will now be discussed.

## 4.6 FUNCTIONS OF THE PEER GROUP

Ausubel (Manaster 1989:284) sees the peer group as performing several functions. Probably the most important function is to provide the individual with the opportunity to demonstrate his or her competence, which Ausubel calls 'providing primary status'. Primary status is considered to be such because it is the status which the individual learns through his or her own efforts, by exerting his or her own abilities and it is different from the status which he or she had as a child.

The identification with the peer group facilitates the gradual emancipation from the family home (Louw 1996:422; Vrey 1979:104; Hamachek 1990:118). Depending on the prevailing degree of cultural discontinuity (gap) between child and adult roles, the peer groups provides a small or large portion of the individual's earned status. The peer group is the only societal group in which the individuals' positions are not marginal, in which they earn status and a social identity in a group of equals, and in which their own activities and concerns reign supreme. As a result their self-concept expands and differentiates in terms other than that as a child of their parents (Ausubel et al. 1980:222). This emancipation is made possible through the support which the individual receives from his or her peer group. The individual gains the courage which loosens the emotional bonds which anchor him or her to his or her parents. They are able to affirm their right to self-determination. They no longer need to subscribe implicitly to the belief that only parents and adults can determine what is right (Ausubel et al. 1980:223).

The peer group is able to offer the individual the security which previously was experienced in the safety of the parental home. The individual can therefore gradually shift his security base from the parental home to the peer group (Du Toit & Kruger 1991:123). The experience of peers, like that of an adolescent's brothers and sisters,

may relate more closely to his or her experience and it may therefore be easier for him or her to confide in them than in his or her parents and teachers (Salzberger et al. 1990:13). The security provided by the peer group insulates and protects the individual to some extent from the coercion that adults are likely to impose on young people. For example, if pressurised the adolescent is likely to respond with 'Everyone is going, why can't I?' They are raising what has become an almost universal wail of defensive protest designed to implore restricting adults to change their minds. There is safety in lodging this type of protest from within the security of the membership of one's peer group, as there is safety in numbers and membership and peer group culture provides a little of each. The peer group plays an important role in the lives of adolescents, as they are uncertain of themselves because they are changing so rapidly. The peer group bolsters security because it is able to provide the security which parents cannot, as no matter how understanding parents and other adults may be their role is limited by the fact that they are already adults, while the adolescent and his or her peers are struggling to achieve adult status (Conger 1991:282). The peer group is also able to offer the individual who is experiencing problems in his or her relationship with his or her parents warm and friendly companionship, providing him or her with a feeling of security, acceptance and understanding (Louw 1996:422).

Erikson (Long 1983:194) suggests that people form their identities within the context of social relationships. New aspects of the self are tested and individuals are frequently as interested in what they learn about themselves as in what they can discover about another person. In making use of the peer group milieu, individuals are able to express the confused feelings of their unconsolidated self-images. The peer group is created in accordance with its members' emotional needs in order to bring about a more holistic integration of self-experience (Kaplan 1986:154 & 155). Therefore, according to Coleman and Elkind (Long 1983:194) peer relationships are an important source of how one feels about oneself and of one's self-esteem. Initially

children derive their feelings of self-worth from their parents' acceptance of them. Adolescents are in a transitional phase and are in the process of cutting themselves loose from emotional dependence on their parents and have not yet gained other support bases to reinforce their self-worth. Friends then become a bridge for this passage or transitional phase. By providing this bridge for transition, the peer group is able to contribute to the adolescent's formation of his or her self-identity. The members of the group help the individual to resolve the conflict within himself or herself and with others by providing a source of feedback to evaluate insights into his or her personality traits, appearance and behaviour (Louw 1996:244 & 422). This feedback, because of its objectivity and honesty, helps individuals 'fine-tune' how they present themselves to others and how they feel about themselves (Hamachek 1990:118-119). The individual is able to do this because the peer group provides behavioural norms for this transitional stage which enables him or her to identify with the group (Louw 1996:422). Group identification provides the individual with a sense of belonging and a feeling of importance to someone outside of the primary family unit and is a source of self-esteem (Hamachek 1990:118). Becoming part of the group and being accepted allows the individual to appraise himself in positive terms and develop a positive self-concept which, in turn, leads to self-acceptance (Vrey 1979:104). The peer group also serves as a reference group, providing the individual with alternative standards for judging his or her experience and behaviour. Although individuals of all ages need others for this purpose, it is especially important during a period of rapid change. Since individuals tend to compare themselves with those like themselves, it is natural for adolescents to prefer the company of other adolescents. Many awkward changes occurring in this period, whether they be pimples or social rejection, become somewhat less unsettling when shared with sympathetic friends who are experiencing the same problems (Atwater 1983:168).

The peer group is a group of equals. The individual can therefore give his or her

opinions within the group and hold his or her own, in contrast to his or her subordinate role in the parent-child relationship (Vrey 1979:104). Through this interaction the individual is able to form a set of personal values and beliefs. According to Ausubel (Manaster 1989:286) the peer group serves as an arena which allows latitude for the individual to test himself or herself in a variety of roles, to test his or her range of abilities and emotions and to test these within a group that, conceptually at least, will be more open and empathetic to the problems, extremes and anxieties of adolescence.

The peer group is an important agent for socialisation as the individual is provided with an opportunity within the group to practise by doing (Louw 1996:422). He or she is able to experiment with new roles which help him or her to develop effective social functioning. Participation in these roles is an important rehearsal for eventual adulthood as it is by means of this role-playing that the individual learns much of his or her poise in dealing with persons outside the intimate family circle, acquires approved techniques of socialisation, self-assertion, competition, and cooperation and develops sensitivity to clues indicative of group expectations, censure and approval (Louw 1996:422; Hamachek 1990:118). By interacting with their peers individuals learn the functions and reciprocal basis of rules and obligations, how to play differentiated roles and how to subordinate their own interests to group goals (Ausubel et al. 1980:223).

Further the individual can speak freely about his or her fears, feelings of confusion, ideals and dreams and in this manner he or she finds release for his or her emotional tension (Louw 1996:422). The peer group is also a useful stabiliser during a period of rapid transition. In the light of the incredible hormonal development and social changes which occur during this period, knowing that others in the group are experiencing the same problems is a source of comfort (Hamachek 1990:118).

The peer group is also able to influence the moral development of the individual. This is achieved by enforcing or discouraging conformity to values, norms and goals which originate in the adult community and generating moral values of its own. Only the peer group can furnish suitable models and occasions for children to serve and practise the social skills and behaviour they must know in order to enact their appropriate age and sex roles both in their sub-cultures and in the wider community. The peer group constitutes a proving ground where adolescents can test the positive workability of techniques which they observe elsewhere. These experiences subsequently serve as a form of apprenticeship for adult social life (Ausubel et al. 1980:223).

In short the functions of the peer group can be listed as follows:

a.  providing the individual with 'primary status';

b.  facilitating the emancipation from the primary care-giver, that is parents;

c.  offering security for the transition from the parental home into larger society;

d.  acting as a stabiliser during the transition period;

e.  helping to develop an identity by allowing for the expression of feelings;

f.  giving a sense of security of belonging outside the family home, which helps to build a sense of self-esteem;

g.  allowing for beliefs and values to be tested;

h.  acting as an important socialising agent;

i.  helping to influence moral development;

j.  providing appropriate age and sex roles;

·k.  building trust in individuals;

l.  helping to involve the individual in human interaction;

m.  helping in attributing meaning to situations;

n.  giving positive meaning to experiencing relationships; and

o.    allowing participation in a common understanding.

## 4.7    THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PEER GROUPS FROM DIFFERENT CULTURES

Irrespective of our cultural affiliations we all at one time or another belong to a peer group, this being especially so during adolescence. All peer groups are essentially formed to fulfil the needs of the individuals who join them. Irrespective of their colour, the peer group helps adolescents to develop an identity, adapt to their environment and structure interpersonal relationships and activities (Morrison 1990:502).

Research cited by Cowie et al. (1994:28) indicates that it is not uncommon for individuals to show own group preference. This is so because we are generally more attracted to those who share our beliefs and opinions because they validate and legitimise our own. Conversely those who disagree with us are less attractive because they invalidate our beliefs (Argyle & Coleman 1995:60). It is also likely from the individual's perspective that same-race preference probably reflects both proximity and similarity because of the racial divisions which still exist in our society. Families live in segregated neighbourhoods and socialise within their own groups so that younger individuals are unlikely to have friends across the racial divide either prior to going to school or in their neighbourhood (Schrumpf et al. 1991:144).

The interaction of individuals of all races with the peer group provides them not only with immediate enjoyment of school and recreational activities but also constitutes an improvement of many aspects of their physical, cognitive, emotional and social development. Peer relationships enhance pleasure, mitigate anxieties and broaden the

individual's realm of experience (Ramsey 1991:2-3). Research cited by Louw (1996:421) points out that conformity to the peer group is greatest during early adolescence. This may be attributed to a lack of self-confidence and a sense of identity. This is also a time when ties with parents become looser. This creates a greater dependency on peer relationships because the peer group provides the adolescent with a sense of independence (Conger 1991:280). By emancipating the adolescent from parental control, the peer group helps the adolescent to develop the social skills which he or she lacks and which will continue to be important in his or her relations with family and people in the community (Mwamwenda 1995:71). According to Zarbatany, Hartmann and Rankin (Hetherington & Parke 1993:465) peer groups are able to provide some degree of independence because they are able to provide the adolescent with the opportunity for socialising and developing relationships, as well as a sense of belonging. All peer groups, irrespective of cultural differences, are basically formed for the same specific purpose.

Now that we find ourselves in a multicultural society, the need arises for our children to become more comfortable and effective with interacting in a diverse society and functioning in a variety of roles. Reducing the distance between various cultural groups is an important part of fostering children's social development (relationships). The immediate goal should be to enable individuals from different racial groups to interact in a comfortable and productive manner which may eventually lead to cross-cultural friendships (Schrumpf et al. 1991:158-159).

## 4.8    CONCLUSION

The past decade has seen a rapid growth of interest in children's social relationships with peers and it has become clear that peer relationships may be especially important

for the child's well-being. These relationships can be extremely complex. In many cases, as has been discussed above, peer relationships can be a great source of support and provide valuable experience for growth in the cognitive, social and emotional domains. However, it is equally clear that social relationships can be a source of great anguish for some children and problems with peer relationships can lead to experiences which may be damaging both in the short term, as well as over a period which extends well into adulthood (Cowie et al. 1994:2).

At school peer groups are usually of the same race and have the same or similar socio-economic status, especially in segregated neighbourhoods. Racial segregation in peer groups often results from prejudice, that is negative attitudes towards particular groups (Papalia & Olds 1993:45). As a result of these prejudices, many individuals have problems in social relationships at school and experience barriers to integration and friendships (Cowie et al. 1994:vii). The use of stereotypes based on race can lead to pupils experiencing loneliness, rejection, few positive responses, depression and a lack of feeling of personal worth. They become victims of a 'self-fulfilling prophecy' in which their achievements are reduced in accordance with the inferiority they feel (Coutts 1992:84; Sanderson & Segal 1995:556 & 565). Such rejected children are also likely to lack acceptance and achieve a lower control of events. Consequently they become prone to a learned helplessness which exacerbates social maladjustment (Toner & Munro 1996:339).

Research cited by Jarvinen and Nicholas (1996:435) suggests that the maintenance of satisfying peer relationships during the period of adolescence becomes a central task. Adolescents who are readily accepted by their peers have higher self-esteem and maintain higher levels of academic achievement than do less-accepted individuals. Less-accepted individuals are also more at risk of problems in later social and psychological functioning.

In chapter four this researcher has discussed the formation of peer groups, conditions for acceptance into the group, functions of the peer group, the importance of the peer group, the similarities and differences between different peer group cultures and peer relationships in a multicultural school context with specific reference to the grade seven pupil. In chapter five groups and more specifically groups for adolescents will be discussed. This discussion will focus on problem-solving groups and the related skills necessary to facilitate group processes.

CHAPTER FIVE

5        GROUPS FOR ADOLESCENTS

5.1      INTRODUCTION

In chapter five this researcher intends discussing groups for adolescents and the advantage of using groups for improving cross-cultural relationships, as well as the skills which facilitate group processes. This researcher will be using group interaction to facilitate change between Indian and Black grade seven pupils. The processes of facilitation allow for contact between groups. Given the historical segregated nature of South African schools, intergroup contact was limited. Therefore, we need to reduce the distance between 'us' and 'them'. This can be achieved through intergroup contact which could lead to the recognition of similarities between different races and cultures. These similarities would promote mutual understanding which would alter entrenched stereotyping on the basis of information which challenges preconceived notions. Increased contact between persons from different cultural groups could provide such information (Baron & Byrne 1994:241-242). There are many advantages in the use of groups as a means to bring about positive cross-cultural relationships. Firstly, groups can be used to develop social skills (interpersonal relationships) by involving members in working with and communicating with each other. Secondly, cognitive skills, which involve the ability to negotiate with each other within the group, can be developed. Thirdly, groups provide emotional support through the motivation engendered by the enthusiasm of the group or of individual group members (Fisher 1995:96). It is through such social exchanges that we develop a sense of self, acquire knowledge and skills regarding human relationships, learn the rules and values of the society in which we live and influence the people and settings around us (Kostelnik et al. 1993:2).

## 5.2 GROUPS

### 5.2.1 Introduction

Individuals are social by nature and consequently communication is more effectively developed within a group context where there is a breadth of input, thought, information and opinions. Furthermore groups can develop a momentum which can carry individuals through problems and difficulties which would normally paralyse individuals (Gibson & Clarke 1994:34). It is not possible to be a member of society without becoming a member of numerous groups and becoming familiar with others. Groups provide the structure on which communities and larger societies are built. Groups provide a means through which relationships with significant others are conducted. Participation in groups helps members to learn acceptable norms of social behaviour, to engage in satisfying social relationships, to identify personal goals and to derive a variety of other benefits which result from participating in closely knit social systems (Toseland & Rivas 1984:3).

Therefore, through the facilitation of group intervention programmes individuals can be encouraged to break-down the stereotypes which have resulted from segregated lifestyles. This will facilitate communication between individuals (Eyber et al. 1997:56). Research undertaken by Cowley (Eyber et al. 1997:54-55) indicates that encouraging individuals to be 'colour blind' within a desegregated context does not necessarily help them to overcome past prejudices and connected problems such as feelings of isolation and aggression. In a country with a diverse population a need to respect similarities and differences between human beings and go beyond 'sensitivity' to active and effective solutions should be recognised. This requires constructive action to change ideas and attitudes that encourage prejudices and stereotyping (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:8). Therefore, in order to create more positive cross-

cultural relationships between Indian and Black adolescents this researcher has deemed it necessary to utilise group processes.

Using group intervention programmes to reach adolescents is feasible because adolescence is an intensively sociable period. During this period peers are actively sought after and groups of friends develop. In this developmental stage groups of friends provide an important source of comfort and security which an adult cannot provide. Individuals are able to empathise with each other as many of the problems being experienced are common to all adolescents. Furthermore, the adolescent group provides valuable feedback about the self and others and provides for the testing of values and beliefs. Consequently involvement in groups is common among adolescents irrespective of race or culture. Therefore, using group programmes to improve inadequate cross-cultural involvement can be advantageous as adolescents are comfortable interacting within a group.

## 5.2.2 Definition of Groups

According to research cited by Fuhriman and Burlingame (1994:225), groups can be described in a number of different ways. Firstly, a group can be described as a fusion of individuals into a common whole. Implicit in this definition is that the individuals are dedicated to the common life and purpose of the group. Secondly, and perhaps the simplest way of describing this 'wholeness' is to say that it is contained in the word 'we'. Thirdly, a group can also be described as a collection of individuals sharing a common goal who have a relationship which makes them interdependent to some significant degree. Finally a group can also be considered as any collection of persons who are bound together by a distinctive set of social relations.

### 5.2.3 The Advantages of Using Groups

Ongoing problems of an economic, racial and political nature often encourage the development of inadequately socialised children (Azima & Richmond 1989:26). According to research cited by Toseland and Rivas (1984:95) such inadequately socialised individuals can benefit through group processes by the skills that facilitation can offer. Group processes contribute to positive outcomes when they can improve understanding among group members, build open communication channels, and encourage the development of trust so that all members are willing to contribute as much as they can to the issue on which the group is working.

In recent years, researchers have begun to recognise the importance of interacting with individuals outside of the family in the socialisation process (Hetherington & Parke 1993:461). The development of peer group relationships and interpersonal skills is important not only in dealing with own group interaction but also in cross-cultural interaction. However, there are no hard and fast rules which regulate people, especially those who are culturally different from ourselves. Similarly, there are rarely any hard and fast rules which apply to the way in which we might work and learn together (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:7). Therefore, through the facilitation of group intervention programmes, individuals can be encouraged to break down stereotypes which have resulted from segregated lifestyles. Racism or prejudice can best be remedied through group collaboration which provides opportunities for individuals to see each other as competent and encourages the development of mutual respect. Although individuals from different racial or cultural groups may initially feel uncomfortable with each other, they may find that within the context of shared goals they have more in common than they had previously assumed. By creating groups in which individuals can become familiar with each other, educators can facilitate a greater degree of group integration and the subsequent development of

potential friendships (Ramsey 1991:160). By creating such face-to-face contact individuals can experience reactions to people of other races and cultures and develop the potential to see groups different from themselves as composed of individuals with whom they can identify (Ramsey 1987:129). In the case of this research this is applicable to Black and Indian groups.

An additional advantage of group facilitation is that it can be used as a vehicle for assisting individuals to make changes in their attitudes, beliefs, feelings and behaviour about themselves and towards others. For example, participants can explore their styles of relating to others and learn more effective social skills. Group processes also provide a forum in which members can discuss their perceptions of one another and receive valuable feedback concerning how they are experienced within the group (Corey 1985:7-8). Mahler (Azima & Richmond 1989:100) goes further and suggests that the process of using group interaction facilitates deeper self-understanding and self-acceptance, so that individuals can loosen their defences sufficiently to explore both the meanings of behaviour and new ways of behaving.

Further, group members are able to practise forming relationships. In groups, individuals have to relate to a number of people who, in varying degrees, are expressing their thoughts, feelings and emotions. Within such a context individuals are able to practise relating to a range of people, emotions and issues which enhance their ability to send and receive communications, which is often deficient (Nelson-Jones 1983:178-179). This is especially relevant in cross-cultural group relationships.

In this research, process-oriented group facilitation is used to deal with interpersonal skills for adolescents. This method is used because group facilitation creates a safe environment to explore feelings, values, attitudes and ideas. In addition group members can be encouraged to participate fully by making connections with one

another's situations and attempts to change behaviour (Smead 1995:9).

This researcher will indicate the important aspects present in relationships which can be incorporated into group work. Groupwork provides an important tool to get individuals to interact with each other on an equal basis (Eyber et al. 1997:36). This facilitates the development of positive relationships. The individual can be encouraged to become involved in relationships. Such involvement should also allow the individual to develop a sense of trust and respect for those to whom he or she relates (Gibson & Clarke 1994:129). Once trust and respect are communicated in a relationship, it is likely that an individual's emotional (affective) response would be to attribute positive meaning to his or her experiences. Such positive attribution of meaning will enable the individual to connect with those with whom he or she is involved. Once this connection is made, the individual will understand that relationships involve reciprocity, possess elements of give and take and have rights and obligations. Individuals can come to understand the right of others to be different but equal by communicating frankly. Once understanding takes place, prejudices and stereotypes can be broken down and positive relationships between Indian and Black groups can be fostered.

The advantages of using groups can be summarised as follows:

a.  cross-cultural contact can be created;

b.  inadequately socialised children can learn to communicate;

c.  cross-cultural understanding can be developed;

d.  breaking down of stereotypes can be encouraged;

e.  co-operative equal status interaction may be engaged in; and

f.  attitudes about oneself and others can be changed.

Having explained what a group is and the need for such groups, this researcher now intends to discuss groups for adolescents as the objective of this research study is to develop a programme to improve cross-cultural relationships between Black and Indian adolescents.

### 5.2.4    Groups for Adolescents

There are many types of special-interest adolescent groups. Adolescence is a time of paradox; conflicts often lead to anxieties and feelings of separateness. At this time of life individuals need to learn how to cope with increasing freedom and the responsibilities which accompany it. A group therefore can provide the opportunity to share common struggles and find ways of making responsible choices (Corey & Corey 1987:284). The group also provides the adolescent with a major source of feedback about behaviour which is annoying or pleasing to others and about cognition which appears to others to be self-defeating or self-enhancing. Adolescent peer groups also provide for peer reinforcement, which is often far more powerful than adult reinforcement. Through group involvement adolescents can learn to tolerate and even come to terms with minor or major differences (Rose & Edleson 1987:3-4).

In this study, this researcher intends using group processes to facilitate improving cross-cultural relationships between Black and Indian adolescents. According to Seligman (Morganett 1990:1) groups for young people can provide an atmosphere of acceptance, encouragement, and safe experimentation for new behaviour. Youth in our society learn, play, and socialise in groups. Consequently, group processes are an ideal medium to use for the purpose of psychological education, in this instance, for the purpose of improving cross-cultural relationships among adolescents.

The Association for Specialists in Group Work lists four major types of groups for adolescents, namely task or work groups; guidance or psycho-educational groups; interpersonal problem-solving groups and psychotherapy or personality construction groups (Smead 1995:5-9).

This researcher intends to make use of counselling, or as it is alternatively known an interpersonal problem-solving group, to facilitate the improvement of relationships between Black and Indian adolescents. Specifically, a person-centred approach to group work will be used.

### 5.2.4.1 Interpersonal Problem-solving Groups

An interpersonal problem-solving group is significantly different from the three groups identified above in 5.2.4. Interpersonal problem-solving groups are process-oriented while task groups and guidance or psycho-educational groups are content-oriented. In other words, interpersonal groups involve a process and a relationship between the facilitator and group members. This type of group is used to resolve common but problematic issues for which we need more specific and effective skills and competencies. Examples of educational, personal, career and developmental topics which may be resolved by group counselling include divorce, anger, uncomplicated grief and loss, relationship issues, friendship skills and self-esteem (Smead 1995:8-9).

Relationship-oriented group facilitation makes use of a person-centred approach (Corey 1985:5). This approach is based on the view that every individual has the inherent capacity to deal constructively and successfully with his or her problems and will do so if given the right emotional environment. The group facilitator is able to bring about problem solutions by establishing a special relationship with the

individuals in the group (Gillis 1997:16). In particular the person-centred approach to group facilitation is based on the premise that group facilitation is a relationship in which group facilitators help group members to live more effectively and cope more successfully with their problems. Effective facilitation is seen as a relationship in which the group facilitator exhibits liberating warmth, genuineness and a sensitive understanding of group members' thoughts and feelings. The central quality of this facilitation relationship is reflected in descriptions such as, empathic understanding, empathic responding and active listening (Nelson-Jones 1983:1).

Now that the atmosphere in which groupwork should take place and the type of approach to be used have been described, the group goals will be discussed.

## 5.2.5    Group Goals

In accordance with the aim of the research being conducted, that is the improvement of relationships between Black and Indian adolescents by creating understanding and trust between cultures and providing a forum in which positive experiences of the cultures of the different groups are brought about and positive meanings are accordingly attached to these cultures, this researcher has selected the following group goals:

a.    the attainment of mutual respect and an understanding of diversity;

b.    the stability necessary to overcome fear and insecurity;

c.    an acknowledgement of diversity so that prejudices and stereotyping are removed;

d.    a sense of belonging within the community in order to obviate cultural isolation and misunderstanding;

e.    the acceptance of responsibility and the absence of imputations of blame;

f.     the recognition of similarities between groups;

g.    the ability to empathise with others;

h     the promotion of understanding through effective communication;

i.     the provision of a secure environment in which self-disclosure can take place;

j.     the promotion of positive experiences of cross-cultural contact which will enhance self-esteem;

k.    the equalising of the status of the different groups by means of effective interaction;

l.     the provision of a sense of belonging within the group which will facilitate the transition from the parental home into society as a whole;

m.   the creation of self-awareness and an awareness of others; and

n.    the provision of an arena in which human interaction is used as a socialising agent.

These goals were selected on the basis of an assessment of the opinions of various authors concerning aspects pertaining to the functions of peer groups in the lives of adolescents. The functions of the peer group have been discussed exhaustively in section 3.6.

## 5.2.6    Skills to Facilitate Group Processes

### 5.2.6.1 Introduction

Ongoing problems of an economic, racial and political nature have often resulted in the development of inadequately socialised children (Azima & Richmond 1989:26). According to research cited by Toseland and Rivas (1984:95) such inadequately socialised children can benefit from group processes which are facilitated with skill. Group processes contribute to positive group outcomes when they improve

understanding between group members, build effective communication channels and encourage the development of trust so that all members willingly contribute to the issues on which the group is working.

Foster and Ritchey (Rose & Edleson 1987:7) refer to such interpersonal skills as responses which within a given situation prove effective or in other words maximise the possibility of producing, maintaining or enhancing positive effects for the interactor. Interaction is the basis of the group process and as such *a peer group approach and not individual treatment provides the most appropriate method for teaching and learning interpersonal skills*. Depending on the type of group formed, skills will be used to achieve the goals of that group which will include the facilitation of group processes to develop more positive peer group relationships. The various skills used to facilitate positive peer group relationships will now be discussed; that is, the skills of linking, trust and empathy.

## 5.2.6.2 The Skill of Linking

When the group begins, the members are in the initial stage. At this stage in the group's existence there is no bonding between members nor is there a perception that the group is a living entity and not just a meeting of individuals. The dynamics of cohesion develop through the interactions of members as they experience the negative and positive emotions and behaviour of group interaction. One of the major skills necessary to facilitate cohesion is the skill of linking, which is also known as connecting or joining (Smead 1995:127).

Children do not automatically connect with one another any more than adults do; on the contrary they must learn to do so. Therefore, it is important to incorporate the skill of linking in group processes. Linking enables individuals to get to know each

other or connect with each other (Smead 1995:128). This need to link or feel a sense of connectedness to others in the group is especially necessary when working with individuals from cross-cultural backgrounds. Very often individuals do not feel comfortable with each other in recently desegregated environments and there is a need to bring about a sense of connectedness. However, as the group begins to establish itself and members identify themselves as 'belonging' together, a process of symbiosis takes place and the group ceases to consist of individuals but functions as a unit (Azima & Richmond 1989:45).

According to Schachter (Toseland & Rivas 1984:65), although fear and anxiety increase individuals' need for affiliation, presumably to reduce fear and help determine the appropriate reaction in anxiety-provoking situations, it does not seem to take place readily in group processes where individuals have for the most part existed separately. Individuals who have belonged only to groups which are representative of their own culture or ethnicity do not relate to problems, feelings, hopes, issues and behaviour experienced by other members within cross-cultural groups. Their reactions are self-centred and consequently they fail to realise that there may be a commonality in their experiences. *Linking, then is a way of teaching group members that by making a mental and emotional connection they share similarities in values and experiences. Such connections are the basis for being able to help one another achieve behaviour changes, goals and personal insights* (Smead 1995:127).

Linking also affects how the group functions. According to Cartwright (Toseland & Rivas 1984:66) cohesive groups tend to maintain their membership, as they are able to influence their members more effectively than groups which are less cohesive. Members of cohesive groups are more likely to exert influence on each other and are more readily influenced by each other. They are also more likely to persevere in attempts to accomplish the group's goals and accept more responsibility (Toseland

& Rivas 1984:66). This can be achieved by moving away from an uninterrupted flow of unilateral interactional patterns from group facilitator to members and members to group facilitator. The facilitator can *ask linking questions and in this way teach members to communicate with each other and prevent interactional bias* (Corey & Corey 1982:19; Smead 1995:128). For example, one group member (Black) feels that he or she is rejected by others in the group and another group member (Indian) expresses the opinion that the 'rejected' group member does not want to get involved with others in the group. Instead of the facilitator questioning and explaining the situation to both the group members, they should be allowed to communicate with each other about their misgivings. In this way these group members will be able to get to know and understand each other better and at the same time a sense of cohesion will be established. Improved cohesion will transfer members' attention from superficial to meaningful issues. Members soon learn to reinforce one another by sharing and working at behaviour patterns and acquiring new skills. Individuals who are introverted, shy or lack social skills are more likely to make mental and emotional connections with other group members. By learning to connect with each other, individuals also learn a skill which they can use in relationships throughout their lives and the quality of the group experience is also improved (Smead 1995:128).

### 5.2.6.3  The Skill of Trust

In the formation of any group the importance of the element of trust cannot be over-emphasised. While the formation of the group is taking shape, it is important for group facilitators to pay attention to the subtle aspects of the emerging group process and teach members how to recognise their own reactions (Corey 1986:63). This is particularly important in a context where individuals were not previously exposed sufficiently to each other's cultures and consequently may be suspicious of each other. *It is only through the establishment of trust that the group will achieve the set*

*goals. The group must be collectively focused on achieving these goals and this can only be achieved if trust is established, that is, an essential trustfulness of others as well as a fundamental sense of one's own trustworthiness* (Erikson 1983:96).

According to Carl Rogers (1990:34-35) the development of an accepting and trusting atmosphere is necessary to enable members to show aspects of themselves which they would usually conceal. The establishment of the right atmosphere is a fundamental requirement for effective group therapy as a lack of trust will preclude self-disclosure and commitment, without which relationships between group members will not be formed. In order to establish a trusting relationship the group facilitator needs to pay attention to the following:

a.   the needs of the individual group members must be considered;

b.   respect must be accorded to the group members when responding to them;

c.   appropriate self-disclosure must be encouraged;

d.   freedom to state opinions openly must be supported;

e.   direct communication between group members must be fostered;

f.   sensitivity to the fears and anxieties of group members encouraged; and

g.   opportunities must be provided for group members to openly express their thoughts and emotions (Corey 1986:65; Corey, Corey, Callanan & Russell 1992:65).

However, the issue of trust is never resolved. Group members need to learn that the more threatening the material explored is, the more the issue of trust becomes central. The group facilitator needs to let the group members know continually that trust is not something that merely happens to them, but is the outcome of the risky steps which they are willing to take to bring this level of safety into their group (Corey 1986:66). It follows that without trust there can be no involvement, movement or

growth because group members will not feel comfortable enough to self-disclose and work on their problems. It is also necessary to take cognisance of the fact that individuals will have different levels of trust depending on their previous experiences in relationships. The possibility exists that if individuals have had negative experiences in which trust has been betrayed, they will probably display a lack of total trust in new situations (Smead 1995:57).

However, this does not mean that group members cannot learn about themselves and others from a group leader who is different from themselves. The main challenge is to create a trusting environment in which individuals feel safe and accepted. This will allow individuals from different cultures to interact in new and positive ways and ultimately they will acquire enough confidence and understanding to be capable to moving between cultures (Bilides 1991:56).

The group facilitator will be able to recognise when a climate of trust has been created because members will express their reactions without fear of censure and criticism. They will be actively involved in the activities of the group, make themselves known to others in personal ways, take risks both in the group and in everyday life, focus on themselves and others, actively work in the group on meaningful personal issues, disclose persistent feelings of lack of trust and support and challenge others in the group (Corey 1986:67).

### 5.2.6.4 The Skill of Empathy

*Empathy* is the ability to recognise what is happening to another person and to communicate this understanding. Two aspects of empathy (recognition and communication) are called perceiving and responding (Smead 1995:145). The other aspects of empathy are respect, silence and communication.

## a. Perceiving

The ability to *perceive* is the ability to 'put oneself in another's shoes' in an effort to understand that person's problems and difficulties from his or her point of view. This understanding or perception gives rise to the idea of 'social feelings' developed by Alfred Alder and cited by Crandall (Hamachek 1990:438). This idea of social feeling refers to the skill or ability to empathise with another person. The usefulness of this concept lies in the fact that it combines the idea 'social', which is an objective reference to common experiences, with the idea 'feelings', which is a subjective reference to private experiences. The synthesis of the object 'social' with the subject 'feelings' is one way of narrowing the gap between 'you' and 'me' and making self-disclosure more likely (Hamachek 1990:438). Once the skill of perceiving is developed the ability to respond or communicate emerges.

## b. Responding

Self-disclosure is the ability to *respond* or communicate on personal material about oneself to the group. Through self-disclosure the individual is able to reveal information about life outside the group, past experiences, fear, embarrassing or worrisome problems (Fuhriman & Burlingame 1994:294). A close relationship exists between self-disclosure and group cohesiveness. The more cohesive the group, the more trusting members will be towards each other. Therefore, group cohesiveness enables empathy to develop and it is through the provision of such empathy that the group is able to provide the support and understanding that is necessary to create an atmosphere of trust which leads to sharing and exploration of concerns. This fosters the members' willingness to explore the problems which they have brought with them to the group. The participants are able to achieve a sense of belonging and through the cohesion that develops the members of the group are able to learn ways of caring and challenging. In such a supportive atmosphere group members can experiment with alternative behaviour in the group, where they receive

encouragement as well as suggestions of how to apply what they have learnt in the group to their lives outside of it (Corey 1985:7-8). It is through such a secure and supportive group atmosphere that an increased level of self-disclosure, risk-taking and interpersonal feedback can be produced. Individual group members may know that self-disclosure is necessary, but unless they feel 'safe' they will not discuss what they feel and think openly. Fears of non-acceptance, criticism, humiliation or attack from the group facilitator or other group members will therefore preclude substantial commitment to the task on hand (Fuhriman & Burlingame 1994:129). Therefore, it is necessary for the group facilitator to communicate to the group members that it is acceptable to show feelings and express their thoughts openly within the group without the fear of ridicule (Corey et al. 1992:13).

## c. Respect

There are several specific reasons why empathy skills are necessary to facilitate group processes especially when group work involves improving intercultural relationships. Through teaching empathy skills, respect for diversity can be fostered. *Respect* can be described as an attitude of valuing others for who they are. A respectful attitude communicates the message, that 'you share in the power of this relationship; you are a separate and unique person, with the right to see things from your vantage point'. Like warmth, respect is often communicated through subtle non-verbal behaviour (Corey 1985:256). Through the creation of such a tone of non-judgmental acceptance a climate is created that encourages self-disclosures. When the individual group members feel that they are not going to be judged or punished for sharing feelings or hurtful behaviour, then they are more likely to try new alternatives. Consequently as individuals learn to empathise with one another, their courage to work on difficult problems grows because they learn that others in the group are working on the same problems. They adopt an attitude of 'if they can do it, so can I' (Smead 1995:146).

In such a climate an atmosphere of positive regard, caring, warmth and acceptance can easily be developed (Corey 1985:253).

**d. Silence**

It is necessary for the group facilitator to understand that when people are together they are communicating and that all communications are intended to convey a message. *Silence* for example can communicate disinterest, sadness, thoughtfulness or even anger (Toseland & Rivas 1984:59). Through the development of empathy, individuals are able to learn the importance of active listening.

**e. Communication**

It is also important for the group facilitator to be aware of the fact that *communication* can also be distorted in transmission. Among the most common transmission problems are language barriers. Frequently, group facilitators conduct groups with members from different cultural and racial backgrounds for whom English is a second language. In addition to understanding accents, the meanings of many words are culturally defined and may not be interpreted in the way the communicator intended. In order to prevent distortions in communications from causing misunderstandings and conflict, it is important to ensure that group members receive feedback about their communications. Feedback is a way of checking to ensure that the messages which are communicated are understood correctly (Toseland & Rivas 1984:59).

**5.3 CONCLUSION**

The procedure of helping is an universal procedure and is not limited to any particular culture. As such the general principles of group work, that is linking, trust and empathy, can be applied to all young people irrespective of their cultural heritage

(Gillis 1997:170). In chapter five this researcher has discussed groups for adolescents, the advantages of using groups for improving cross-cultural relationships and the skills that facilitate group processes. In chapter six this researcher intends to develop a programme which will enable Black and Indian grade seven pupils to become more aware of each other. It is hoped to bring about a greater understanding between the two groups which will eventually facilitate more positive cross-cultural relationships by means of the opportunities created by the use of group sessions.

**CHAPTER SIX**

## 6 AN INTERVENTION MODEL FOR IMPROVING CROSS-CULTURAL RELATIONSHIPS

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The discussion on groups for adolescents, interpersonal problem-solving groups and group goals at 5.2.4, 5.2.4.1 and 5.2.5 are particularly relevant for the design of this model. The relevant developmental aspects of the adolescent discussed in chapters three and four were considered when developing the model.

The group will consist of four Indian and four Black pupils who will be involved in eight sessions of groupwork. The duration of each session will be approximately fifty minutes. All sessions will be conducted after school hours. Pupils will be selected from the same grade, year and school. Pupils will be chosen for the groupwork on the basis of socio-economic standards, pupils' permission, involvement and willingness to participate. The purpose of the group will be explained to all individuals involved in the very first session in the following terms.

a. Having friends is important to all human beings.

b. It is necessary to be able to interact positively with other cultural groups.

c. Positive cross-cultural interaction creates a climate conducive to both mental and emotional well-being which are necessary for positive self-actualisation.

d. It is through groupwork that we can learn about each other.

e. Individuals can learn how to develop positive cross-cultural relationships.

Human beings have the potential for growth and social self-improvement. Maturation

occurs at specific developmental levels, that is physical, cognitive, affective and social levels. Although each level or aspect of growth is specifically categorised, the various aspects are all interwoven to form the individual as a whole. The various developmental aspects mentioned have specific implications for human development. These aspects were discussed in detail in chapter three. The implications of the stages of development in relation to multicultural interaction were also discussed.

The types of opportunities offered by the environment for social interaction will to a large extent determine the quality of cross-cultural relationship formation. During physical development the child is exposed to a variety of other individuals, thus creating an awareness of others. During such interaction he is not passive but is actively thinking (cognitive development) about others and forming attitudes and feelings (affective development) towards others. Therefore, the type of social involvement will be determined on the basis of the quality of interaction provided. However, if such interaction has been limited to an environment where an individual is exposed only to individuals of the same culture as himself or herself, interaction within a multicultural context could be problematic. If an awareness of and sensitivity to people of other cultures is not developed during the formative years, individuals will not be able to interact effectively. Deprivation of cross-cultural contact or involvement precludes the formation of basic trust between individuals from different cultures. Any relationship not founded on trust will be experienced negatively. If this occurs, then it seems that attribution of meaning to cross-cultural experiences will be negative.

The following intervention programme is designed to improve problematic cross-cultural relationships. The developmental level of the target group is taken in consideration. Firstly, the planning of each session is discussed, thereafter the specific issues to be addressed are listed. Secondly, the developmental levels to be

remedied are discussed. Each session is given a theme and follows a procedure of opening, activities, feedback and closing. The expected goals are stated.

## 6.2 GOAL-DIRECTED ACTIVITIES

This research is directed at the improvement of cross-cultural relationships between adolescents. The goals which were identified as necessary to achieve this improvement were discussed in section 5.2.5. These goals were selected after a careful evaluation of the literature concerning the impact of aspects of physical, cognitive, affective and social development of the adolescent. These developmental stages and their interaction were thoroughly discussed in chapter three. In chapter four the influential role of peer group interaction was investigated in the light of available literature. It was on the basis of this investigation that it was decided that a programme to improve relationships between adolescents should be implemented in the context of peer group interaction. Interpersonal problem-solving group therapy from the viewpoint of systems theory was considered to be the appropriate choice for the intervention programme.

The following activities which underpin the achievement of the goal of improved relationships are interwoven in the programme by means of various techniques available to the facilitator.

1.   Negative experiences will be defined and a process of developing group cohesiveness will be instituted. It is thought that the linking of the Indian and Black groups will result in an acknowledgement of existing differences and a commitment to work towards unity.

2.   Common problems which are experienced will be identified and discussed with a view to creating a sense of security and a feeling of belonging.

3. Communication skills will be developed by discussing the life worlds of the different groups. This will create an opportunity to express emotional reaction to differences and similarities.

4. The group will be encouraged to disclose insecurities which create distrust between pupils from different cultures.

6. The group will act as a socialising agent for inadequately socialised children within a multicultural environment.

7. A sense of communality will be instilled which will result in a change of perceptions and develop an awareness of similarities between different cultures.

8. Appreciation and tolerance for cultural diversity will be fostered.

9. Equal status cooperative and collaborative activities designed to develop empathy, sensitivity, understanding and trust for those different from the self will be implemented.

10. Changes of perception will lead to improved self-esteem among the members of the group.

11. A realisation that different cultural groups can co-exist peacefully despite a strong sense of own group identity will be instilled.

## 6.3 PLANNING OF SESSIONS ONE TO EIGHT

### PLANNING OF SESSION ONE

In a society which was historically divided by racial segregation, cultural integration will not automatically ensure that linking occurs. In order for any relationship to develop people need to be aware of each other so that polarisation can occur. As a result of our monocultural upbringing 'closed relationships' have created misconceptions and ignorance of those different from ourselves. Currently an

awareness of and ability to communicate with those different from ourselves remains problematic because racial divisions which still exist within the macro society (homogeneous environments) are reflected within the micro society (school). Since individuals do not automatically connect with each other, they need to be made aware of themselves in relation to significant others (peers) within a desegregated context. This is necessary because the individual learns about others from his environment. He learns about how others are identified and in turn how he himself is identified by others. A lack or insufficient involvement between cultures fosters preconceived perceptions which, in most instances, have a detrimental effect on cross-cultural communication skills. The inability of individuals to attend to or respond to those different from themselves results in restricted social interactional patterns. This can cause anxieties and insecurities which impede cognitive development, as anxious and insecure individuals will be emotionally affected which, in turn, will result in distorting their thinking about others. However, if positive social interaction can be encouraged this will encourage positive concept formation about those different from themselves. Consequently individuals will be in a position to communicate their thoughts and be more accepting of new ideas and information received. Therefore, in order to develop into well-adjusted adults who are able to function adequately within a multicultural environment, individuals need to be made aware of themselves and others within a cross-cultural context. The creation of such an awareness (involvement) of self and others allows for effective communication which breaks down barriers between 'us' and 'them'. This will result in the unlearning of negative stereotyping which promotes insecurity and distrust.

Effective communication between different cultures enables individuals to gain more control over themselves and the environment because misunderstandings which have resulted from a lack of knowledge about those different from themselves can be resolved in an amicable way. The development of effective communication engenders

self-control, self-knowledge and an understanding of others and consequently fosters a social conscience. The ability to communicate approval and disapproval verbally, teaches individuals to think and results in developed reasoning abilities. In so doing attitudes and beliefs which have impacted negatively on cross-cultural relationships can be redefined.

The following aspects are selected to receive attention in session one: connecting, awareness, involvement, cognitive development, social interaction, communication, awareness of self, awareness of others, warmth and trust. These aspects have been discussed in chapters one to three. In chapter four their relevance in the context of the inter-personal problem-solving group has been analysed. The various skills necessary for effective communication have been discussed specifically in section 5.2.6.

The incorporation of the abovementioned aspects into the interpersonal problem-solving group therapy programme will bring pupils of different cultural backgrounds closer to each other. The initial stage of interaction between pupils will commence when pupils introduce themselves to the group. The recollection of peer groups of which individual pupils have been members will create a common element between pupils so that an awareness of self and others can be developed. An initial stage of linking between individuals previously unaware of each other will be created when individuals have to think about themselves in relation to others. Pairing Black and Indian pupils will compel them to focus on each other and to pay attention to their partners. Once attention has been concentrated individuals will be willing to participate in the fun activity and will express themselves freely. The fun game will be designed specifically to facilitate self-expression. Involvement in the fun-game activity will create a mood which can be used to induce pupils to tell about things which they would not usually discuss. The creation of involvement and an awareness between pupils will establish a need to attend to others. This awareness will enable

pupils to think about the positive attributes of their partners and will promote a reciprocal response. Once the ability to attend and respond has been established, the group facilitator will be able to focus on the skill of communication. By getting group members to verbalise positive characteristics about their partners the group facilitator will be able to create an appreciation for individuality and a warm, trusting and comfortable group atmosphere. Positive assessments from their peers will make it possible for group members to share in the experiences freely. A group climate which allows for anxieties to be overcome will be fostered when an atmosphere of acceptance and awareness of the self and others is created.

Schedule one is representative of the abovementioned aspects.

**Schedule 1**

| | |
|---|---|
| Connection | Communication |
| Awareness | Awareness of self |
| Involvement | Awareness of others |
| Cognitive development | Warmth |
| Social interaction | Trust |

The aspects listed in schedule one will now be addressed. Session one will consist of the following headings: the theme, that is 'Making Acquaintance', levels which will indicate the aspects to be incorporated, a process which will entail opening, activities, feedback, closing and the expected outcomes which will be connected to the levels and will be indicative of how and during which activities the aspects to be redressed will feature.

| SESSION ONE | LEVELS |
|---|---|
| THEME 'Making Acquaintance' | Awareness of self and others (knowledge of self and others). |
| | Cognitive Level of child is taken into consideration. |
| | Deficits in cognition caused by cultural isolation do not allow individuals to automatically connect (Smead 1995:128). |
| | For connection to occur, they need to become aware of each other (Du Toit & Kruger 1991:17-18). |
| | Through involvement individuals can relate to other groups (Ramsey 1987:3). |
| | Cognitive development is negatively affected by insecurities, incompetence, lack of commitment and an unwillingness to get involved (Behr et al. 1989:75). |
| | Insufficient social interaction (communication) results in ignorance and stereotyping about those different from the self (Eyber et al. 1997:20). |
| | Cultural isolation has resulted in limited knowledge about others in relation to the self (Bowser & Hunt, as cited in Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:4). |
| | Limited awareness of others has resulted in the creation of a hierarchy between groups (Eyber et al. 1997:3). |
| | To be able to connect there must be an environment of trust so that a feeling of well-being and warmth can be created (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:63). |

| PROCESS | EXPECTED OUTCOME (GOALS) |
|---|---|
| **OPENING**<br>• Welcome.<br>• Explanation of purpose of group.<br>• Each pupil introduces himself or herself to the group. | • Developing an initial state of linking (Smead 1995:127).<br><br>• Primary status (Ausubel as cited in Manaster 1989:284). |
| **ACTIVITIES**<br>• Each pupil gets to tell about an experience which they have had in any previous peer group to which they belonged. | • Feeling of security (Rogers 1990:34-35).<br><br>• Ability to attend to others (Corey & Corey 1982:18; Corey 1985:251). |
| • Pupils divide into pairs (Black/Indian) | |
| • Fun game: Each group member finds out three facts about their partner. Each member tells the group what they have discovered about their partner. | • Expression of self (Corey 1986:65; Corey et al. 1992:65).<br><br>• Ability to respond to others (Smead 1995:145). |
| • Each pupil writes down something about themselves which they would not normally tell to a pupil from another culture. | • Focus on communication (Fuhriman & Burlingame 1994:294).<br><br>• Developing trust (Erikson 1983:96). |
| • Group member gets to tell something positive about his or her partner to the group. | • Appreciation of individuality (Corey 1985:256).<br><br>• Development of trust and a warm and comfortable environment (Corey 1986:63). |
| • Group discusses how it feels to hear something positive about yourself shared with the group. | • Positive human interaction (Brunk 1975:145). |
| • Feedback about the session | • Overcome anxieties (Smead 1995:128). |

**CLOSING**

- Group facilitator summarises the process and prepares the group for the next session by explaining that they are secure in the environment in which the session takes place. Among the devices used to achieve this are newspaper articles which reveal that they are not alone in their experience of multicultural differences. The activities for the following session are discussed.

## PLANNING OF SESSION TWO

Rigid boundaries between Black and Indian groups have been reinforced because these groups have been reared during their formative years within monocultural environments. Cross-cultural contact took place only at school which created a system for superficial contact between groups. The lack of cross-cultural involvement between groups hampered the development of communication between groups. Consequently the foundation necessary for building trust between groups has not yet been established. Any relationship which is not based on trust is bound to give rise to feelings of insecurities. This will effect the individual's ability to interact positively with people of other cultures. Such insecurities will also have an effect on the individual's ability to express themselves freely. Once expressions of feeling are affected then one group automatically assumes a more privileged status than the other. Once this occurs the ability to interact competently within the peer group will be affected. It is through interaction with peers that individuals are enabled to interact competently with peers. This results in equal status interaction between peers. When individuals are made to feel incompetent they will be unable to connect with others. The ability to connect is essential if individuals are to identify with each other in a

multicultural context. The yardstick by which to measure self-worth and self-esteem is provided by the significant others with whom the individual interacts. If individuals are to function effectively in the larger desegregated society they will have to accept being measured against the standards of their peers of all cultures. Consequently if a feeling of inadequacy arises because of the perception that one group does not measure up to the standards of the other, this negative perception will affect cross-cultural interactional patterns.

The following aspects, that is rigid boundaries, limited cross-cultural involvement, trust, insecurities, expression of self, status, connecting, identity and self-esteem are selected for attention in session two. As in the planning of session one, the aspects selected have been evaluated in previous chapters in the light of available literature. The specific references are included in the description of session two.

The exploration of these aspects during session two will, as a result of information concerning the interests of other peer groups to which individual members have belonged, create an understanding between group members. The realisation that common interests exist will allow individuals to connect and this will initiate the first stage of linking between group members. Session one has set the pattern for discussions which follow. If attitudes expressed by the group facilitator indicate genuine concern for the group, group facilitation will be possible. Group members will be prepared to participate in the fun activities which allow for self-disclosure and the creation of a greater understanding of each group member. This will help to break down the rigid boundaries which exist between the groups. The attitude of the group facilitator will also determine the tone and mood of the group environment. Verbal and non-verbal cues should not be biased or judgmental as this will affect the tone of the group. If the group facilitator succeeds in creating a relaxed atmosphere, group members will feel secure enough to interact with each other. In such an environment

members will be confident to describe the environment from which they come and will feel free to talk about themselves and their experiences. This involvement will enable group members who have no understanding of the type of existence which those different from themselves have outside of the school environment to gain knowledge about each other. The creation of such involvement will encourage the formation of a trusting relationship through greater understanding of those different from the self. This will enable the group to bond. The creation of a cohesive atmosphere will make it possible to surmount insecurities which result from ignorance of other cultures because of cultural isolation. When group members become involved they will begin to identify with each other because they are able to express feelings freely. If an opportunity to communicate experiences is provided, group members will engage in a process of active listening and responding. They will learn how to interact with each other. The establishment of self-awareness and awareness of others will make it possible to evaluate how oneself is experienced in relation to others. If individuals are able to interact competently with each other they will achieve equal status as both groups of pupils will identify with each other as peers. This will encourage individuals to feel good about themselves and will promote self-esteem.

Schedule two is representative of the abovementioned information.

**Schedule 2**

| | |
|---|---|
| Rigid boundaries | Status |
| Limited cross-cultural involvement | Connecting |
| Trust | Identity |
| Insecurities | Self-esteem |
| Expression of self | Inadequacy |

The above aspects will be addressed in session two. Session two will consist of a theme, that is 'Working side by side', levels which will indicate the aspects to be incorporated, a process of opening, activities, feedback, closing and expected outcomes which will be connected to the levels and which will indicate how and during which activities the aspects to be redressed feature.

| SESSION TWO | LEVELS |
|---|---|
| **THEME 'Working side by side'** | Awareness of self and others. |
| | Knowledge of self (Focus on feelings) cognitive and affective levels are taken into consideration. |
| | Limited cross-cultural contact (involvement) has resulted in rigid boundaries between groups which have helped to reinforce distrust, misunderstanding, fears and rejection of those different from ourselves (Coutts 1992:34-35). |
| | The need exists to communicate understanding, sincerity and acceptance (Gillis 1997:170). |
| | Insecure interpersonal relationships do not allow for positive viewing of the self and hamper the formation of trust (Willey 1984:6). |
| | The inability to express oneself freely can induce a cycle of attribution of blame which creates negative attitudes and insecurities (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:70). |

If one group is accorded a more privileged status, then such unequal status involvement can lead to anxiety and distress in individuals (Modgil et al. 1986:89).

Feelings of inadequacy impede the development of competencies, such as expression of self which, in turn, affects the development of primary status (Ausubel as cited in Manaster 1989:284).

To be able to connect and identify with others individuals need to be involved in co-operative equal status interaction which enhances self-esteem (Sleeter 1991:168).

| PROCESS | EXPECTED OUTCOMES (GOALS) |
|---|---|
| **OPENING** | |
| • Fun Game: Each group member chooses to be an animal — describes characteristics which they have in common and say how he or she identifies with the animal chosen. | • Overcome insecurities by providing a secure atmosphere for self-disclosure (Rogers 1990:34-35). |
| **ACTIVITIES** | |
| • Each member tells about their home environment. | • Expression of self (Fuhriman & Burlingame 1994:129). |
| • The group members share their experiences after hearing about environments of which they have had no experience. | • Helping in human interaction — breaking down rigid boundaries between groups (Brunk 1975:145). |
| • Feedback about session. | • Ability to identify or connect with group (Toseland & Rivas 1984:215). |
| | • Engaging in equal status contact through the creation of group stability (Ausubel et al. 1980:223). |

**CLOSING**
- Group facilitator summarises the process and prepares the group for the next session by reiterating that they are secure in the environment in which the discussion takes place. Topical issues relating to their experience of multicultural differences are again discussed. The activities for the following session are described. This process is followed for each session.

## PLANNING OF SESSION THREE

Only by becoming involved with each other can group members be made aware of each other and engage in sharing information about themselves. Through such cooperative interactions individuals can be taught to unlearn stereotypes and misconceptions which have been engendered in a monocultural environment. Social cognition about those different from ourselves is a perception which is learnt from the environment in which one develops. If individuals are unaware of how others feel it is unlikely that positive emotional feelings towards others will develop. Perceived differences which have developed through a lack of involvement between cultures can be overcome by sharing emotions. An awareness of similarities which exist between groups will enable individuals to empathise with the emotions expressed by those different from themselves. Once empathetic perception is developed, individuals will be able to attend to (cognition) and respond to the feelings (emotions) of other group members. In this way understanding for others will be developed. Once positive involvement occurs a sense of belonging which gives rise

to a sense of security will emerge. Feelings of security enable trust to develop. Once trust is present in relationships, respect and tolerance for others who are perceived to be culturally different but equal will emerge. Equal status results in reciprocity in cross-cultural relationships. This will develop positive social perceptions between culturally different groups.

The following aspects, that is involvement, cooperative interaction, social cognition, emotions, similarities, empathy, attending to, responding to, belonging, security, trust and respect are selected for discussion in the planning of session three. The specific literature sources for these aspects are identified in the description of this session.

If group members have established links in sessions one and two, concentration on the abovementioned aspects in this problem-solving session will establish group cohesion and group members should be trusting enough to focus on self-exploration and expressing their feelings. Willingness to participate in the fun activity selected will imply that pupils have become sufficiently involved with each other. This will help the group facilitator to determine the level of trust within the group and the willingness to engage in cooperative interaction. Discussions between group members about their happiest and saddest moments will exhibit the level of group cohesiveness and willingness to self-disclose. At the same time group members will be encouraged to explore feelings about themselves and focus on feelings of others. This will create the potential for a greater understanding of self and others and for the eradication of stereotyping. Acknowledgement of their experiences on hearing the life stories of others and telling their own life stories will change cognitive perspectives because increased self-knowledge and knowledge about others contribute to a greater awareness of each other. This will promote more positive feelings (emotions) towards each other and facilitate cognitive growth. If such changes are positive then the potential for disclosing what members find to be surprising, new, different, similar

and impressive about the stories of others will be established and similarities between groups will emerge. In so doing members will show that they have the ability to attend to others in the group and will therefore be able to respond to the needs of others. The awareness created by self-disclosures and the development in cognitive growth about the self and others will help members to understand those less fortunate than themselves. This will enhance the ability to empathise with others. The ability to see from the perspective of another person will create a sense of belonging within the peer group. An increased level of understanding and knowledge of those different from the self will increase the level of trust between group members. Trust will contribute to unlearning of stereotypes and the fostering of respect and tolerance for diversity.

Schedule three is representative of the abovementioned information.

**Schedule 3**

| | |
|---|---|
| Involvement | Attending to |
| Cooperative interaction | Responding to |
| Stereotyping | Belonging |
| Social cognition | Security |
| Emotions | Trust |
| Similarities | Respect and tolerance |
| Empathy | |

The abovementioned aspects will be addressed in session three. Session three will consist of a theme, that is 'Telling your story', levels which will indicate the aspects to be incorporated, a process of opening, activities, feedback, closing and expected outcome which will be connected to the levels and will indicate how and during which activities the aspects to be redressed will feature.

| SESSION THREE | LEVELS |
|---|---|
| **THEME** 'Telling your story'. | Getting to know self and others (Focus on knowledge). Cognitive levels are· taken into consideration. |
| | Becoming involved through the development of cooperative interaction in a relationship develops the ability to participate in a common understanding (Schrumpf et al. 1991:9). |
| | Through cooperative group interactions we learn about others and develop social cognition about those different from ourselves through interaction with our environment (Ramsey 1991:39). |
| | Through working and communicating together, cognitive skills which create the ability to negotiate enable emotional support between groups to develop (Fisher 1995:96). |
| | Intergroup contact enables individuals to perceive similarities which generate mutual attraction so that stereotypes resistant to change can be broken down (Baron & Byrne 1994:241). |
| | The ability to attend to and communicate (respond) promotes understanding and allows for sensitivity (empathy) towards others to develop (Corey & Corey 1982:18; Corey 1985:251). |
| | Through respect and value for cultural diversity tolerance emerges (Le Roux 1993:16). |
| | The peer group offers a sense of security (trust) and belonging (Du Toit & Kruger 1991:123). |

The security provided enables the weakening of emotional bonds with parents which helps adolescents to see that they are not different from each other (Ausubel et al. 1980:223).

| PROCESS | EXPECTED OUTCOMES (GOALS) |
|---|---|

**OPENING**
- Fun game: 'Secrets'. Members are asked to write down one thing about themselves which they would not normally tell to a new friend. Facilitator collects these secrets and reads them to the group. Members try to identify person with the secret and give a reason for the choice.

- Creation of an atmosphere of trust and group cohesion through increased involvement (Erikson 1983:96).

- Acceptance of disclosure (Rogers 1990:34-35).

**ACTIVITIES**
- Each member creates their life story by making a collage. He or she presents the collage to the group and tells his or her life story.

- Building understanding through communication (Toseland & Rivas 1984:95).

- Discovery of similarities (Smead 1995:127)

- Members share the saddest and happiest moments of their lives with the group.

- Demonstrate similar difficulties which must be overcome (Corey & Corey 1982:284).

- Experiencing trust, security, emotional support and a sense of belonging (Henggeler et al. 1998:126).

- Members are asked to tell how they experienced hearing others' stories and how they experienced telling their own story.

- Mutual respect and tolerance for differences (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:62-63).

- Ability to attend and respond to the needs of others (Smead 1995:145).

- Members tell what they found surprising, new, different, similar and impressive about the others' stories.

- Ability to empathise (Corey & Corey 1982:18; Corey 1985:251).

- Unlearning stereotypes (Eyber et al. 1997:56).

- Feedback

- Changing social cognition (Argyle &

- Changing social cognition (Argyle & Coleman 1995:68-69)

**CLOSING**

- Group facilitator summarises the process and prepares the group for the next session as explained above at sessions one and two.

## PLANNING OF SESSION FOUR

The development of collaboration between individuals will allow all group members to feel competent to discuss and accept both negative and positive aspects of the self. Collaboration will enable the group to involve all members in interaction which will allow for expression of feelings and development of competencies between individuals of the same age and sex. Equal status relationships between pupils will enable them to identify with each other and they could be encouraged to resolve conflict situations arising from prejudiced attitude formation. Heightening sensitivity between groups will allow for the acceptance of responsibility by group members. Sharing responsibilities within a supportive environment will have the added advantage of making members aware that there may be different but equally good solutions to the same problem. This will enhance the development of sensitivity between different groups and can be used to develop equal group status. Encouraging all members to participate in finding solutions to problems experienced will enable them to experience an understanding of the rationale behind the need for rules and will modify behaviour patterns. Verbal communication of perspectives on thinking will enable group members to acknowledge the need for mutual give and take (reciprocity) which is necessary for positive relationship formation. Members will be able to negotiate within the supportive environment of the group, which will provide

a sense of belonging outside of the family and will act as a socialising agent for moral development. Cognitive misrepresentations and insecurities which have developed from social distancing resulting from living 'closed' lives have resulted in deficiencies in thinking about people different from ourselves which could now be remedied. Conflict which results from deficient knowledge about others could be averted by developing a social conscience and acceptance for responsibility within relationships.

The following aspects, that is collaboration, competence, age and sex roles, sensitivity, prejudice, conflict, identity, attitudes, belonging, self-esteem, reciprocity, socialising, insecurities, closed relationships, social distancing and responsibility are selected for attention in session four. The aspects have been discussed in detail in previous chapters and the pertinent references are incorporated into the discussion of session four.

These aspects will be used to promote collaborative interaction which will allow a discussion of experiences and the development of competencies between same-age peers. This could develop appropriate behaviour patterns between individuals. Group members would, for example, be in a position to discuss what they like or dislike about their names. This activity could promote sensitivity. It would serve to correct prejudicial attitudes as the ability to communicate feelings will create a sense of belonging between individuals. A sense of belonging will help individuals to identify with each other and will promote self-esteem. The development of greater involvement and understanding in the group process will lead to a greater sense of group cohesiveness. Consequently members will be able to discuss the characteristics of other group members and a greater understanding and awareness among members who are different from each other will develop. The group will act as a socialising agent which could be used to rectify insecurities resulting from inappropriate cross-

cultural socialisation patterns. Once involvement between members is established, cognitive problem-solving skills which recognise conflict could be used to provide solutions. When group members are encouraged to think of solutions to problems they will see that they are not alone in their frustrations and could have similar problems which need to be resolved. If they recognise that conflict is counter-productive to cross-cultural harmony an awareness of the need for mutual respect and a developed social conscience could be created. Furthermore, the ability of group members to discuss and offer solutions to common problems will allow them to test beliefs, discuss and offer solutions. Previously this was impossible because of social distancing. This will have the added advantage of teaching responsibility for oneself and others.

Schedule four is representative of the abovementioned aspects.

**Schedule 4**

| | |
|---|---|
| Collaboration | Belonging |
| Competence | Self-esteem |
| Age and sex roles | Reciprocity |
| Sensitivity | Socialising |
| Prejudice | Insecurities |
| Conflict | Closed relationships |
| Identity | Social distancing |
| Attitudes | Responsibility |

Session four will consist of a theme, that is 'Planning together — exploring and testing', levels which will indicate the aspects to be incorporated, a process of opening, activities, feedback, closing and expected outcomes which will indicate how and during which activities the aspects to be redressed will feature.

| SESSION FOUR | LEVEL |
|---|---|
| **THEME**<br>**'Planning together, exploration and testing'.** | Getting closer (focus on knowledge of self and others). Cognitive Level is taken into consideration.. |
| | Contact must be on a collaborative basis to ensure that similarities of competence can emerge (Lynch 1987: 121). |
| | Peer group furnishes suitable models and occasions for individuals to serve and practise the social skills and behaviour they must know in order to enact age and sex appropriate roles (Ausubel et al. 1980:223). |
| | Through interaction, sensitivity towards others can develop (Cowie et al. 1994:2). |
| | Encouraging equal status contact increases the likelihood of combatting prejudicial attitudes so that conflict can be resolved (Lynch 1987:3 & 121). |
| | Equal status contact enables individuals to identify with each other. This creates a sense of belonging and importance to someone outside the primary family group and this can be a source of self-esteem (Hamachek 1990:118). |
| | Individuals who are involved come to realise that relationships require reciprocity. Relationships require mutual give and take and possess both rights and obligations (Erwin 1993:4 & 65). |
| | The creation of a socialising force among peers (Long 1983:201) can counteract fears and insecurities which have resulted from 'closed relationships' (Travers as cited in Behr et al. 1989:76). |

Positive involvement can lead to positive understanding which allows for misconceptions caused by social distancing to be corrected (Sleeter 1991:180).

Denying the opportunity to exercise responsibility deprives individuals of becoming responsible towards themselves but also towards others (Pringle 1993:103).

| PROCESS | EXPECTED OUTCOMES (GOALS) |
|---|---|

**OPENING**

- Fun game: 'My name'. Members state what their names mean or what they like and dislike about their names.

- Create an awareness of and purpose for the group (Douglas 1978:29-30).

- Sharing both negative and positive feelings that enable more positive behaviour patterns to be built (Smead 1995:206).

**ACTIVITIES**

- Group members comment on what they think of their partner of a different culture and provide a character description. Members of the group comment, the member under discussion comments.

- Create a safe environment to explore values, attitudes and ideas (Nelson-Jones 1983:178-179).

- Partners are asked to work together on the following problem. *A school presents a problem: pupils from different cultures in a school do not get along. It is important that they should get along for the future of the country: members to give positive suggestions and plans.* Partners in group work together on suggestions. After discussions they put their suggestions on paper together and all the sheets of paper are put into a box. Suggestions are drawn from the box and group discusses them.

- Awareness of similar problems and frustrations experienced by others not isolated (Smead 1995:127).

- Development of social conscience, responsibility and mutual respect (Rose & Edleson 1987:3-4).

- Connect with one another's situations and attempt to change behaviour (Smead 1995:9).

- Encouraged to utilise abilities and resources available to resolve conflict (Corey & Corey 1987:284).

- Feedback.

**CLOSING**
- Group facilitator summarises and prepares group for next session as explained above at sessions one and two.

## PLANNING OF SESSION FIVE

Cognition and social development should not be underestimated. Communication, understanding and interpretation of interpersonal involvement is important. The social environment must provide support and guidance to develop competent interactional patterns so that cooperative reciprocal interaction takes place between groups. Cultural isolation has a negative affect on cross-cultural relationships because children do not develop emotional sensitivity to people who are culturally different. Knowledge about other cultures must be propagated so that more effective relationships can be formed between children. Individuals must engage in more pro-social activities so that they can experience positive relationships. Involvement and collaboration in activities teaches individuals to comply with rules which apply equally to all members irrespective of race. They realise that completion of tasks is achievable if their ability to use available strengths is used. In this way responsible behavioural patterns are endorsed. Through pro-social activities individuals can be taught to deal with frustrations because of the tolerance and support of other group members. This leads to the attribution of positive meaning to cross-cultural contact.

Once responsible pro-social behavioural patterns are established, group members will be able to communicate understanding and acceptance of cultural diversity. Greater intergroup involvement will give individuals confidence to test beliefs and values

which will provide a frame of reference for cross-cultural encounters. Individuals will learn to subordinate their interests to those of the group in the context of which they are able to test their values and beliefs. As equal partners in this relationship individuals will develop the confidence to accept and appreciate similarities and differences within relationships without their self-worth being affected negatively.

The following aspects, that is cooperative reciprocal interaction, cultural isolation, emotional sensitivity, pro-social activities, collaboration, equal application of rules, tolerance, testing beliefs, reference group, subordination of interests, equal partnership and acceptances of similarities and differences are selected for attention in session five. The use of these aspects will facilitate a greater knowledge and understanding of those from different cultures.

At this stage of group facilitation a sense of connectedness, interpersonal cohesiveness and a climate conducive to pro-social involvement and understanding should have developed. Assuming that connection between group members has occurred, it may also be assumed that they have developed particular interactional patterns which allow for particular patterns of communication and that they will be ready for more involved social growth and development. Cooperative reciprocal interactions will obviate cultural isolation. Members should be able to engage in the pro-social fun activity of holding hands in session five. Participating in collaborative activities will imply a willingness to be involved in cross-cultural activities and a compliance with the principle of an equal application of rules. Group members will be in a position to discuss more intimate cultural habits and customs. Cognitive growth relating to knowledge about different cultures will create an awareness of similarities which may exist between cultures as well as an appreciation of and sensitivity to differences. Discussions about their cultural heritage and beliefs will allow members to test values in relation to other cultures and enhance their ability to

understand differences which will obviate stereotyping. This will allow for tolerance of differences and will provide a forum for the testing of values and beliefs within the group. A more comprehensive knowledge about those of different cultures will evolve. The group will serve as a frame of reference for judging own behaviour in relation to that of others. The growth of knowledge and understanding of cultural differences will cultivate an appreciation of these differences among group members. This will make it possible to subordinate own interests to those of the group and to consider others who are involved in the interaction process. Once this occurs, it could be inferred that group members will be ready to accept similarities and differences which may exist between cultures. Acceptance of cultural differences will improve self-value and provides the confidence to engage in cross-cultural relationships.

Schedule five is representative of the abovementioned information.

**Schedule 5**

| | |
|---|---|
| Cooperative reciprocal interaction | Tolerance |
| Cultural isolation | Testing beliefs |
| Emotional sensitivity | Reference group |
| Pro-social activities | Subordination of interests |
| Collaboration | Equal partnerships |
| Equal application of rules | Acceptance of similarities and differences |

These aspects will be addressed in session five. Session five will consist of a theme, that, is 'My home, my people', levels which will indicate the aspects to be incorporated, a process of opening, activities, feedback and closing and expected outcomes which will be connected to the levels and will indicate how and during which activities the aspects to be redressed will feature.

| SESSION FIVE | LEVELS |
|---|---|
| **THEME 'My home, my people'.** | Awareness of self and others (Knowledge). Cognitive and Affective Levels are taken into consideration.

Cooperative reciprocal interaction requires individuals to see themselves as part of a larger society, to identify, empathise and relate to other groups (Ramsey 1987:3).

By building on deficits caused by cultural isolation, respectful emotional sensitivity towards others can be developed and individuals can be encouraged to build on own strengths (collaborate) in pro-social activities which are conducive to a climate which nurtures the self-worth of each individual and provides opportunities for fulfilment of needs (Schrumpf et al. 1991:3 & 5).

Through involvement individuals can come to realise that rules apply equally and learn to tolerate and deal with minor or major differences (Rose & Edleson 1987:3-4).

By being able to discuss perceptions of one another and receive valuable feedback the group is able to serve as a frame of reference (Corey 1985:7-8).

This allows for the facilitation of deeper understanding and acceptance so that individuals drop their defences sufficiently to explore both meanings of behaviour and new ways of behaving (Mahler as cited in Azima & Richmond 1989:100).

Through a shared foundational purpose to support each other's well-being, trust, a sense of community, emotional bonding, a spirit of tolerance (subordination of own interests) which allows for a measure of uncertainty and dissent is created (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:63). |

| PROCESS | EXPECTED OUTCOMES (GOALS) |
|---|---|

**OPENING**
- Fun game: Members stand in a circle and hold hands with a member who is not next to them. Without letting go of each other they try to form a circle and incorporate the members next to themselves.

- Creation of positive cross-cultural involvement (Sleeter 1991:168).

**ACTIVITIES**
- Black pupils choose a representative who tells the group about one or other habit which is unique to their culture. Indian representative to do the same.

- Tolerance and appreciation for diversity so that prejudice and stereotypes can be overcome (Smead 1995:81).

- Creation of respect for individuality, (Gibson & Clarke 1994:129).

- Acceptance of responsibility towards self and others (Smead 1995:235).

- Feedback

**CLOSING**
- Group facilitator summarises and prepares the group for the next session. The method of preparation is explained above at sessions one and two.

## PLANNING OF SESSION SIX

As social beings, individuals need to be able to interact and communicate with each other. Insecurity in relationships can impede psychological development. Furthermore, inadequate exposure to other cultures can result in inadequately socialised individuals. Such inadequacies result in superficial cross-cultural contact, which increases the possibility of tension between groups. In an emotionally charged climate conflict is

bound to occur. However, through emotional and social adjustment as a result of more positive involvement in pro-social activities, individuals can be taught to trust, understand, accept, adapt and cooperate. This will provide a standard for moral development.

Pro-social activities will increase group participation and develop cohesiveness. To maintain such cohesiveness individuals need to feel comfortable with each other. Consequently individuals must be encouraged to support each other in pro-social activities so that confidence can be built. Through cooperation a standard is set against which individuals can measure themselves. The way in which we are seen by others will determine how we see ourselves. If we are seen in a positive light confidence will be built and the self will not be undermined. To be able to successfully reconcile differences, individuals need to be provided with the opportunity to practise appropriate social interaction. The ability to play new roles will result in more effective cross-cultural socialisation. This will enable individuals to function adequately in a multicultural society.

The following aspects, that is communication, insecurity, inadequate socialisation, tension, trust, understanding, acceptance, cohesiveness, confidence, support, how others see us, how we see ourselves and role-playing will receive attention in session six.

The abovementioned aspects will be used to enhance the group members' confidence to communicate with people of other cultures. Once this confidence is established, insecurities will be overcome and the group will be able to engage cooperatively and socially in the fun game. The involvement of partners in the same activity will encourage each member of the group to participate equally in the activity. This will have the effect of decreasing cross-cultural tension caused by inadequate exposure to

other cultures. Equal status participation will induce positive self-regard. This could be used to build trust, understanding and acceptance between groups, which would have the effect of intensifying emotional bonding between group members. Positive involvement could be instrumental in instilling confidence to support each other in cross-cultural interaction. Mutual support and confidence in interaction will allow members to evaluate themselves positively in relation to other group members. By engaging members in an activity in which they identify themselves with natural phenomena positive aspects of the self could emerge after the ensuing discussion. Positive group identity will develop when individual members realise their self-worth. The group will also serve as a frame of reference to guide individuals when experiencing cross-cultural encounters. Members will be indirectly encouraged to assume roles which will identify them with objects from nature and this will influence moral development.

Schedule six is representative of the abovementioned aspects.

**Schedule 6**

| | |
|---|---|
| Communication | Cohesiveness |
| Insecurity | Confidence |
| Inadequate exposure | Support |
| Inadequate socialisation | How others see us |
| Tension | How we see ourselves |
| Trust | Reconciling differences |
| Understanding | Rewards |
| Acceptance | Costs |

The aspects in schedule six will be addressed in session six. Session six will consist of a theme, that is 'Our friend', levels which will indicate the aspects to be incorporated, a process of opening and activities and expected outcomes which will be connected to the levels and will indicate how and during which activities the

aspects to be redressed will feature.

| SESSION SIX | LEVEL |
|---|---|
| **THEME 'Our friend'.** | Awareness of self and others (focus on feelings). |
| | Affective Level. |
| | To achieve self-actualisation individuals need to be able to communicate effectively (Le Roux 1993:8). |
| | Through the utilisation of cooperative activities individuals can be encouraged to socialise, adjust, adapt and control themselves (Behr et al. 1989:79). |
| | Inadequate cross-cultural socialisation results in superficial contact which impacts upon communication creating frustration and tension between groups this will undoubtedly affect the development of trust, understanding and acceptance (Le Roux 1993:9-10). |
| | Through successful pro-social activities group cohesiveness can be increased (Feldman 1985:379; Rose & Edleson 1987:253). |
| | Individuals need to be prompted to support and help each other rather than to denigrate or ridicule each other so that confidence can be built (Fontana 1995:322-232). |

| ACTIVITIES | EXPECTED OUTCOMES (GOALS) |
|---|---|
| **OPENING** | |
| ● Fun game: Mystery friend: Each members and his or her partner joins the dots in the picture to discover who the mystery friend is | ● Positive regard for self and others. |
| | ● Feeling of emotional well-being towards each other (Le Roux 1993:9). |

**ACTIVITIES**

- Members are asked to identify with an *object* from nature, e.g. flower, water, sunset etc. Placed in a box. Facilitator draws one out and reads aloud. Group discusses the characteristics of the object. Each one is discussed separately. At the end of the session group members get to guess who wrote what. Member identifies himself or herself and says why he or she chose the object.

- Support and encouragement between groups (Fontana 1995:323).

- Positive communication (Squelch 1994:4).

- Standard for comparison. (Argyle & Coleman 1995: 68 - 69)

- Build trust, understanding and acceptance (Le Roux 1993:11).

- Practise at being involved in new roles (Louw 1996:422); Hamacheck 1990:118).

- Feedback.

**CLOSING**

- Group facilitator summarises the process and prepares the group for the next session as explained above at sessions one and two.

**PLANNING SESSION SEVEN**

The individual is constantly interacting with his or her environment. Through such interactions he or she determines how others perceive him or her and on the basis of such perceptions he or she evaluates his or her behaviour. Such perceptions of the self allow for a positive concept of the self to develop. Conversely if the individual feels that he or she or his or her cultural group is accorded negative status, then feelings of self-worth will suffer. Negative perceptions of self will lead to the formation of negative self-esteem and ultimately to a negative self-concept. Accordingly perceptions of self will determine how an individual views himself or herself and how

he or she will react towards others. How an individual thinks and feels about himself or herself is reinforced by those with whom he interacts. Individuals need to know how they are seen by their peers and accordance with these perceptions they will determine the level of their self-worth. The need to evaluate the self favourably is great. If groups are perceived as distinct from each other, discrimination and prejudicial attitudes develop which adversely affect involvement and cooperation between individuals.

Increased contact between groups reveal similarities which allow for mutual attraction and more positive involvement. If contact is on an equal basis and one group is not favoured anxieties will be replaced by warmth and trust. This will encourage favourable perceptions which will result in feelings of self-worth, positive self-esteem and positive identity formation.

The following aspects, that is interaction, negative status, self-worth, evaluation, reinforcement, perceptions, discrimination and prejudice are selected for attention in session seven.

The process of cooperative interpersonal interaction and the development of pro-social cross-cultural interaction should lead to equal status and a feeling of positive self-worth between group members. By participating in the fun activity and getting group members to volunteer to be the centre of attention, group members will show that they have developed an awareness of themselves and others. This will enable them to evaluate themselves in relation to each other. Holding hands and co-operating in the activity will demonstrate a warm, friendly atmosphere in which emotional integration of cross-cultural experiences will be established. This will allow for the reinforcement of positive self-perceptions which will result in a positive experience of cross-cultural contact. These pro-social activities will have the effect of

encouraging equal status participation in activities and will counteract discrimination and prejudicial attitudes between group members. Group members will be prepared to physically and socially use their abilities in cooperative contact. Emotional bonding will be created through pro-social activities which will encourage individuals to communicate their differences and use the resources available to resolve conflict.

Schedule seven is representative of the abovementioned activities.

**Schedule 7**

| Interaction | Reinforcement |
|---|---|
| Negative status | Perceptions |
| Self-worth | Discrimination |
| Evaluation | Prejudice |

The abovementioned aspects will be addressed in session seven. Session seven will consist of a theme, that is 'Playing together', levels which will indicate the aspects to be incorporated, a process of opening, activities, feedback, closing and expected outcomes which will be connected to the levels and which will indicate how and during which activities the aspects to be redressed will feature.

| SESSION SEVEN | LEVEL |
|---|---|
| THEME 'Playing together'. | Focus on self and others (feelings). |
| | Affective Level. |
| | Through interaction (involvement) individuals can compare and contrast themselves and self-worth is determined (Hamachek 1990:310). |
| | Through increased contact similarities between groups can be encouraged which lead to mutual attraction and positive involvement (Baron & Byrne 1994:241-243). |
| | The development of equal basis contact helps dissolve anxieties and stereotypes which have kept groups apart and warmth and friendship can develop (Baron & Byrne 1994:243). |
| | Negative group status affects positive self-worth (Kostelnik et al. 1993:316). |
| | Self-worth is evaluated and reinforced through interaction (Behr et al. 1989:100). |
| | Groups which are perceived as meaningfully distinct from each other result in discrimination and prejudicial behavioural patterns (Argyle & Coleman 1995:69). |

## PROCESS

### OPENING

- Fun game: Companionship members form a circle with their partners. One member volunteers to be in centre of circle. Members hold hands without bending knees to prevent volunteer from escaping from within circle.

### ACTIVITIES

- Three legged race. Members take hold of each other at upper arms and the left foot of one and the right foot of the other are tied together

- Feedback.

### CLOSING

- Group facilitator summarises and prepares the group for the next session.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES (GOALS)

- Warmth, friendliness — emotional integration of experiences (Louw 1996:422).

- Positive experiencing of contact (Smead 1995:9; Ramsey 1987:129).

- Equal status participation (Sleeter 1991:108).

- Feeling of well-being towards self and others (Ramsey 1991:160).

- Positive self-worth and self-esteem — formation of positive identity (Azima & Richmond 1989:45).

- Respect and understanding for different cultures — atmosphere of safety and acceptance (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:62).

- Sense of belonging together (Azima & Richmond 1989:45).

## PLANNING SESSION EIGHT

Individuals need to be made aware of the fact that they are in control of the situations in which they find themselves. If such awareness is created cross-cultural interaction need not be negative. Conflict can be beneficial if it provides for learning and the

positive development of the individual, but conflict which results in physical aggression or impedes psychological well-being needs to be redressed.

If individuals are made aware of their strengths they will gain confidence and will be able to communicate and cooperate with each other. Cooperation should lead to mutual respect which allows for diversity. Individuals must remember that independence comes with responsibility for the consequences of actions. Imputing blame does not increase knowledge or improve feelings towards oneself and others. Individuals must realise that responsibility depends on self-respect and self-acceptance. Affective development leads to acceptance of the self and others. The ability to think about, acknowledge and accept the right to diversity enables the budding adult to cross the threshold of adolescence as an affectively (emotional), cognitively (thinking), physically and socially well-adjusted human being, who will be able to interact within a desegregated multicultural environment and be a social asset to society.

The following aspects, that is control, conflict, psychological well-being, communication, cooperation, respect, reciprocity, diversity, independence, responsibility, blame, physical cognitive, affective and social development are selected for attention in session eight. It is hoped that by addressing these aspects the closing message, that is 'There is no one more equal than me and neither am I more equal than another' will be understood and accepted by all group members.

In order to attain self-actualisation and develop into an adult, individuals have to be prepared to accept the responsibilities which come with independence. They must resolve and control conflict situations which arise in an amicable way by accepting responsibility for their actions. Imputing blame does not allow positive patterns of communication between different cultural groups to develop. However, through cooperative interactional patterns, individuals will be able to build on each other's

strengths so that peaceful coexistence becomes possible. This can only be achieved through reciprocal respect for diversity of cultures. For psychological well-being to occur and a strong value of the self to emerge, the adolescent has the task of accepting and integrating the various developmental levels (physical, cognitive, affective and social). In meeting these challenges it is important that he or she is accepted and understood by his or her peers and, in turn, accepts and understands those with whom he or she interacts in the multicultural society. Once such understanding and acceptance occurs it is possible to develop cross-cultural relationships based on trust and to attribute positive meanings to cross-cultural contact.

The group facilitator should make every effort to ensure that the final session ends on a positive note as the success of the entire programme will depend on the final session. It is this stage of group work which will determine how skills learnt within the group will be used and disseminated. Each group member should be given the opportunity to share his or her experiences with the other group members. Members should also be able to accept the message delivered at the end of the session, this being 'No one is more equal than me and neither am I more equal than another'. If mutual involvement, awareness and understanding have developed between group members, they will be able to acknowledge their strengths to build confidence within the process of cross-cultural interaction. This will enable individuals to experience cross-cultural relationships positively. Developing respect for oneself and others, will allow individuals to be in control of a situation, use communication skills, develop mutual respect to apply the skills learnt within the group.

Schedule eight is representative of the abovementioned aspects.

**Schedule 8**

| | |
|---|---|
| Control | Diversity |
| Conflict | Independence |
| Psychological well-being | Responsibility |
| Communication | Blame |
| Cooperation | Affective |
| Respect | Cognitive |
| Reciprocity | Physical |
| Social | |

The above aspects will be addressed in session eight. Session eight will consist of a theme, that is 'Saying goodbye', levels which will indicate the aspects to be incorporated, a process of opening, activities, feedback and closing finally expected outcomes which will be connected to the levels and will indicate during which activities the aspects to be redressed will feature.

<table>
<tr><th>SESSION EIGHT</th><th>LEVEL</th></tr>
<tr><td>**THEME 'Saying Goodbye'.**</td><td>Awareness of self and others (Focus on knowledge and feelings).</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>Cognitive and Affective Levels. Cross-cultural contact which encourages mutual involvement and understanding, creates trust. Such trust enables the group to become more cohesive, enables cross-cultural contact to be positively experienced and meaning attribution to be more favourable. This creates the potential for pro-social involvement. (Ramsey 1987:129).</td></tr>
</table>

| PROCESS | EXPECTED OUTCOMES (GOALS) |
|---|---|
| **OPENING**<br>• Sharing experiences within group work | • Ability to control conflict through the acceptance of responsibility for own actions (Smead 1995:204).<br><br>• Respect for diversity needs to be characterised by reciprocity (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:284).<br><br>• For psychological well-being individuals need the esteem of their peers (Fontana 1995:3).<br><br>• Blame is the most damaging factor to any trusting relationship (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:70).<br><br>• Realise that they are in control of the situation — interaction need not be negative (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg 1995:178).<br><br>• Able to communicate and cooperate (Corey & Corey 1982:18; Corey 1985:7-8).<br><br>• With independence comes responsibility, that is knowledge of rules together with the reasons as to whether rules are in the interest of the self only or are in the interest of others as well (Pringle 1993:55). |
| **CLOSING**<br>• Saying goodbye, expressing thanks, message to take away<br>— *There is no one more equal than me and neither am I more equal than another.* | • The transition from childhood to adulthood requires working through a number of tasks which consist of a series of highly personalised experiences which involve the various developmental levels, that is, physical, cognitive, affective and social (Gillis 1997:71).<br><br>• Apply skills learnt outside the group (Corey 1985:7-8). |

## 6.4    CONCLUSION

Cross-cultural contact alone is ineffective in reducing social distances between groups. For more harmonious relationships to develop individuals need to be engaged in age-appropriate collaborative interaction. This type of interaction teaches groups of individuals to form more cooperative human interactional patterns. It is common knowledge that cultural isolation diminishes the motivation to be involved. Therefore, by creating a sense of connectedness between groups, a greater sense of involvement (linking), understanding and trust can be encouraged. Similarities between groups are identified by perceptions of communality. A sense of mutual awareness can be developed by emphasising the importance of group membership. Once groups are no longer categorised rigidly, individuality will emerge and empathy between group members will develop. Through an emotional climate which conveys acceptance, safety and capability, contact on a more interpersonal basis can be encouraged. In this way boundaries can become less rigid. This will facilitate a spontaneous acceptance of responsibility towards the self and others. Acceptance, respect and tolerance for differences helps build equal-status contact, which enables diverse cultural groups to co-exist peacefully within a multicultural society while maintaining their own cultural identities.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

7        **THE EMPIRICAL STUDY**

7.1      **INTRODUCTION**

In chapter six this researcher discussed goal-directed activities to be implemented with groups and the planning and conducting of sessions one to eight. In the empirical study she intends to implement group activities devised to create more positive peer relationships among grade seven Indian and Black pupils.

After compiling the processes at the sessions, she will analize the content according to the expected outcomes discussed in chapter six. This analysis will be provided after the description of the interactional processes of each session. An example of the analysis of an outside expert of the sessions to determine the outcomes, will be included in annexure III.

This researcher conducted an interview with each of the pupils who agreed to participate in this study. The aim was to gather information on the background of the pupils as well as create a relationship of trust with each of them. A summarised version of the information gathered will be provided before discussing the group processes.

## 7.2 PROFILES OF PUPILS

**PUPIL:** 1

**GENDER:** Female

**GROUP:** Indian

**AGE:** 12 years

### HOME BACKGROUND:

This girl has four sisters. She is the middle child. Her father is employed as a worker at a shoe factory. The family lives in a council flat in an area near the school. She has attended this particular school since nursery school. The school is within walking distance from her home.

**PUPIL:** 2

**GENDER:** Female

**GROUP:** Indian

**AGE:** 13 years

### HOME BACKGROUND:

There are four children in this family. This pupil is the second child. Her family lives with her paternal grandparents in a semi-detached council cottage. Her father is employed at a local paper mill and her mother works as a shop assistant. She has attended this school since nursery school. The school is within walking distance from her home.

**PUPIL: 3**

**GENDER:** Female

**GROUP:** Black

**AGE:** 14 years

## HOME BACKGROUND:

There are six children in this family. This pupil is the youngest. The family live in a township outside the area designated for the school. Her mother is a domestic worker and an older brother and sister are casual workers. The family shares their home with grandparents and other family members. She has attended the school since grade five. She travels to school by train and bus.

**PUPIL: 4**

**GENDER:** Female

**GROUP:** Black

**AGE:** 13 years

## HOME BACKGROUND:

This girl is one of three children. She is the middle child. The family resides in a township council home outside the area in which the school is situated. Her mother is employed as a factory worker and her father is a labourer in the employ of a building construction company. She has attended this particular school since grade six. She travels by train and bus to the school.

**PUPIL: 5**

**GENDER:** Male

**GROUP:** Indian

**AGE:** 13 years

**HOME BACKGROUND:**

This child is the eldest son in a family of three children. The family live in an outbuilding at their grandparents' council home. His father works at a local paper mill and his mother is unemployed. He has attended this school since nursery school. The school is within walking distance from his home.

**PUPIL: 6**

**GENDER:** Male

**GROUP:** Indian

**AGE:** 13 years

**HOME BACKGROUND:**

This boy is the eldest of two children. Both his parents work at a clothing manufacturing company. The family lives with the paternal grandparents in a semi-detached council home situated in the area of the school. The boy has attended this school since nursery school. He walks to the school as it is situated within walking distance from his home.

**PUPIL: 7**

**GENDER:**    **Male**

**GROUP:**    **Black**

**AGE:**    **14 years**

## HOME BACKGROUND:

This boy is one of five children. He is the fourth child. He has attended the present school since grade five. His mother is a casual worker and his father assists a taxi driver. The family sub-lets a home in the township. This boy travels to school by bus.

**PUPIL: 8**

**GENDER:**    **Male**

**GROUP:**    **Black**

**AGE:**    **15 years**

## HOME BACKGROUND:

This boy is one of three children. His family live with his maternal grandmother in a home in a township outside the designated area for the school. The boy's older brother is studying at a technical college. Both he and his younger brother are in grade seven in the same school. Their mother is employed at a clothing factory. His father is a driver in the employ of a pharmacist. He travels to school by train and bus.

All the pupils are from a lower socio-economic background. The Indian pupils have been attending the school since nursery school. The Black children have been attending the school for two years.

The Indian children live close to the school and the Black children travel to school by bus or train.

## 7.2    THE INTERACTIONAL PROCESS BETWEEN GRADE SEVEN INDIAN AND BLACK PUPILS DURING GROUPWORK

SESSION ONE

In the convening stage of the interpersonal problem-solving group programme, the group facilitator welcomed the group and thanked them for their willingness to participate in the group activities. Members were made to feel comfortable and were told that if they at any time felt uncomfortable with any activity or aspect of the groupwork they should inform the group facilitator of their disquiet either verbally or in writing.

The purpose of the group, improving cross-cultural relationships between Indian and Black pupils in school, was explained in terms of the need to build unity and harmony between the various cultural groups within schools. The group understood the need to improve cross-cultural relationships within the school environment and were prepared to participate in the groupwork sessions. Once the purpose of the group had been accepted and understood, it was hoped that sincerity would develop and that the group would be in a position to freely communicate their thoughts and feelings.

Pupils were able to introduce themselves to the group and choose a partner from a different culture with whom they wished to work during the group sessions. Initially the Black pupils seemed to be reserved and were uncomfortable with communicating and interacting. This was inferred from their inability to express themselves freely

within the group.

*The question that arose here was whether this could be interpreted as a signal that dominance by one group within the classroom existed and was in fact going unnoticed. Was one group participating more freely in the activities of the class and was the lack of participation of the other group being interpreted as lack of cooperation or reservation?*

*This researcher realised after reflection that this would affect the balance of power between groups in any interactional situation as a sense of interconnectedness based on equal status was necessary if social inequalities were to be corrected. It occurred to this researcher that very often a lack of such participation in the activities of the class could be mistaken for shyness on the part of an individual, instead of being attributed to a feeling of 'uncomfortableness' with social interaction. When this goes unnoticed it automatically leads to one group assuming power and domination, be this in communication or in the distribution of responsibilities in the classroom. On reflection this researcher came to the realisation that this could actually be happening without her being aware.*

It was also observed that both the Indian and Black pupils were self-conscious in their mutual interaction, because their initial reactions to their partners were reserved. It became evident that norms and values prevalent in larger society were being reflected within the group, as a tendency to divide themselves according to their respective cultural groups was evident. This clearly indicated that pupils were finding difficulty in relating to each other.

*This made this researcher aware of the need to re-examine whether both groups of*

*pupils were in fact enjoying the same degree of cultural freedom that she had assumed automatically existed in the multicultural classroom.*

At this stage, this group facilitator made the group aware that it was this attitude of not wanting to become involved with those different from ourselves which had resulted in the prevailing climate of group alienation. This attitude created an inability to perceive similarities between groups of individuals. Consequently we need to use this opportunity to change our perceptions so that we see each other not only as members of specific cultural groups, but as human beings, who are accepted and valued for who we are. The realisation that they came from similar backgrounds of cultural isolation resulted in the atmosphere within the group becoming more relaxed.

It was noticeable that group members began to take an interest in what was being said and done. The sharing of specific common background information about peer group experiences developed a better understanding among group members. For the first time the group members perceived the development of a sense of community among themselves which created the initial stage of linking. On observing this reaction, this group facilitator drew the attention of the group to the need to overcome the difficulties of living within closed communities, which have hampered the development of cross-cultural relationships. The need now was to overcome any inhibitions which they might have and to work towards changing the multicultural school environment so that it is conducive to the establishment of more favourable cross-cultural relationship patterns.

Both the Indian and Black pupils were pleasantly surprised to discover that even though their cultures were different they belonged to similar peer groups outside the school. They belonged to sports clubs, dance groups, Sunday School groups and Girl

Guides. The realisation that members of the group possessed similar interests developed a sense of security because they perceived that they could interact with each other competently. This was evident from the way in which they openly discussed their interests.

By enabling the group to divide into Indian/Black pairs, this group facilitator allowed for pupils to focus their attention on each other. This, in turn, developed self-awareness and an awareness of themselves in relation to others in the group. The ability to interrelate created a sense of involvement between members and enabled them to attend and respond to each other. The development of greater involvement between the group members made it possible to proceed with the fun game of finding out three facts about their partners. The creation of involvement among pupils encouraged them to become more trusting of each other. Their willingness to express themselves during the group activity could be observed quite clearly.

The discovery of new information about each other through the fun activity resulted in the Black group members being the first to state that although they had attended classes with their Indian peers since they were in grade five, this was the first time that they had realised how many interests and attitudes they had in common. These pertained to likes and dislikes, such as a preference for certain school subjects and teachers, the types of foods which they preferred, fashion and friends. As a result of discovering that they were not distinctly different from each other but were similar in many respects, the pupils were able to express themselves without the fear of rejection. Consequently they were able to attend and respond to each other in a warm, accepting and comfortable manner. This group facilitator then made pupils aware of their previous lack of involvement and how this had hampered the development of trust. Cultural isolation limited our knowledge about each other and although trust and

acceptance within the group was developing they could still find difficulty in relating to each other.

*This made this researcher aware of the fact that teachers often take it for granted that placing children of different cultures in the same classroom will allow for them to find out about each other. She realised that knowledge constructed in a monocultural context limits involvement and the development of understanding and can therefore not be expected to reflect the social and cultural context in which it was constructed. It is only by participating in the formulation of the social and cultural context that understanding can be developed in a multicultural context.*

The group members agreed that the only solution to overcoming ignorance of each other and the insecurities which this had created between the various cultural groups was to use the opportunity to get to know each other better so that cross-cultural relationships could develop more positively between peers. If they allowed themselves to know each other better it would become clear that many of the insecurities and the distrust within the school population in most instances would prove to be unfounded. We need to allow ourselves to become involved with each other so that greater understanding can develop between individuals from different cultures.

Initially it was clearly evident from observation that some pupils in the group seemed anxious about sharing information about themselves which they would not normally disclose to anyone else. However, encouraged by the eagerness of the other group members who were willing to engage in the activity, the reticent members soon joined in the discussions. This involvement between pupils developed a sense of trust and the confidence to express themselves freely, which was clearly perceptible. This encouraged the development of more positive cross-cultural interactional patterns.

Consequently, it was possible for this group facilitator to draw the group members' attention to the detrimental effects of cultural isolation and how this, in turn, has led to stereotyping those different from themselves. Cultural chauvinism has impacted negatively on cross-cultural relationship formation. Consequently, it is necessary for individuals to willingly become involved with people from other cultures, so that a climate of tolerance and acceptance will be created. Greater involvement with and acceptance of their cultures would make it obvious that there are many similarities among groups. Therefore, the group members agreed that when something positive was said about them, it made them happy and resulted in their wanting to be more involved and consequently knowing each other better. Furthermore, on hearing something positive said about them, Black pupils felt that their Indian peers were honest which led them to believe that an atmosphere of trust, which had previously been lacking, did exist. The Black pupils also stated that before they had become involved they were unaware of the fact that their Indian peers were willing to help and were cooperative. Such cooperation between group members creates a sense of acceptance and appreciation of individuality which obviates anxieties within the group and allows members to feel free and competent to communicate across cultures. Placing the group members in a position which encouraged them to see positive aspects of their peers helped them not only to communicate their willingness and trust in each other but also allowed them to acknowledge and appreciate individuality.

At the end of the session pupils were confident enough to express the feeling that before the groupwork they had felt different from each other because they had seen each other in terms of their cultural grouping and not as individuals. Once past misconceptions had been overcome, they discovered that they shared many things in common. For example, the girls were interested in current fashions, while the boys enjoyed going to the beach and playing soccer. It was evident from their discussions

that these common interests had helped to create a sense of bonding between group members which enabled them to develop mutual trust.

**7.3.1    Analysis of group session one according to the expected outcomes**

| THEME | CATEGORY | ANALYSIS |
|---|---|---|
| Involvement | * Linking/connecting | * Willingness to choose a partner from a different culture.<br>* Expression of feelings that they no longer feel different from one another.<br>* Bonding between groups - willingness to work together |
| Acceptance | * Warmth/security | * Development of a sense of community-belonging to similar peer groups<br>* Positive comments about partners-acceptance and appreciation for individuality. |
| Understanding | * Expression of self<br>* Individuality<br>* Social interaction | * Sharing background information - greater sense of understanding<br>* Discovery of new information-common interests and attitudes |

| Communica-tion | * Ability to attend to<br>* Positive human interaction<br>* Overcome anxieties | * Taking an interest and sharing in specific information<br>* Responding positively to what was said<br>* Positive comments - overcome cultural chauvinism |
|---|---|---|
| Stereotyping/<br>Sensitivity/<br>Respect | * Ability to respond<br>* Cognitions | * Surprise at belonging to similar peer groups<br>* New information - awareness of self in relation to others |

SESSION TWO

Participation in the fun game, in which members of the group identified with animals, led to the breaking down of rigid boundaries between different cultural groups. This resulted in the development of more positive contact between group members. Further, a feeling of commonality was achieved as a result of the fun game. In identifying with animals the group was able to assume new roles which encouraged the emergence of each individual's uniqueness. The group members were able to express themselves freely as identification with the characteristics of an animal overcome feelings of insecurity which hampered self-expression. It was evident that greater involvement between the group members developed which allowed for sincere interpersonal contacts and created an atmosphere in which trust could emerge. The group appeared to have no difficulty in adopting an animal persona to express their thoughts and feelings. It was evident from the observation of the group members' reactions that this equal status interaction obviated any past insecurities. Positive aspects such as strengths and the unique aspects of each individual's character emerged. Comparing themselves to animals helped the pupils to recognise new aspects of themselves and others. It was clearly evident from their reactions that these

discoveries led to more effective interactional patterns between the group members. The creation of this awareness changed the group members' perceptions about each other. It was apparent from the group members' behaviour that they were able to engage in more positive interaction, as in many instances they identified with the same animal, for example, a bird. Both Black and Indian group members found that they enjoyed music, singing, liked colourful clothing and did not like to be isolated. This enabled this group facilitator to point out to the group that if they allowed themselves to become involved with each other, they would perceive that they were not different from each other. They would also realise that the assumption that one group was superior to the other was incorrect. Making pupils aware of their equality through equal status participation within the group changed the perception of Indian pupils that their Black peers were prone to violent behaviour patterns. By identifying with a rabbit and seeing themselves as beautiful, timid and loving, Indian pupils were able to see their Black peers from a different point of view. This shift in perspective allowed the group to identify with each òther. This led to an atmosphere of security which increased the potential for understanding and self-expression.

*The consciousness-raising nature of this aspect of group activity instilled in this researcher an awareness of the restrictive policy of teaching. The need exists to look beyond the classroom in order to gain greater and clearer understanding of the children that one is expected to educate. Becoming aware that groups of pupils are prone to particular behavioural characteristics made her reflect on the differing reactions of the group and how her own selective perceptions could unconsciously shape her cultural preferences. She now recognised the need to become more open · to and observant of interactions in the classroom that reflect inequality.* ·

Once a secure group atmosphere had been created, feelings of inadequacy were

overcome and both groups of pupils were enthusiastic about telling about the environments from which they came. This was a clear indication that trust between pupils had developed. Although both cultural groups came from similar socio-economic environments, it became apparent that cross-cultural contact was limited to the school context. Each cultural group appeared to be unaware of how the other experienced the environment in which they lived. Consequently, they were surprised to discover that the upsurge of violence in the country was not limited to any one area. Indian pupils expressed surprise that their Black peers were also fearful of the escalating violence within their townships and as a result of this increased knowledge were able to connect both mentally and emotionally with their Black peers. This was because they discovered that Black pupils had the same fears which they had. This group facilitator informed them that our deficiencies of knowledge and understanding about those different from ourselves arise from a lack of desire to be involved with those different from ourselves. It is dangerous to make judgements based on an ignorance of culture or lifestyle. Such assumptions result in unfounded misunderstandings, fears and rejections of those different from us. This leads not only to an inability to accept responsibility for actions and the attribution of blame but also to further social distancing between cultures.

It initially appeared that Indian pupils did not identify with the experiences of their Black peers because they believed that their fears were isolated. They later realised that many of the things which were disturbing, such as the violence in the country, were also disturbing to their Black peers. This group facilitator was able to make pupils aware that their inability to communicate across the cultural divide often led to feelings of insecurity and misunderstandings in interpersonal relationships. This inability to become involved deprived people from getting to know and understand each other and this led to negative perceptions of other people. These negative

perceptions contributed to attribution of blame and encouraged the tendency to thoughtlessly attribute violent and aggressive behaviour to all Black pupils in conflict situations. Black and Indian pupils were made aware of these reactions and acknowledged that it was unfair to label groups of pupils, when in many instances both groups were equally to blame for inter-cultural misunderstandings which occurred. Furthermore, as a result of the development of a greater cross-cultural awareness, the group stated that although there might be differences between individuals, this could not be attributed to one group being in a more privileged position than the other.

*This researcher's unintentional differing reactions made it necessary for ther to become more open to and observant of interactions that reflect inequalities.*

The forum for involvement in human interaction which the group provided helped both groups of pupils to connect with each other. The ability to identify with their peers from different cultures made pupils feel competent and allowed them to view themselves more positively in their relationships within the group. It was noticeable that this allowed for a more cohesive group atmosphere. At this stage, the group was able to agree that Indian and Black pupils could learn a great deal from each other. This knowledge could be obtained by means of cooperative interaction and acceptance of those who are culturally different. This group facilitator made the group aware of the necessity to treat each other with respect and understanding. This would reduce the distance between the groups and would result in competent interaction between individuals. The ability to identify with peers from other cultures made the development of a positive self-perspective possible and enhanced self-worth. The perception of similarities between themselves and their peers made pupils feel good about themselves. This helped to develop a more positive sense of self-esteem.

**7.3.2    Analysis of group session two according to expected outcomes**

| THEME | CATEGORY | ANALYSIS |
|---|---|---|
| Involvement | * Connecting<br><br>* Equal status | * Commonality in identifying with animals - positive experiencing of contact<br><br>* Identifying through animals - equal status participation - obviates past insecurities |
| Acceptance | * Identifying/ connecting | * Knowledge - not isolated in fears<br><br>* Sharing fears - development of competence to interact<br><br>* Ability to identify with each other concerning information shared - increased self-worth - self-esteem |
| Understanding | * Self-esteem<br><br>* Human interaction | * Comparisons through animals - new information about self and others - change of perceptions<br><br>* Character description - greater self-expression and understanding - increased self-esteem<br><br>* Knowledge - attribution of blame results in conflict - more positive interaction. |
| Communica-tion | * Self-expression | * Freedom of expression through new roles - emergence of individual uniqueness |

| Stereotyping/ Sensitivity/ Respect | * Rigid boundaries<br>* Limited contact<br>* Inadequacies | * Freedom of expression - change in social perceptions - sensitive to feelings of others<br>* Surprise at emotional and mental connections to similar fears - change of perceptions - more sensitive |
|---|---|---|
| Trust | * Insecurities/distrust<br>* Self expression<br>* Communicating warm and comfortable environment | * Visually engrossed in interaction - sincere interpersonal contact<br>* Enthusiasm to want to share information about environments<br>* Similar interests - awareness of being distinctively different<br>* Willingness to engage in self-expression<br>* Insecurity and distrust in participation overcome by eagerness of others to share information<br>* Visible confidence in sharing information |

## SESSION THREE

The fun activity 'Secrets' allowed pupils to become involved with each other. The sharing of more personal information through cooperative interaction helped to determine the level of group cohesion or connectedness and the degree of trust which had so far developed between the group members who came from monocultural home environments.

*Segregation of groups can be attributed to the segregated neighbourhoods where friends are formed before coming to school. In this respect it has been observed that teachers do not see it as part of their job to intervene in creating cross-cultural friendships. This reaffirms the need to challenge misconceptions that children automatically connect to form positive cross-cultural friendships. This researcher recognised the neccessity of intervening to promote and support integration between the cultures.*

The fact that all group members were willing to participate in the fun activity indicated that trust had developed among the group members and that they were prepared to communicate their thoughts and feelings. This provided for the development of more positive emotional feelings (bonding) towards each other. This narrowing of the gap between members also indicated that group acceptance was in progress and that members did not feel inhibited about cross-cultural communications.

Observation made it clear that the group was more comfortable with sharing personal information. There was consensus among pupils that their willingness to become involved encouraged improved communication across the cultural divide and fostered understanding. It was also evident that the mood of the group was both happy and relaxed.

This willingness to communicate across cultural differences could be seen as an indication that group members were comfortable within themselves and with each other and that a sense of group identity was developing. It was clear that the group members were secure enough to progress in their interpersonal relationships. The disclosure of personal information during the fun game centred on likes and dislikes, things which they had done as children, as well as the group members' preference for

and dislike of certain teachers. These disclosures were of a similar nature and consequently variations in opinions were imperceptible.

When the pupils discussed their life worlds they were again able to connect with each other. Indian pupils were surprised to discover that they had a great deal in common with their Black peers. They discovered that in Black families grandparents often lived with and took care of their grandchildren while parents worked. Consequently the group was able to visualise how their peers from a different culture lived. The perspective gained about the similarities between the life worlds of their peers helped the group members to progress to a greater understanding of their peers from different cultures. This resulted in more positive feelings developing among group members. Individuals could now identify with each other and see that they had interests and experiences in common. This group facilitator drew the attention of the group to these similarities and to the need to change negative social cognition of other cultures, which had developed because of ignorance or a lack of knowledge resulting from living in monocultural home environments. The members agreed that greater understanding and acceptance of those different from themselves would develop as a result of cross-cultural communication and by working together. Increased knowledge about other cultures will increase the potential for the development of cross-cultural friendships.

*In this respect this researcher came to the realisation that as the class teacher, she too would need to explore her own perceptions and experiences as, like the groups of children in the class, educators too had been part of an oppressive socialisation system. Denying this would merely aggravate the development of new insights into the teaching of culturally diverse children. Developing an increased consciousness of the dilemmas facing various cultures in the classroom creates the need for teachers*

*to become more reflective and challenging in a more effective system of education.*
*While encouraging children to recognise diversity as an asset in developing new ways*
*of thinking and feeling, as an educator, this researcher too need to become more*
*flexible and question taking things for granted that were appropriate only within a*
*monocultural classroom. For an understanding of other cultures to develop there is*
*a need to become more reflective about present practices.*

An understanding of different cultures will lead to greater tolerance which will result in more positive experiences of cross-cultural relationships. If more positive meanings are attributed to cross-cultural relationships patterns, the potential for cross-cultural conflict will decrease.

The group learned how the group members spent their afternoons away from school. Indian pupils spent some time completing household chores after which they watched television, visited friends or the library and then completed their schoolwork. Black group members had more household chores to complete and less time for their schoolwork and other social activities. Indian group members empathised with their Black peers because of their academic handicap, when they discovered that Black pupils had to travel long distances to get to and from school. Consequently, Black pupils had less time to spend on their schoolwork. When the Indian group members asked why they did not choose to attend schools nearer to their homes, the group learned that Black pupils believed that former exclusively Indian schools offered a better quality of education and the opportunity to learn English, which was necessary if they wished to study further. If they attended schools in their townships, they would be disadvantaged. The group members listened intently and were engrossed in the discussion, which made interpretation and discussion possible. It was observed that the discussion exploring why the Black pupils wanted to attend an integrated school,

resulted in a great understanding between group members. This discussion also resulted in the emergence of empathy among group members. Consequently, mutual respect and tolerance evolved within the group.

*Upon reflection it occurred to this researcher that it was not sufficient that respect and tolerance for diversity be fostered among pupils alone. There was the need for her to become aware of her own prejudices so that she would be equipped to deal with the prejudices of children within the classroom. Changing cognition was not a one-way process. The need existed for those in authority who, like herself, have had limited exposure to other cultures outside the classroom, to become self-reflective. In utilising the group as a vehicle of change, she too had come to the realisation of the need to re-examine her attitudes and not merely take for granted that such attitudes reflected no signs of discriminatory patterns of behaviour. This self-reflection helped to add to the conceptualisation of the issue.*

The opportunity to compare and acknowledge emotional experiences given to the group members allowed similarities between cultures to emerge. During the group discussions Indian and Black group members expressed feelings of sadness at the death of family members or even pets. The happiest moments in the lives of Black pupils were as a result of being able to live with both of their parents who had come to find work nearer to their homes or of being reunited with 'lost relatives'. Indian pupils' happiest moments were as a result of having a surprise birthday party, going on holiday, getting presents and getting together with family members for a day of fun at each other's homes or the beach. This group facilitator could at this stage of the discussion point out to the group that irrespective of the culture to which its members belonged, they all experienced similar emotions and had similar difficulties to overcome.

The emotional experiences which the group members shared made them aware that they were very similar and that the stereotyping of individuals according to culture or race was wrong. The discovery that they shared similar emotions encouraged the development of respect and tolerance of differences. The group members realised that although they were from different cultural groups, they were thinking and feeling individuals and it was wrong to categorise people. Through the creation of understanding and communication, social cognition among group members was increased and perceptions about each other were changed.

### 7.3.3     Analysis of group session three according to expected outcomes

| THEME | CATEGORY | ANALYSIS |
|---|---|---|
| Involvement | * Self disclosure | * Disclosure of personal information - cooperation interaction - improved level of cohesion / connectedness |
| Acceptance | * Cohesiveness | * Positive bonding - telling about 'secrets' - not inhibited |

| Understanding | * Belonging<br>* Empathy | * Disclosure of personal information - greater sense of understanding<br>* Increased communication about lifeworlds - increased knowledge - increased understanding - connect with one another<br>* Increased knowledge about how time after school spent - ability to mentally visualise hardships - empathise |
|---|---|---|
| Communica-tion | * Similar emotions and difficulties | * Comfortable - in sharing personal information - happy and relaxed<br>* Communication on lifeworlds - emergency of commonalities<br>* Discovery of experiencing similar emotions - similar difficulties to overcome |

| Stereotyping/ Sensitivity/ Respect | * Similarities<br>* Social cognitions | * Relaxed/comfortable - happy in communicating across cultures - positive group identities fostered<br>* Ability to mentally visualise life-worlds emergence of similarities<br>* Changing negative social cognitions - filling in gaps in cognitions about lifeworlds caused by monocultural environments - mentally and emotionally recognise hardships<br>* Able to mentally visualise life-worlds - emergence of similarities mutual respect and telerance for differences<br>* Changed social perceptions - able to perceive one another as thinking, feeling individuals as opposed to categories of people |
|---|---|---|
| Trust | * Attend and respond to | * Willingness to tell about personal information - 'secrets'<br>* Prepared to communicate thoughts and feelings |

SESSION FOUR

Group involvement in the fun game 'My Name', developed a spirit of collaboration because the group was able to discuss both the positive and negative aspects of their

names. Collaboration allowed members to disclose what they did not like about their names. Consequently, they were able to build on each other's strengths and disclose aspects of their personal lives which might not have been possible previously. Confidence gained through collaboration allowed for both physical and mental involvement. Concentrating on the task at hand helped the pupils to relate to each other and resulted in an appreciation of individuality. The discussion about the negative and positive aspects of their names revealed that neither cultural group was totally satisfied with their names and both groups found that their culturally determined names caused difficulty. Members of both the cultural groups were also known by more than one name. One was the name by which they were known at home and the other by which they were known at school. Black pupils found that their Indian peers had difficulty in pronouncing their names, while Indian pupils found that their names were incorrectly abbreviated in conversation. Both groups of pupils felt that they should have been given one name which was a more English-sounding name. This group facilitator realised that she needed to establish whether pupils did identify strongly with their cultural heritage. It was established that both groups of pupils did identify with their respective cultures. They observed and practised all the norms and values of their cultures. However, they felt that it would be more appropriate to have English names as they enjoyed modern western fashion, music, dance and films. It seemed that while pupils still believed in their respective cultural values and possessed strong cultural identities, they preferred to be identified socially as being more westernised. The logical consequence of these similarities in attitudes was that Indian and Black pupils were able identify socially with each other. This group facilitator drew the group members' attention to the unanimity of their thinking and feeling. They were surprised to discover that the reasons given by both cultural groups for their preference for their English names were the same. After this discussion, pupils agreed that it was easier to pronounce their English names and they preferred

these names. Collaboration between pupils enabled them to disclose positive and negative feelings about themselves and developed a sense of respect and sensitivity towards individual thinking and feeling. The sharing of emotions increased individuals' knowledge about their peers and at the same time revealed similarities in thinking and feeling. Sharing personal aspects of the self enhanced the group members' understanding and acceptance of each other. The progress which the group members had made in interpersonal socialisation could clearly be observed. They were able to connect with each other and experience cross-cultural contact more positively as a result of filling in the gaps in their social cognition of each other.

During the activity which necessitated that group members comment on the characteristics of their partners, it was clear from these comments that greater sensitivity towards each other had developed. All the group members expressed positive feelings and attitudes about their partners from a different culture. There was consensus that prior to group involvement, individuals were unaware of the positive characteristics of their partners. Once contact between group members had been established, previously unknown characteristics surfaced. Black pupils found their Indian peers to be helpful because they were prepared to lend them stationery, books and explain schoolwork to them. Indian pupils commented that when they communicated with their Black peers they now felt more comfortable than they had previously. The fact that both groups of pupils could depend on their peers for help, illustrated that trust between the two cultures had developed. The positive descriptions of each other indicated that pupils were becoming more appreciative and accepting of each other. At this stage it was evident from observation that a safe environment had been created. This environment, which was devoid of anxieties and fears, made it possible to explore attitudes and feelings. Therefore, it was possible to use the group as a socialising agent to overcome previously held prejudicial attitudes which had

resulted from cultural isolation. Increased involvement allowed for the formation of more appropriate cross-cultural socialisation patterns. Consequently it was possible for this group facilitator to explain the formation of friendship patterns to the group in terms of the need for mutual rights and obligations. The group was made aware of the give and take in relationships. This group facilitator emphasised that without such mutuality no relationship could be expected to grow. The reason for this was that without an element of basic trust any relationship would result in unfounded misunderstandings which would be detrimental to the development of greater involvement and understanding. Pupils agreed that they could no longer generalise about the characteristics of groups of individuals as this led to misconceptions. They recognised the necessity of becoming involved in cross-cultural friendships so that they could experience such relationships for themselves instead of being told how such relationships had been or are being experienced. The group agreed that after they had experienced cross-cultural contact positively, they saw new aspects of themselves in relation to their peers. The feelings among group members had changed and the positive experiences of cross-cultural contact enabled them to attribute more positive meaning to these experiences.

*On reaching this point in the groupwork, the realisation of the consciousness raising aspect of this activity brought this researcher to an inner awareness that today the teacher is no longer a person who merely imparts knowledge but is also in the process of being educated and that education should be viewed as a joint process of cognitive growth. Educating and being educated are a joint responsibility in our multicultural society if diversity is to be respected. Therefore, for empowerment of children of all cultures to be successful, it becomes necessary to remember that relationships of empowerment occur through the cooperative construction of social reality and as the class teacher, this researcher needs to become more involved in*

*what goes on in the classroom. She needs to extend her perceptions beyond merely imparting knowledge and a being able to identify unaddressed issues that may be disempowering one group of children while benefiting another. The consciousness of this problem now needs to take on a new personal dimension and it can no longer be taken for granted that the problem will sort itself out.*

The fact that group members were accepting and trusting of each other created a safe environment for self-disclosure. The ability of pupils to share both negative and positive aspects about their names demonstrated that they were competent to engage in more positive interactional patterns. The emphasis placed on positive characteristics of their peers demonstrated that the group was more in control of the situation and was able to engage in equal status contact. This could be used to combat prejudicial attitudes so that the group could work together to find solutions of the problem presented to the group. Encouraging group members to think about solutions to these problems made it clear to them that they were not isolated in their frustration and that other individuals were experiencing similar problems which had to be overcome. Being required to work together helped correct the gaps in cognition relating to thinking and feeling and created a sense of belonging which enabled group members to identify with each other about similar issues.

The creation of the ability to identify with each other about similar problems made it possible for the group to discuss and find solutions to common problems which were hindering the formation of more positive cross-cultural relationships. The group identity and trust which had developed allowed the group members to express their feelings and views freely without fear of ridicule. The creation of an arena in which to test beliefs provided a forum in which the group could communicate their suggestions to solve problems which were experienced. This had not been feasible

previously because of social distancing between cultures. This group facilitator perceived that the group had progressed and drew the attention of the group to the necessity of even-handed assessment of the behaviour of the cultural groups when attempting to find solutions to problems between the groups. Put more simply, different sets of rules could not be applied to different cultural groups. Therefore, every individual should accept responsibility for his or her actions and develop a sense of responsibility for themselves and others. The group agreed that if accountability among peers was developed, a great deal of cross-cultural conflict presently being experienced within the desegregated school environment could be averted because greater understanding would develop among individuals.

The insights gained during the above discussion made the group realise that they had similar difficulties which had to be overcome. After the group members realised that they were not isolated in their frustration, greater involvement among the group members could be observed because they were all eager to participate in finding solutions to the problem presented. This problem was posed as follows:

*A school presents a problem: pupils from different cultures in a school do not get along. It is important that they should get along for the future of the country : members to give positive suggestions and plans.*

The Indian pupils felt that their Black peers needed to adjust their behavioural patterns. One of the main reasons for the conflict between the Black and Indian groups could be attributed to the language problem. The Indian pupils maintained that Black pupils should be discouraged from communicating in their own language as this created suspicion among Indian pupils, who were not familiar with isiZulu and might assume that Black pupils were gossiping about them. Furthermore, it was suggested

that in cross-cultural company every effort should be made to communicate in a language which could be understood by all. This did not imply that Black pupils should not be allowed to communicate in their own language but merely that they should refrain from doing so in cross-cultural company.

The Black pupils in the group initially disagreed with this, as they felt that they were entitled to communicate in their own language. If Indian pupils wanted to know what was being said they should ask. This resulted in general disagreement as the Indian pupils felt that they would not be provided with accurate explanations. At this point this group facilitator made the group members aware that if pupils insisted on speaking their home languages, they should take note that the Indian pupils also spoke a variety of languages such as Gujerati, Tamil and Hindi and that insistence on using their own languages would exacerbate the potential for conflict and misunderstanding. This discussion made the Black pupils aware that it would be advantageous to communicate in a common language which could be understood by members of the different groups because conflict resulting from misunderstandings would be averted.

The Black pupils in the group suggested that they should be encouraged to participate more fully in school activities. They felt that both in and outside of the classroom responsibilities were unfairly distributed. An example they cited was that in the classroom Indian pupils were appointed class monitors and were responsible for the collection and distribution of books. Responsible positions such as representation on the prefect body or appointments as team captains were the preserve of the Indian pupils. The Indian pupils felt that the fact that they were originally at the school and the majority of the school population was Indian were decisive factors when decisions to hand out responsibility were taken. This group facilitator reiterated that society was in the process of changing. Since the school population was no longer monocultural,

the fact that one cultural group was numerically superior could not circumvent the necessity for an even-handed accommodation of diverse cultures within the school. The Indian pupils should consider what their expectations would be if they were in the same situation as their Black peers were. How would they expect the problems which were under discussion to be resolved? The Indian pupils could visualise the change in position and agreed that it would be wrong to expect them to adapt to the existing order of a school where the monocultural nature of the institution would have changed. They felt that it would be more equitable if the school adapted an even-handed approach and modified the school rules so that they were treated as equals and fully-fledged members of the school population. It would be wrong to expect the school to provide exclusively for one culture. The group members were in agreement that they needed to change. They should be given the opportunity to air their grievances and should be encouraged to participate in role-playing where cultural identity is reversed so that they can see themselves from a different perspective. The Indian pupils suggested that the school should involve pupils actively in a cross-cultural awareness programme so that a greater understanding of cultural differences would develop. Although pupils from different cultural groups came into contact with each other they had little or no understanding of why individuals from different cultures sometimes behaved in a particular manner. The fact that Indian pupils often accused Black pupils of talking and laughing too loudly serves as an illustration of this lack of understanding. However, if Indian pupils knew a little more about Black culture, they would realise that this was a normal part of Black culture. For example, the assumption could be made that a person who spoke quietly was sowing dissension or plotting something untoward. A greater understanding of cultural differences could obviate problems.

*This researcher came to realise that even though she was able to comprehend and*

*communicate in isi-Zulu, this did not necessarily mean that she was culturally*
*sophisticated. To become culturally aware meant that a knowledge of the culture had*
*to be attained. The only way this researcher perceives this happening is by greater*
*cross-cultural involvement through observation and communication. If children of*
*other cultures are to be understood, then the need exists for greater cultural*
*awareness.*

At this point, this group facilitator focussed the groups' attention on the fact that reciprocity was necessary to build relationships. Individuals must be accommodated and they could not be expected to assimilate or accept the behaviour of another culture. Therefore, no culture should be allowed to impose its cultural values and norms on another culture within a multicultural context. If respect and tolerance for diversity are to be maintained, consideration must be given to all cultures within a system. This will ensure that individuals will engage in more positive human interaction. Relationships entail both rights and obligations, which imply that the concept of 'give and take' must form part of positive relationships. If this is not borne in mind, social distancing and the resultant conflict will not be averted.

*By engaging pupils in action that required the analysis of situations that reflected the*
*actual problems presented by the school, pupils were empowered to become more*
*involved in finding their own solutions through joint construction of knowledge,*
*thereby increasing responsibility for their own behaviour. However, in empowering*
*pupils to finding solutions to their problems, this researcher came to see the need for*
*her to assume a different role from that which she is at present accustomed to. She*
*needs to redefine her role as teacher and become more involved·in action in an effort*
*to bring about a more comfortable pattern of interaction in the classroom. This*
*would require constant reflection on her own actions and solutions to problems be*

*found. In order to create harmony, she realised that she would need to be more positively involved and that such involvement should exhibit the necessary enthusiasm so that more positive experiencing would occur. Changing her attitude to what is required of a teacher would allow for her to become more directly involved in the action or problem being presented. She will therefore be in a position to change attitudes and empower all pupils equally.*

The group members were able to reach consensus on this issue and agreed that both cultural groups had to become more responsible, not only towards themselves but also to others. Consequently, it was necessary to recognise the different cultural groups who were represented in the school. This group facilitator then made the group aware that a prerequisite for the development of a social conscience was individual accountability. In the absence of accountability, no responsibility could develop. Pupils had to take into consideration the negative consequences of behaviour which provoked and sanctioned attribution of blame to others. The acceptance of responsibility would provide solutions to problems which would obviate future conflict. The group members agreed unanimously that in order to avoid conflict situations, pupils had to accept responsibility for themselves and their behaviour towards others. Conflict need not become violent or aggressive if individuals use their ability to resolve conflict by accepting responsibility.

### 7.3.4    Analysis of group session four according to expected outcomes

| THEME | CATEGORY | ANALYSIS |
|---|---|---|
| Involvement | * Collaboration<br><br>* Sharing feelings | * Similar experiencing of positive and negative aspects of names<br>* Building on each other's strenghts - confidence to become mentally and physically involved - appreciation for individuality<br>* Recognition of need for greater cross-cultural involvement |

| Acceptance | * Social consciousness<br>* Belonging<br>* Social distancing<br>* Responsibility | * Willingness to help individuals from another culture - more appreciative and accepting of others<br>* Emphasis of positive characteristics - made to feel more in control of the situation - emergence of equal status acceptance<br>* Growing closer - ability to test beliefs and communicate experience without reservations<br>* Acceptance of need to modify school rules - acceptance of diversity<br>* Need for equal distribution of responsibilities - willingness to share |

| Understanding | * Identifying<br>* Collaboration | * Self comparisons - ability to identify with own culture as well as socially identify<br>* Increased knowledge about self and others - discovery of similarities in thinking and feeling<br>* Increased accountability - acceptance of the need to accept individual responsibility for own actions |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Communica-tion | * Attitudes<br>* Competence | * Communicating feelings - gaps in social cognitions filled<br>* Sharing both negative and positive aspects of self-development of competence - not distinctively different |
| Stereotyping/<br>Sensitivity/<br>Respect | * Prejudice<br>* Closed relationships | * Through collaboration development of respect and sensitivity - positive comments on feelings and attitudes - recognition of diversity<br>* Willingness to exchange cultural roles - break down of rigid boundaries |

| Trust | * Insecurities | * Willingness to communicate in common language in cross-cultural company |
|---|---|---|
| | | * Willingness to assist each other - acceptance of the need to give and take in relationships |
| | | * Able to freely express themselves - no fear at ridicule |

## SESSION FIVE

The fun game, in which members stood in a circle and held hands with a member who was not next to them, while trying to incorporate the member next to them into the circle, took place in an atmosphere of friendly cooperation. It was noticeable that the group members were completely involved with each other irrespective of the difference in cultures. The laughter and enthusiasm with which the activity was conducted indicated that physical and emotional integration had taken place and that cross-cultural contact was being experienced positively.

The attention of the group members was drawn to the fact that cross-cultural contact could be experienced positively outside of the group, if pupils would follow the rule of reciprocity in other situations at school and in society. It was necessary for the group to understand that we share our environment with other individuals and consequently need to consider how our actions will affect significant others. If others perceive our actions to be innocuous their reaction to us will be positive, but if such actions are perceived to be damaging to a person or a group of people, it is likely that these negative reactions could result in aversion or even conflict. In interacting with our environment we must become more sensitive to the needs and feelings of others

so that we can become more trusting of each other. At this stage this group facilitator took the opportunity to again emphasise that we live in a society which is multicultural and that in order to adjust to this environment as adults, pupils had to learn how to identify with their peers from different cultures.

The level of group cohesiveness created by the pro-social activity of the fun game not only encouraged the development of more positive cross-cultural human interactional patterns but also created a sense of self-worth among group members. The emotional display of laughter made it evident that pupils felt good about themselves. Furthermore, by complying with the rules of the game, the group displayed that they were able to obey rules and accept that the rules of the game were equally applicable to all the group members irrespective of the race or culture to which they belonged. This display of cross-cultural tolerance indicated that the group was becoming more responsible in their behaviour towards themselves as well as to other group members. At this stage, this group facilitator compared the status of cross-cultural contact before group remediation to that which was taking place now. Working together and experiencing more positive contact made it possible for the group to attribute more positive meanings to cross-cultural involvement. By transcending environmental perceptions pupils were able to experience cross-cultural contact personally and no longer had to rely on preconceived notions or on what other people said. This allowed for the development of individual independence among the group members. This resulted in the group agreeing that it was incorrect to form social perceptions about those with whom its members had no or very limited social contact. The group members realised that it was necessary for individuals to be receptive to involvement so that cross-cultural understanding could develop.

*This researcher had to acknowledge at this point that, being human it was possible*

*that she tended to bring into the classroom her own cultural perspectives, and that misconceptions and stereotypes could therefore influence how a message was put forward. Because the act of teaching requires constant communication, she needs to reflect on her personal values and identity so that she can help pupils from cultures different from hers to develop and maintain their own strong cultural identities while still being able to relate positively to other cultures. It was necessary for her in interacting with a diversity of cultures to be aware that she does not automatically assimilate those cultures with hers.*

The ability to subordinate interests and follow the rules which applied to the fun game helped the group members to build equal status participation and also contributed to the development of more positive self-images. These experiences helped pupils to identify with their peers of other cultures. A climate conducive to pro-social involvement was created and sufficient understanding had developed for pupils to be confident and willing to test their values in relation to other cultures. This could be inferred because pupils no longer exhibited verbal or non-verbal cues which indicated that they did not want to discuss unique aspects relating to their cultures. Instead excitement and enthusiasm were expressed and all the group members were keen to represent their relevant cultural groups. Encouragement of the group members to discuss their various cultures created greater involvement and understanding between them. They were also made aware of the fact that they no longer lived in monocultural enclaves within society. Instead an awareness of cultural diversity was created and pupils were given opportunities to talk about more intimate cultural habits and customs. Black pupils told how they celebrated specific cultural occasions. They discussed the wearing of animal skin bracelets which symbolised that a religious ceremony had been observed, the need to pay lobola, which as in the case of dowry, is payment which relates to marriage, and why it was necessary to shave their hair in

times of mourning. Much to the surprise of their Indian peers they were able to identify with Indian customs such as the wearing of a bracelet made of string to symbolise the celebration of a religious occasion, the payment of some kind of dowry at marriage ceremonies and the shaving off of hair to signify mourning. Before they became involved in the interpersonal problem-solving group the pupils were unaware of these similarities in their traditions.

The opportunity given to the group to discuss their particular cultural habits and customs increased cognitive awareness of different cultures and highlighted similarities between cultures. This provided an opportunity for this group facilitator to make the group aware of the effects of living in monocultural environments. Significant among these effects is the limitation of social cognition about those different from ourselves which may unconsciously have prejudiced us against those with whom we were uninvolved. This isolation may have served a positive purpose in preserving cultural values. Learning more about those who are different from us need not confuse cultural identity but should be seen as a means to adapt to the multicultural character of society in South Africa. Those who do not wish to reject their cultural roots need not do so. The group members realised that it was necessary to work together to form a unified whole and agreed that stereotyping of different cultural groups or forming generalisations about them did not enhance our unique cultural values. These prejudices impacted negatively on cross-cultural relationships in a country which still had to build unity among its people. Agreement was reached that it was necessary for pupils to look beyond their home environments so that unity could be achieved. Pupils had to see themselves as part of a larger multicultural society.

Pupils discussed the various kinds of food which were peculiar to their cultures.

Indian pupils told about the custom of making sweets at home and how time-consuming this was. Black pupils were able to compare this to the traditional dishes which were associated with their culture and which were just as time-consuming to prepare. These traditional foods, according to both Black and Indian pupils, were shared by family and friends on special occasions. This seemed to capture the attention of the group and it was suggested that each group of pupils make some type of traditional food which they should bring for the group to see and taste. The development of this mutual interest among group members seemed to change perceptions between pupils. It could be inferred from the group members' desire to share traditional food that they were growing closer to each other and were also more trusting. This increased emotional bonding between group members allowed for a sense of community to develop. The creation of this feeling of tolerance and appreciation for diversity could have important implications for future interactional patterns between cross-cultural groups. The ability to accept and experience different aspects of each others' cultures implied that the self-worth of group members had increased. The increase in self-worth led to an enhancement of self-esteem, which facilitated the development of identification between cultures. Positive self-esteem allows for equal status interaction between individuals from different cultures. The ability of the members of the cross-cultural peer group to interact and identify with each other will enable them to serve as an adolescent reference group within a multicultural society. The positive interaction between the group members may also be seen as a manifestation of the willingness of individuals to subordinate their own interests to that of the group as a whole. This type of cooperation will allow for the development of unity and harmony between cultures. Pupils acknowledged that they had gained valuable understanding and knowledge which had helped to change their stereotyped perceptions of each other. They could also acknowledge and appreciate the similarities and differences which existed between cultures. This, in turn, ensured

the development of respect and tolerance for diversity. Prejudices and stereotypes resulting from living within isolated cultural environments could be overcome and more responsible behaviour patterns between groups could be developed.

*Participating in a process of constructing knowledge allows for the challenging of that knowledge. Therefore commitment to active social participation in the construction of knowledge can create the need to change stereotyped ideas and allows for the commitment to social change because we are in a position to 'see' diverse social as well as cultural perspectives at first hand. In rejecting the status quo in the school, it became necessary for pupils to experience the construction of knowledge for themselves. By becoming reflective concerning decision-making and engaging in personal action, transformation within the school can become a reality.*

*This researcher was in a position to observe that instilling human values in children did create change. However for her to be effective within a multicultural context she would need to reflect on her own values, norms and assumptions and what they meant to her. She now realises* that *she rarely, or never previously had engaged in this type of reflection. She would now need to participate in the construction of this knowledge to become more culturally democratic so as to empower herself to participate constructively in a democratic South Africa.*

**7.3.5    Analysis of group session five according to expected outcomes**

| THEME | CATEGORY | ANALYSIS |
|---|---|---|
| Involvement | * Cooperative interaction<br>* Cohesiveness | * Evidence of friendly environment - excitement, laughter and enthusiasm - positive physical and emotional integration |

| Acceptance | * Collaboration | * Positive experiencing of pro-social activity - increased selfworth<br><br>* Increase selfworth - feeling of security - willingness to each other's cultures |
|---|---|---|
| Understanding | * Equal application of rules<br><br>* Subordination of interests | * Acceptance that rules of the game are equally applicable<br><br>* Exhibition of responsible behaviour in following rules - ability to transcend environmental perceptions<br><br>* Engaging in equal status participation - positive image of self in relation to others - identify with others |
| Communica-tion | * Cultural isolation | * Acceptance of the need to extend perceptions beyond immediate environment - existence of multi-cultural society |

| Stereotyping/ Sensitivity/ Respect | * Emotional sensitivity<br>* Tolerance<br>* Respect for indivuality<br>* Equal status | * Acceptance of cultural diversity - ability to talk about intimate cultural habits<br>* Surprise at discovering similarities in tradition - sensitivity and respect for diversity<br>* Identification in similarities - positively identify - increased self-esteem |
|---|---|---|
| Trust | * Bonding | * Desire to share traditional foods - overcome misconceptions and insecurities |

SESSION SIX

During the initial phase of the fun game in which the members of the group joined in the co-operative intergroup activity of joining dots to discover who the mystery friend was, it could clearly be observed that group polarisation had not occurred. Members were engaged in constructive communication and were supporting and encouraging each other as they excitedly worked together to complete the task at hand. The pro-social activity in which the group members were engaged provided an opportunity for them to interact socially. This encouraged effective cross-cultural socialisation which was evidenced by the eagerness with which the paired pupils helped each other to complete the mystery picture. The pro-social cooperative interaction clearly revealed that bonding or connectedness was taking place. The bonding between the Black and Indian pupils produced emotional feelings of well-being and improved the ability to co-operatively engage and support each other in the activity presented. This was a clear indication that as social beings the group members were able to interact

positively irrespective of their cultural differences. If opportunities to become acquainted with representatives of other cultures are provided, positive cross-cultural relationships can develop.

*It could be observed that by engaging the group cooperatively and constructively, relationships were not perceived as oppressive. This allowed for the breakdown of stereotyped roles, labels and expectations of incompetence. Empowering group members in this way did not make pupils feel stifled or oppressed by the norms of the school, as they previously indicated in the activity requiring them to find solutions to problems presented by the school. Cooperative activity empowers pupils and they are encouraged to self-actualise. As was observed in this activity, when pupils feel good about themselves, they feel more in control of the situation that they find themselves in, and there is therefore a lesser chance of conflict arising.*

The group members, when questioned about how they experienced working cooperatively on the fun game, confirmed that they had experienced cross-cultural contact positively. The group members agreed that before they had become members of the project group, they had been inadequately exposed to each other and that it had been difficult for them to identify with each other. As a result of this group isolation, cross-cultural tension had arisen. However, the group was in the process of learning more positive interactional patterns by means of constructive involvement. This group facilitator stressed the importance of cross-cultural communication to the group and pointed out that without the skill of communication the process of self-actualisation, which facilitates transition into society, would become problematic. Consequently, they would lack the experience necessary to interact as adults within a multicultural society.

The ability to identify with different aspects of nature increased the potential for both emotional and social adjustment. Pupils were placed in a positive position which enabled them to identify with each other. Through the exchange of information, the group members' perceptions of each other were further changed and similarities emerged because both Black and Indian pupils were in many instances able to identify with the same object from nature. For example, identification with a flower enabled the group to draw comparisons to colourful clothing, wearing of perfume and beauty. Other pupils were able to identify with water and linked this to swimming and fishing. Pupils were also able to identify with the warmth and tranquillity of the setting sun. This identification with different aspects of nature provided greater insight and awareness about the characteristics of their peers to the group members. This activity freed pupils to express themselves without inhibitions and fear of ridicule. They also obtained first-hand information about the more positive aspects of their peers. These developments provided the group members with the necessary support and confidence to evaluate themselves in relation to each other. It can be stated that the process of socialisation was successful because the group members were able to report that they shared things in common, that they could assess themselves in relation to their peers and they had discovered that although they belonged to different cultural groups they were not completely different from each other.

Positive self-disclosure encouraged group members to talk about aspects of themselves which would not under normal circumstances have been discussed. The ability to identify with aspects of nature created a more supportive and encouraging environment which encouraged the development of more positive communication patterns. This created trust, understanding and acceptance among group members.

The decrease of cross-cultural tension brought about by pro-social involvement had

allowed a sense of self-worth in relation to others to develop. This increased the potential for deeper emotional bonding which is necessary for the development of more positive cross-cultural interactional patterns. This group facilitator made the group aware that no one wants to be involved in an unrewarding relationship. Consequently, we tend to avoid or distance ourselves from others if we think that negative consequences will flow from involvement. However, avoidance or isolation might not be the solution to the problem of dysfunctional cross-cultural relationships within the school environment.

Consequently it is necessary to develop skills for more appropriate cross-cultural communication patterns which will contribute to effective cross-cultural involvement. The group discussions have made it clear that regardless of cultural affiliation, there are many similarities between the group members and by extension between all human beings. An understanding of the norms, values and beliefs of other cultures does not preclude adherence to our own cultural beliefs, but strengthens our ability to identify with a variety of cultures within the larger system of South African society. The feeling of self-worth engendered by an understanding of the cultures of others will increase our confidence and enable us to reconcile differences. The group agreed that it was necessary to reconcile cultural differences which had resulted in insecurities, misunderstandings and distrust and which encouraged cross-cultural group tensions which were detrimental to the psychological well-being of society. The group facilitator explained the necessity of psychological well-being for the development of self-actualisation. If we have to live in constant fear of each other, then the necessary confidence to approach new tasks will be hampered and the full potential to develop into an adult capable of interacting positively within a multicultural society may be affected. Self-actualisation, which is the need of every human being to develop physically, cognitively, affectively and socially to fulfil his

or her full potential, will be affected.

**7.3.6    Analysis of group session six according to expected outcomes**

| THEME | CATEGORY | ANALYSIS |
|---|---|---|
| Involvement | * Connecting | * Polarisation not evident - engaged in constructive cooperative activity |
| Acceptance | * Cultural isolation | * Friendly cooperative atmosphere - emotional feeling of well-being |
| Understanding | * Self-disclosure | * Encouraged to talk about aspects that would not normally discuss - greater understanding and acceptance for differences |
| Communica-tion | * Superficial contact | * Support and encouragement to complete fun activity<br>* Positive social interaction - verbally encouraging each other<br>* Working cooperatively - ability to identify with one another<br>* No inhibitions in self-expression - awareness and insights into character of peers |
| Stereotyping/ Sensitivity/ Respect | * Inadequate socialisation | * Ability to identify with same aspects from nature - increased ability to identify with one another - negative perceptions changed |

| Trust | * Bonding | * Deeper emotional bonding - tension not evident - friendly atmosphere - overcome superficial contact |
| | | * Supportive environment - selfworth increased |

SESSION SEVEN

The opportunity to engage in positive cross-cultural involvement had the effect of encouraging equal status interaction because the group was able to act as a cohesive whole and follow the rules of the fun game. The group members accepted that, irrespective of who formed the centre of the group, the same rules applied. A warm, trusting and friendly relationship between group members had developed. The group was willing to engage in the game by holding hands with individuals from different cultures. This exhibited a willingness to become involved with their peers from another culture. This implied that the group members were accepting and trusting of each other because they were able to 'play' together. Furthermore, all the members of the group agreed that prior to working together in the group they could not have imagined that interacting together would be so much fun. While this interaction was taking place group membership was predominant because group members saw themselves as a unit rather than as members of different cultural groups. Therefore it was evident that the group members were not perceiving themselves as being significantly different from each other. The rigid boundaries between the different cultural groups were no longer disproportionately emphasised. The group members were still aware of their cultural identities but could effectively identify socially.

*This activity had the effect of building self-confidence through fostering an attitude*

*that 'I, too, am competent to do this'. Being equally involved allowed for attitudes to change. Evidence of interpersonal growth and development between group members could be elicited from the fun evoked by the activity.*

Because group members had been provided with an environment in which allowance was made for increased contact between group members, they were able to assess themselves in relation to their peers. Consequently, they could modify their behaviour patterns in accordance with the rules of the game. The involvement of the group members in pro-social co-operative activity encouraged them to assess themselves favourably in relation to their peers. The group members confirmed that as a result of equal status interaction they were happy to be involved and did enjoy the activity in which they were required to engage, which entailed holding hands and forming a circle to prevent the person in the centre from escaping. This group facilitator was able to explain the component of inclusion in this activity by requesting that pupils compare their feelings about the activity to those of their peers in the group. It was clear they identified with each other because they all expressed the opinion that they were excited about participating in the activity. If a state of such well-being can be developed in cross-cultural relationships, individuals will automatically feel good about themselves. This will allow them to evaluate themselves positively in relation to their peers from other cultures. Once self-worth is developed, self-esteem will be increased and the development of a positive identity can be encouraged. Once this happens and individuals can see themselves favourably in relation to others, prejudicial and discriminatory attitudes, which have impacted negatively on cross-cultural relationships, can be changed or modified.

This change in perceptions enabled group members to overcome any prejudicial or discriminatory attitudes which may have existed. Consequently, they willingly

participated in the 'three-legged race'. All the group members agreed with the choice of the winning Indian/Black pair in the group. Irrespective of whom their partners were, they wanted their team to win and accordingly made every effort to help their partners along. This cooperation brought about a positive experience of cross-cultural contact.

It could be inferred that equal status participation had occurred because none of the group members attributed blame to their partners for being incompetent or being too slow during this activity. Instead, the opposite occurred because laughter and enjoyment between the partners and the group as a whole reflected a positive experience of contact and a feeling of benevolence towards each other. The group members agreed with this group facilitator that interaction with those who are different from them can encourage pupils to identify with each other. In turn, this will create reciprocal understanding and respect.

*By engaging pupils in a cooperative activity of 'play' attitudes about being different can be modified or even changed. This researcher was in a position to observe that the effect of this equal status participation was to change perceptions and attitudes. It was obvious from the emotional tone that the group was thoroughly enjoying itself. Empowering pupils through this pro-social activity also had the effect of influencing their personal and social worlds. This activity was able to provide specific knowledge that 'others' were cooperative and friendly. At the same time it provided the 'knowledge', (skill) to interact, that could not develop within monocultural environments.*

The spirit of community and well-being created by equal status participation in the fun activities provided for positive self-evaluation between pupils from different cultures.

When individuals are able to evaluate themselves positively, positive identity can emerge. Pupils were not made to feel inferior to their peers from other cultures and Black and Indian group members developed a sense of positive self-worth which created positive self-esteem and ultimately positive self-identity.

**7.3.7    Analysis of group session seven according to expected outcomes**

| THEME | CATEGORY | ANALYSIS |
|---|---|---|
| Involvement | * Positive experience of contact | * Equal status interaction - willingness to hold hands - mental and physical involvement of well-being - encouraged to see themselves as a unit |
| Acceptance | * Rigid boundaries | * Overcome perceptions of being distinctively different - able to interest positively - socially identify with each other |
| Understanding | * Equal status participation | * Increased contact allowed for modification of behaviour patterns - allowed for inclusion of all members<br>* Favourable perceptions of self in relation to others - excited to engage in fun activity - increase selfworth and self-esteem |
| Communication | * Positive self evaluation | * Spirit of well-being communicated by emotional tone - contact experienced positively |

| Stereotyping/ Sensitivity/ Respect | * Social perceptions <br> * Attribution of blame | * Willingness to participate in 'three legged race' requiring physical contact - exhibited that prejudicial and discriminatory social perceptions had changed <br> * Reciprocal understanding and respect - no perceptions of incompetence in pro-social activity - expression of enjoyment - positive experiencing of diversity |
|---|---|---|
| Trust | * Integration of experiences | * Equal status interaction - positive integration of emotional experiences - warm, friendly trusting atmosphere |

## SESSION EIGHT

When session eight commenced, the group members had come to accept and acknowledge that irrespective of their cultural affiliation they were all social beings and consequently gregarious. The school could be seen as a sub-community within a social system of communities, which like any other grouping of social beings could offer security, a shared value system, friendship, positive identity formation and the necessary psychological well-being for the development of the individual as a whole. Our life worlds are constructed from our everyday experiences. Should the community in which we find ourselves be experienced as socially restrictive, it is likely that we may become apprehensive and lose control of our actions in that environment. This may lead to fear of involvement and the assumption that isolation will protect us from

misunderstandings, insecurities and lack of acceptance. Fear of the unknown will lead to a resistance to involvement, which will preclude the development of cross-cultural relationships. Insecurity and a fear of cross-cultural involvement subvert our ability to accept responsibility for our actions. Consequently, a cycle of blame results which tends to alienate individuals or groups of individuals. Members of the group were able to understand that our knowledge and feelings about significant others with whom we come into contact are constructed through involvement and understanding. This group facilitator informed the group that without involvement there could be no understanding and resultant development of trust. The Black and Indian group members concurred that prior to the discussions in the group sessions their attitude towards other group members had been negative and stereotyped because they had no knowledge of each other as unique individuals. They had categorised themselves into cultural groups and accordingly had attributed negative or positive meanings to situations. This group facilitator explained that in most instances they had been socialised in a monocultural environment during their formative years. Knowledge about our own cultural values and norms and perceptions about other cultures had been formed against a background of a monocultural environment. Interpretations on how those different from ourselves ought to be perceived were formed on the basis of isolated experiences or second-hand information at our disposal. These perceptions may explain an initial reluctance to become involved with individuals from other cultures.

An urgent necessity exists for individuals to liberate themselves from thought processes which were forged in a monocultural environment. In order to achieve this, it must be recognised that no ethnic group or culture is superior to another. Cross-cultural communication skills must accordingly be adapted and developed so that individuals can learn to reject group categorisation and stereotyping.

When individuals can evaluate themselves and the cultural group to which they belong positively, they will attain equal status within a multicultural society. This will allow for the development of positive group and personal identity. The resultant esteem and acceptance by society will engender personal and cultural pride. The psychological well-being derived from this will positively affect physical, cognitive, affective and social development and enhance the quality of the transition from adolescence to adulthood.

*In developing the process of liberation of children from stereotyped social cognition, this researcher came to the realisation that she needed to be more self-assured in guiding children to become cross-culturally competent. This would therefore require her to be more cross-culturally efficient, as her own misconceptions of culturally different people could lead to a chauvinistic attitude that could unintentionally perpetuate inequality rather than encourage empowerment. In order to empower all pupils equally, it would become necessary not only to actively involve pupils in addressing their problems of social inequality, but that this researcher should become more reflective of her role in bringing about cultural empowerment and should accept that the school could never be separated from the community that it served, even if the community fell outside the situational area of the school. This meant that she would have to become more sensitive to the lifeworlds of diverse cultures as well as more appreciative of the uniqueness of cultural diversity. This would help develop more positive attitudes to the diversity of the school population. Further, in engaging pupils in groupwork activities, they were in a position to perceive situations from diverse cultural perspectives. This had the effect of revealing social inequality. By being involved in the construction of this social knowledge, attitudes could be changed and powergroup relations within the school could be balanced.*

This group facilitator was able to make the group aware of the need for greater cross-cultural involvement. The group was made to realise that new information about all the aspects of the lives of those different from themselves could only be integrated into their existing cognition by means of cross-cultural involvement. Internalisation of this type of information would improve cross-cultural relationships because it would change prejudicial or discriminatory attitudes which were formed within monocultural environments. Aspects of other cultures which had previously been inaccessible could be evaluated and understood and individuals would come to realise and acknowledge that cultural differences were acceptable. These cultural differences would no longer be judged to be abnormal or inferior to their own cultures. The acceptance of and respect for the unique characteristics of each culture will encourage the recognition of the similarities between cultures. This will preclude identification with prejudicial, stereotyped or discriminatory attitudes. The result will be positive self-actualisation within a wider multicultural society.

As a result of knowledge gained in the group sessions, the group members stated that they no longer categorised individuals and were more understanding and trusting of each other. Consequently, group members were prepared to become involved with each other as their perceptions had changed. Indian group members acknowledged that in conflict situations the conduct of Black pupils was not necessarily blameworthy. Before the desegregation of schools, relationships between pupils in monocultural schools had not been wholly free of conflict either. At this point, this group facilitator informed the group of the necessity for effective communication and the avoidance of internalised attribution of blame. Conflict can be resolved in an amicable way and more cooperative cross-cultural interactional patterns can be developed by means of effective communication. This would obviate negative consequences, which arise when conflict deteriorates into aggression. Group members

agreed that cooperative cross-cultural interaction would allow them insight into each other's behavioural patterns. This would encourage group members to accept responsibility for themselves and consequently for each other.

This group facilitator informed the group that, if they were able to accept responsibility for themselves and others, conflict situations would be reduced and a feeling of reciprocal well-being would develop. Group members agreed that psychological well-being was essential if they were to help develop a new united South Africa. Both Black and Indian pupils expressed the feeling that they had to make a greater effort to know and understand each other so that reciprocal trust could develop. Black and Indian pupils resolved that they would no longer categorise each other and attribute blame. They had come to realise that much of the conflict, which had occurred, had been unnecessary and could have been avoided if they had learnt to be more accepting of each other. They agreed that in order to make the school environment more pleasant they had to accept each other as equal partners. The importance of spreading the message *There is no-one more equal than me and neither am I more equal than another*' to their peers was acknowledged.

Finally, both groups of pupils decided that they were now better able to change the cross-cultural perception of others in their respective cultural groups. This learning experience had equipped the group to work on building strong cross-cultural relationships, which they could carry into society beyond the school environment.

**7.3.8    Analysis of group session eight according to expected outcomes**

| THEME | CATEGORY | ANALYSIS |
|---|---|---|
| Involvement | * Connecting | * Acceptance of the need to become involved and for cross-cultural friendships to develop<br>* Cultural isolation does not allow for understanding, security and acceptance for those different from ourselves to develop - knowledge is constructed through involvement |
| Acceptance | * Ability to identify<br>* Phychological well-being | * Acceptance of cultural diversity - perceptions of all as social beings<br>* Ability to identify as social beings - acceptance of shared value system - overcome insecurities - psychological well-being develops |
| Understanding | * Restrictive social environment | * Acceptance of lack of understanding of others leads to loss of control of actions - inability to accept responsibility |

| Communica-tion | * Avoidance | * Need to personally experience cross-cultural friendships for positive patterns of communication to develop<br>* Acceptance - inability to communicate leads to internalisa-tion of the attribution of blame - inability to accept responsibility for actions |
|---|---|---|
| Stereotyping/ Sensitivity/ Respect | * Cultural isolation | * Increased knowledge - ability to perceive others as individuals<br>* Greater involvement - change of social perceptions - acknowledge the right to diversity |
| Trust | * Self distancing | * Change of perceptions through greater involvement - acceptance of the wrongfulness of attribution of blame - acknowledgement that monocultural environment is not conflict free |

## 7.4    RESULTS OF THE PUPILS' EXPERIENCES DURING GROUPWORK

After eight sessions of groupwork pupils were able to report that

a.        cross-cultural association did not display cultural disloyalty;

b.        they were more prepared to initiate cross-cultural communication;

c.      it was wrong to attribute blame;

d.      they were better prepared to assist and cooperate with other cultures;

e.      similarities exist between cultures;

f.      their cross-cultural communication skills had improved;

g.      the school had undergone positive changes;

h.      there was a need to accommodate those different from themselves;

i.      each individual was a unique being;

j.      they appreciate the right of individuals to be different;

k.      they were more trusting of each other;

l.      insecurities are unfounded;

m.      they had learned that individuals should be treated equally irrespective of the culture to which they belong;

n.      they had more confidence in themselves;

o.      they were ready for greater involvement between cultures;

p.      it was wrong to stereotype individuals;

q.      there is a need to build unity and trust between cultures;

r.      they have become more sensitive to the needs of others;

s.      cross-cultural integration can be positive; and

t.      they expressed hope for the future.

## 7.5      IMPLEMENTATION OF GROUPWORK SESSIONS BY AN INDEPENDENT OBSERVER

Mrs R. Maniram, an educator, implemented the model derived and her findings were positive and were as follows:

**SESSION ONE**

This was an important stage in the group work. The introduction allowed pupils to become aware of each other. This allowed for pupils of different cultures to identify with each other as they were able to focus on salient points such as names, likes and dislikes. This created an awareness of self in relation to peers. The opportunity to share experiences developed a sense of basic trust. Therefore, when pupils were required to divide into Indian/Black pairs their curiosity about each other and eagerness to share experiences developed an awareness which allowed group members to respond to the feelings of their peers.

**SESSION TWO**

The awareness created in session one among group members facilitated their choice of an animal with which they wished to be identified. They were able to identify with both the negative and/or positive characteristics of the chosen animal. They were also able to justify the choice of animal based on personal preferences.

It was interesting to observe from the discussion of their environment that the group members were able to use the negative aspects of their home environment to identify with each other. This enabled the group members to grow closer. It was interesting to observe the consequent development of positive cross-cultural relationships.

**SESSION THREE**

Learners were more aware of each other and the interaction between cultural groups was spontaneous. The collages of their families were presented with confidence. The group was able to highlight the achievements of family members. Feelings towards each other were shared by the group members as they were able to identify with successes and disappointments of their peers. Life experiences within the different

cultures were similar and this enhanced the idea of belonging.

**SESSION FOUR**

The knowledge and awareness of the group was focussed. This resulted in the ability of the group members to successfully match the 'secrets' to the particular group members. Secrets were shared willingly. This indicated that there was acceptance between group members. The group members were able to highlight the happiest and saddest moments in their lives. It was significant to note that empathy had developed between group members. Understanding of the pain and joy experienced was not restricted to any particular cultural group. Pupils were able to identify with each other. Consequently, they were able to offer advice and sympathy because of similar events which they had experienced.

The group was able to solve the problems at school objectively and were able to derive generalisations based on previous experiences to assist in avoiding cultural conflict. During this activity it was clearly apparent that harmony between cultures is definitely possible. Artificial barriers can be overcome within cross-cultural relationships as pupils demonstrated through their involvement that they had come to see each other as human beings. The openness of the discussion had the effect of removing inferiority and rejection.

**SESSION FIVE**

Cross-cultural self-identity was positive as both groups of pupils liked their names. Partners had developed a positive outlook towards each other. The increased awareness of the group indicated that they had grown closer and that they were able to focus on their similarities, needs wants and cares, rather than differences in culture and lifestyle.

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The group members were able to discuss the unique aspects of their respective cultures such as dowry payment, lobola, funeral rites and religious ceremonies. This had the effect of highlighting similarities and bringing the group closer together.

**SESSION SIX**

Cross-cultural contact was experienced positively. The group enjoyed a friendly game. A warm and friendly atmosphere prevailed which demonstrated that there was cross-cultural acceptance.

**SESSION SEVEN**

The group members were able to interact positively with each other as peers. A sense of feeling towards each other was evident. All group members were able to express happiness at being involved in the game. Acceptance of each other could be observed.

**SESSION EIGHT**

It was evident that the group had gained valuable experience in cross-cultural contact. Not only were the group members in total acceptance of the message but it could also be observed that they were trusting of each other and prepared to implement the message outside the group.

The above sessions will definitely help in bringing children of different cultures closer together. The awareness created made it possible for group members to see aspects of themselves of and similarities among themselves of which they were previously unaware. This model will be of great advantage to teachers with cross-cultural class populations.

# CHAPTER EIGHT

## 8 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this research study was to develop and implement a programme which would improve intercultural relationships between grade seven Indian and Black pupils in a multicultural school.

The findings resulting from this research study have proved the intervention programme which was developed and implemented to be an effective means for successfully changing relationships between Indian and Black pupils.

### 8.2 ATTAINMENT OF THE GROUP GOALS OF THE INTERPERSONAL PROBLEM-SOLVING GROUP AND SUPPORTING FINDINGS

The group goals set for each session were directed to the attainment of the primary aim, which was the improvement of relationships between grade seven Indian and Black pupils. Consequently the attainment of these goals is important for determining the efficacy of the intervention programme. A brief exposition of the goals for each interpersonal problem-solving group session and an equally brief description of how their attainment (findings) was manifested and observed follows.

**SESSION ONE**

| Goals | Findings derived from observed manifestation of goal attainment. |
|---|---|
| ● Linking. | ● The group members began to take an interest in what was being said and done. This was evidenced by their facial expressions and by tentative communication with each other. |
| ● Primary status. | ● Group members discovered that they were members of similar external (out of school context) interest groups. This was manifested by clearly observable spontaneous communication. |
| ● Security. | ● The development of a sense of security in group members was manifest when they discovered that they belonged to similar social groups (for example sports clubs, dance groups). This was evidenced by the emergence of a palpable sense of unity and by the group members' willingness to communicate about their interests. |
| ● Ability to attend to and respond to others. | ● The discovery of similar interests led to a process by which members began to openly state their views without fear of rejection. Their lack of reticence was clearly observable. |
| ● Focus on communication. | ● The sharing of personal information led to |

members exchanging confidential information freely. This was evidenced by the relatively uninhibited way in which this information was shared. This was also indicative of the emergence of trust among the group members.

- Trust.

- The group members expressed themselves freely and confidently when they engaged in the activity of finding out three facts about their partners. This could be observed in the sense of excited eagerness with which they proceeded to 'tell' about themselves and the development of trust was evidenced by their obvious lack of inhibition.

- Individuality.

- The group members displayed respect for individuality, which was manifested by the manner in which they listened to their peers talking about themselves and the enthusiastic way in which they too commented.

- Trusting, warm and comfortable environment.

- The awareness by the group members of similarities among them allowed for freedom of expression. This was perceived in the convivial atmosphere within the group.

- Positive human interaction.

- Group members who were initially reticent

about disclosing personal information were encouraged to do so by less inhibited members of the group. This was manifested by the mutual encouragement given among group members.

- Overcoming anxieties.

- The acknowledgment by their partners in the group activity of their positive characteristics led to group members overcoming their anxieties about disclosing personal information. This was evidenced by the perceptible ease with which members communicated personal information.

**SESSION TWO**

- Overcoming insecurities.

- Role playing, in which members assumed animal identities, freed them to talk more openly about themselves and they betrayed no .sign of insecurity. This was apparent from the ease with which they imparted personal information.

- Expression of self.

- Similarly, the spontaneity with which group members discussed personal information relating to their home environments was a clear indication that they were free to express themselves.

- Helping in human interaction.

- Rigid boundaries between the groups were broken down and the group members found that they had common interests about which they could communicate. This was

manifested by the enthusiasm with which they discussed these interests.

| | |
|---|---|
| • Ability to identify and connect. | • The group members were able to identify and connect with their peers within the group. This was apparent from the enthusiastic manner in which they shared intimate details concerning their home environments. |
| • Engaging in equal status contact. | • An awareness between group members that they were similar to each other emerged when they discovered similar likes and dislikes. Both groups acknowledged verbally that it was unfair to judge other cultural groups prejudicially and acknowledged that they were equally to blame for intercultural misunderstandings. |

**SESSION THREE**

| | |
|---|---|
| • Group cohesion. | • The willingness of all the group members to participate in the fun activity 'Secrets', and to divulge personal information, was a clear manifestation of group cohesion and trust. |
| • Acceptance of disclosure. | • The group members revealed their 'secrets' without inhibition. This was indicative that the group members had accepted each other and were willing to reveal personal information about themselves. |

- Building communication
  through understanding.

- Group members agreed that more effective communication between them had created a greater understanding of each other.

- Discovery of similarities.

- Similarities between Indian and Black cultures emerged when the group members discussed their life worlds. The eager curiosity with which they absorbed information about each other was clearly observable.

- Similar difficulties
  to overcome.

- The discovery that, irrespective of cultural affiliation, group members shared similar feelings of happiness and sadness led group members to acknowledge that they faced similar difficulties. The more positive reactions among the group members were clearly evident.

- Sense of belonging.

- The lack of inhibition with which group members shared emotions could clearly be observed which confirmed that group members affiliated themselves to the group and identified with each other.

- Mutual respect and tolerance
  for differences.

- The sharing of mutual experiences and similar emotions changed the group members' perceptions about each other and revealed similarities between them. This

was evidenced by the eagerness with which they listened to each other.

- Ability to attend to and respond to each other.

- The ability of the group members to pay attention and respond to each other was manifested by the intentness with which they listened to descriptions of their peers' experiences and descriptions of their life worlds. This could also be observed from the way in which they became engrossed in ensuing conversations.

- Ability to empathise.

- Indian and Black group members developed a greater sensitivity to each other, which was apparent from the spontaneity with which they responded to and questioned the information which they shared.

- Unlearning stereotypes.

- Group members developed a greater understanding of each other which obviated preconceived stereotyping of other cultural groups. The group members affirmed that members of different cultures had the right to dignity and respect.

- Changing social cognition.

- The group members developed an awareness and understanding of each others' life worlds in discussions about the environments from which they came and

their different life styles. This greater understanding was obvious from the respect they accorded each others' revelations.

## SESSION FOUR

- Awareness of and purpose for the group.

- The discovery that they had similar opinions and attitudes about a variety of issues, for example their rejection of their traditional names, unified group members.

- Positive behaviour patterns.

- The development of unity among group members could clearly be observed from the spontaneity with which they disclosed their positive and negative attitudes to a variety of issues. This was manifest from the respect they accorded to each other's viewpoints.

- Safe environment.

- The creation of a secure atmosphere in which it was possible for group members to explore attitudes, values and ideas was reflected in the sensitivity which had developed among members and which could be observed when they discussed the characteristics of their peers.

- Awareness of similar problems and frustrations.

- The necessity of finding solutions to common problems created an awareness in group members that they were not alone in experiencing difficulties. The group

|  |  |
|---|---|
|  | members acknowledged that they could identify with each other's problems openly. |
| • Development of social conscience, responsibility and mutual respect. | • The group members agreed that respect for the norms and values of other cultures was an integral part of establishing more positive relationships. Inherent in these relationships would be the responsibility of individuals for themselves and to others. The open discussion between group members concerning these aspects was indicative of the development of responsibility and a social conscience. |
| • Connect with one another's situation and attempt to change behaviour. | • Changes in attitudes and behaviour were implicit in the positive manner in which the group members listened to their peers' revelations. This indicated that a greater understanding of other people's lifestyle and beliefs had changed attitudes and behaviour. |
| • Utilise abilities and resources to resolve conflict. | • Involvement in the group activities allowed group members to become familiar with each other and express their opinions freely. This could be seen in the way in which they listened and responded to each other when they discussed conflict arising from cultural differences. |

**SESSION FIVE**

- Creation of cross-cultural
- involvement

- A relaxed atmosphere was clearly observable during this session. The group members acted spontaneously towards each other and it was obvious that they enjoyed being in each other's company.

- Tolerance and appreciation for diversity so that prejudicial attitudes and stereotypes could be overcome.

- The spirit with which the group members took part in the fun activity indicated clearly that they related to each other positively. The trust among group members and the tolerance of and appreciation for diversity which had developed in the group was evinced by the enthusiasm with which they expressed a desire to partake of their different traditional food.

- Respect for individuality.

- The new information about different cultures to which the group members were exposed led to their agreeing that people of different cultures had values and beliefs which are worthy of respect and that it is wrong to have prejudices and misconceptions which result in stereotyped generalisations.

- Acceptance of responsibility

The respect and appreciation group members expressed towards self and others for the traditions and beliefs of other cultures implied receptiveness to those different from themselves and indicated an ability to assume responsibility for their own behaviour towards others.

**SESSION SIX**

- Positive regard for self and others.

- The group members engaged in constructive communication during the group activities and supported and encouraged each other.

- Feeling of emotional well-being.

- The group members enjoyed the activities and it was clear that they were relaxed and receptive towards each other.

- Support and encouragement between groups.

- During the activities the group members encouraged each other enthusiastically.

- Positive communication.

- The group members communicated freely and shared information spontaneously.

- Standards for comparisons.

- During the activity in which group members identified with nature, the shift in perspective from which they viewed themselves and others enabled them to see themselves and others in a more positive light and consequently they were able to evaluate themselves in relation to their

peers.

- Building trust, understanding and acceptance.

- The development of trust, understanding and acceptance among group members was evinced by the spontaneity with which they shared information.

- Practice at being involved in new roles.

- Identification with aspects from nature made it possible for group members to perceive themselves and their peers from a different perspective. This enabled them to evaluate themselves in relation to each other. The more flexible attitudes which the group members adopted as a result of this activity was manifest in the mutual acceptance among the Indian and Black group members.

**SESSION SEVEN**

- Warmth, friendliness emotional integration of experiences

- The relaxed manner in which group members made physical contact during the activities indicated that the warmth and friendliness towards each other had intensified. The spontaneous enjoyment of each other's company indicated that their mutual experiences had consolidated the feeling which had developed.

- Positive experiencing of contact.

- During the group activity members held hands without any sign of inhibition.

- Equal status participation.

- During the three-legged race it was evident that group members accepted each other as equals and that prejudicial and discriminatory attitudes had disappeared. This was evidenced by the spontaneity with which they reacted to the physical closeness of their partners and the spirit of cheerful competition.

- Feeling of well-being towards the self and others.

- The mutual ease and spontaneity among group members when they took part in the activities reflected their esteem for each other.

- Positive self-worth and self-esteem — formation of

  positive relationships.

- The self-assured manner in which group members could immerse themselves in group

  activities where group identity predominated over cultural identity was clear evidence that they were able to form positive cross-cultural relationships.

- Respect and understanding for different cultures — atmosphere of safety and acceptances.

- The group members' spontaneous acceptance of and positive attitudes to each other reflected mutual respect and understanding.

- Sense of belonging together.

- The active participation in group activities and mutual support given among members

of the group indicated a spirit of group cohesion.

**SESSION EIGHT**

- Ability to control conflict through the acceptance of responsibility for own actions.

- The group members acknowledged that they must assume responsibility for their actions and behaviour so that they do not contribute negatively to situations in which conflict between different cultural groups can arise.

- Respect for diversity needs to be characterised by reciprocity.

- Group members stated that their experiences of cooperative cross-cultural interaction provided them with insight into each other's behavioural patterns.

- Psychological well-being.

- The self-assured manner in which group members shared personal information indicated the existence of psychological well-being which emanated from their ability to evaluate themselves and their peers in the group positively.

- Blame as a damaging factor in trusting relationships.

- The group members acknowledged that ill-considered attributions of blame are damaging to cross-cultural relationships.

- Realisation that they are in control of a situation.

- The group members agreed that the insights which they had developed during the group sessions had made them realise that control

was inherent in their ability to control their own actions and not in the fact that one or other cultural group was dominant.

- Ability to cooperate and communication
- The ability of the group members to discuss their opinions freely and to allow others to do so indicated that they were positively disposed to each other.

- Independence and responsibility.
- The group members acknowledged that the awareness that they were responsible for their own actions towards others had made them realise that they could avoid cross-cultural conflict of their own volition.

- Transition from childhood to adulthood.
- The personal experiences which the group members had had during the group sessions had engendered a positive group and personal identity which impacted on all the developmental levels. This indicated that a process of self-actualisation had taken place.

- Ability to apply acquired skills outside the group.
- The attainment of this goal can only be confirmed after the written information obtained from former group members six months after the group dispersed is analysed.

During the interpersonal problem-solving group sessions there was a marked progression in the interactional processes among group members. Initially the

reactions of the group members were reserved and they were reticent about their opinions. They gradually became more interested and reacted enthusiastically when taking part in the activities. Subsequently the interactional processes among the group members took on another dimension and they communicated enthusiastically and were no longer hesitant when they engaged in close physical contact with members of a different culture. It was obvious that close physical ties had developed between the group members. The aim of this research study, which was to develop and implement an intervention programme to improve intercultural relationships, was achieved.

This is clearly illustrated in the findings of this study which were set out in section 8.2 above. The sustainable efficacy of this programme was also evaluated on the basis of written information obtained from former group members six months after the group dispersed. The aspects which were evaluated were cross-cultural involvement, acceptance, understanding, quality of communication, sensitivity and respect.

## 8.3 AFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME AS SEEN BY FORMER GROUP MEMBERS

The group members' written comments (see annexure IV) in reaction to statements concerning the sustained effect of the programme on them after six months indicate that they

- believe that all individuals, regardless of cultural affiliation, have the right to equal opportunities;
- believe that school rules should recognise the multicultural identity of a school;
- communicate with individuals from other cultures at school;
- have a closer association with other cultural groups at school;

- respect the rights of all cultures;

- accept their peers, regardless of their cultural affiliation;

- recognise advantages in attending a multicultural school; and

- are optimistic about cultural integration.

The sensitivity, understanding and acceptance which developed between Indian and Black pupils is evidence of the successful implementation of the intervention programme designed as part of this research study.

Figure 4 represents the positive cycle of interpersonal relationships after the successful implementation of the interpersonal problem-solving programme.

<u>Figure 4.  Functional Relationship Cycle — Positive Desegregation.</u>

**POSITIVE DESEGREGATION**

**Ability to relate-identify**

**Involvement**

**Development of responsibility and accountability**

**Positive experience of contact-connecting**

**Security-breakdown of stereotypes, insecurities, anxieties**

**Acceptance and understanding**

**TRUST**
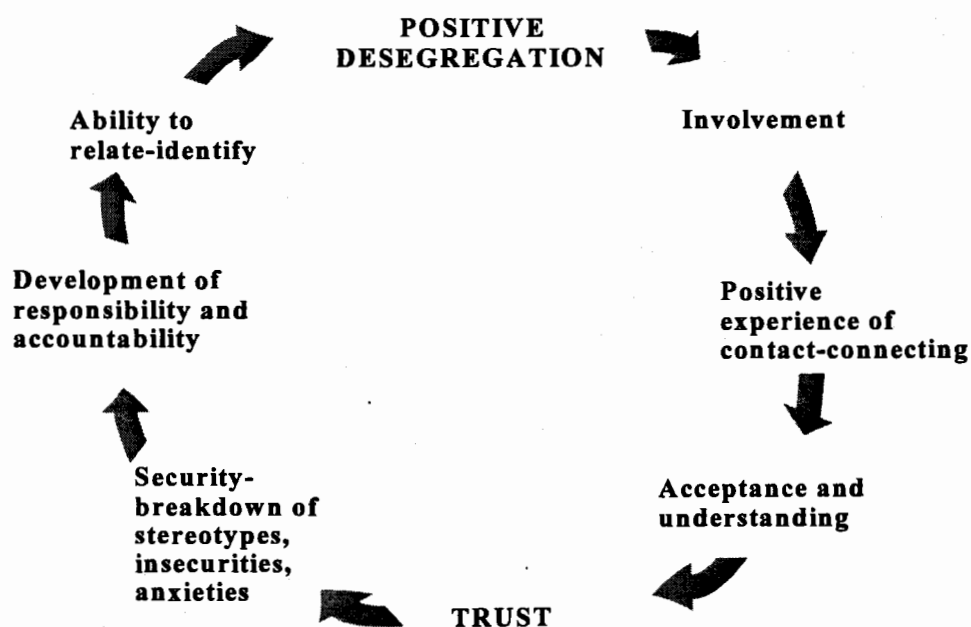
## 8.4     RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations for the improvement of multicultural relationships which result from the findings in 8.2 are the following:

### 8.4.1     General Recommendations

- The improvement of cross-cultural relationships in schools is a priority.
- Schools should provide in-service training for teachers which will provide them with the skills to facilitate interpersonal problem-solving groups for the improvement of cross-cultural relationships.
- The curriculum at training colleges for teachers should include the teaching of skills necessary in multicultural institutions.
- Pupils should be included systematically in multicultural problem-solving groups.
- Regulations at schools should provide for the needs of all cultural groups.
- An atmosphere which accommodates pupils from all cultures should be created at schools.
- Opportunities for cross-cultural interaction among pupils should be created.

### 8.4.2     Recommendations for Research and for Further Study

- Explaining relationships between different races and cultures.
- Developing this programme to fit the classroom situation.
- Developing awareness of the quality of relationships between cultural groups.

## 8.5    PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED

Cross-cultural conflict in schools has received a great deal of media coverage. Permission to investigate the problem resulting from cross-cultural tension was difficult to obtain, probably because schools feared that they would attract negative media coverage. This research study had to take place after school hours so that the education of the participants in the study was not affected adversely. This researcher was responsible for the transport arrangements for participants who did not live in close proximity to the school. Initially the participants in the intervention programme had reservations about their involvement in the programme. These reservations disappeared once the purpose and functions of the study had been explained.

## 8.6    SHORTCOMINGS

It is possible that the written information concerning the sustained effect of the intervention programme, which was obtained six months after the group dispersed, is unreliable. The relationship established with this researcher during the intervention programme could have influenced the former group members to write responses which they felt would please her. Consequently the long-term effect of this programme can only be assessed when more pupils have taken part in it and when improved relationships can be observed among older pupils.

The empirical study was limited to the school district in which this researcher works and with which she is familiar. This limitation was necessary as her employment is of such a nature that it was not practical to extend the scope of the research to neighbouring districts. The socio-economic circumstances prevailing in the district are similar to those in the area from which the participants who did not live in close proximity to the school came.

An aspect that was not addressed in this research, but should be given consideration,

is the issue of language. As human beings irrespective of our culture we all communicate through language. Therefore individuals should be made to feel uncomfortable with other spoken languages which are unfamiliar. They should be encouraged to perceive other languages as an asset or cross-cultural enrichment. Language should not be experienced as a strange phenomenon which evokes suspicion but should rather be seen as an enrichment of linguistic diversity.

## 8.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the goals which had to be obtained in each session and the findings which support their attainment are set out. The effect of the attainment of these goals on the success of the intervention programme was discussed briefly. The responses of the participants in the programme concerning its sustained effect six months after its completion were listed. The recommendations for improving multicultural relationships which arose from the findings were given. The problems experienced while conducting the study and its shortcomings were briefly described.

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# ANNEXURE I:

Two examples of statements of pupils during initial investigation

a. All pupils , irrespective of cultural groupings are afforded the same degree of participation in school activities _This is a Indian school._

b. Pupils from different cultures need to adjust to the dominant school culture _yes: They must not speak and laugh loudly._

c. I have sufficient knowledge about how pupils from other cultures spend their time after school _no I don't know_

d. My biggest problem with pupils from other cultures is ....... _I don't like them to talk zulu._

e. Prior to school integration I have had cross - cultural contact with same age peers _no I only see them in school._

f. Pupils belonging to a particular group can generally be assumed to have the same characteristics _yes_

g. Language is sometimes a problem in cross cultural communication

_They don't speak english._

h. Pupils should be able to communicate in their own language if they so wish _no. I don't know what they say._

i. Pupils from another culture different from mine are generally trouble makers_They push and fight._

j. The reason that I have not as yet made Black/Indian friends is that..........

_I don't play with them so they don't fight with us._

k. By learning about other cultures , understanding between groups can be created_No we will become like black children._

l. Harmony within the school environment can only be created if we revert to a monoculture environment_yes. it was better when only Indians came to school_

a. All pupils , irrespective of cultural groupings are afforded the same degree of participation in school activities WE CAME FIRST TO THIS SCHOOL. WE SHOULD GET TO DO ALL ACTIVITIES

b. Pupils from different cultures need to adjust to the dominant school culture YES: THEY SPEAK ZULU – I THINK THEY ARE GOSSIPING ABOUT US.

c. I have sufficient knowledge about how pupils from other cultures spend their time after school I ONLY SEE THEM IN SCHOOL.

d. My biggest problem with pupils from other cultures is ........
THEY MUST LEARN TO BEHAVE.

e. Prior to school integration I have had cross - cultural contact with same age peers NO: I HAVE NO BLACK FRIENDS.

f. Pupils belonging to a particular group can generally be assumed to have the same characteristics  YES

g. Language is sometimes a problem in cross cultural communication
IT IS HARD TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY SAY.

h. Pupils should be able to communicate in their own language if they so wish NO THEY TALK AND LAUGH ABOUT A US.

i. Pupils from another culture different from mine are generally trouble makers BLACK CHILDREN LIKE TO FIGHT OVER NOTHING.

j. The reason that I have not as yet made Black/Indian friends is that..........
IT IS BETTER TO STAY FAR AWAY FROM THEM.

k. By learning about other cultures , understanding between groups can be created NO WE WILL NOT ACT LIKE INDIANS ANYMORE.

l. Harmony within the school environment can only be created if we revert to a monoculture environment I LIKE INDIANS TO BE IN MY CLASS.

# ANNEXURE II:

Example of transciption of group sessions one
and six

# EXAMPLE OF TRANSCRIPTION OF GROUP SESSIONS

## SESSION ONE

Researcher:        Welcome to our very first group work session. Thank you very much for attending and I appreciate you all being here. Please make yourself comfortable. As I have previously explained, I have decided to form this group so that we together can develop more friendly relationships between the Black and Indian pupils in our school. However it is impossible for me to do this on my own and I need you to help me find solutions to problems that are being experienced presently not only in our own school but else where as well. Before we begin with the activities for today I would once again like to remind all of you that if at any time, for whatever reason you feel uncomfortable with any activity you may stop. Also if you think that the group is going nowhere and you no longer want to be part of the group you can inform me personally or maybe even in writing. I promise no questions will be asked and you may fee free to leave.

Is there anything that you would like to ask or tell me before we start?

*Silence.*

Researcher:        Can I then take it we can begin with the session?

*Nodding of heads.*

Reasearcher:        Fine, no one in the group is new to the school, we have all seen each other at one time or the other for much more than a year

now and you may have even spoken to each other and know each other's names. I would now like for you to introduce yourself formally to the group, by first telling the group you name, age, grade and where you live. Let us begin.

*No movement or sound.*

Researcher:     Would any one like to begin?

*Looking down or in the other direction.*

Researcher:     All right then let's start with the person right next to me here and go around in this way? Let's start then.

*Very quietly.*

Pupil R:        My name is Reshma, I am 12 years old, I am in grade 7C and I live in Merebank.

Researcher:     Good. Lets have the next person.

Pupil L:        My name is Lakshmi, I am 13 years old, I live in Merebank and I am in grade 7A.

*Looking at the floor.*

Pupil T:        My name is Tandeka. My age is 14 years. I am in grade 7C. I live in Umlazi.

Pupil B:        My name is Bongiwe (looking away from the group). I am in grade 7B. My age is 13 years. I live in Umlazi.

Pupil M:        *(Looking at me smiling).* I am 13 years old. I live in Merebank. I am in grade 7A and I live in Merebank.

Pupil K:        *(Looking at Mahendra).* I am in grade 7B. I am 13 years. I live in Merebank.

Pupil J:        *(Looking down).* My age is 14. I come from Umlazi. I am in grade 7C.

Pupil Bo:       My name is Bonga. *(Speaking very fast and looking away).* I stay in Umlazi. My age is 15 years. I am in grade 7A.

| | |
|---|---|
| Researcher: | Now that we know who each one is, let us proceed with the activities. I want you to think very carefully about a group that you belong to outside the school, by this I mean think about what you and your friends get together and do in a group outside the school - in other words at home. |

*Silence.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil M: | Like when you meet your friends to go and play a game? |
| Researcher: | Yes, a group you and your friends, who can be boys or girls or even both get together to do things you enjoy. |
| Pupil K: | We have a cricket club. |
| Researcher: | Tell the group a little about the things that you do here. |
| Pupil K: | We practice. |

*Pause.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Researcher: | And? |
| Pupil K: | We meet after school on the ground to play. |
| Researcher: | In this school ground? |
| Pupil K: | No, Budalla Road grounds. |
| Researcher: | How long do you practice for? |
| Pupil K: | About two hours. |
| Pupil M: | From 4 o'clock to about 6 o'clock. That is interesting you belong to the same group? |
| Pupil K: | Yes. We don't play cricket all the time, when the cricket season is finished we play soccer, because you can only play cricket when it is cricket season. |
| Pupil M: | How interesting, I thought that you could play cricket when ever you liked. |

*Laughter and shaking of heads (Mahendra and Krishna).*

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil J: | In the township we play soccer every day, we don't wait. |

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| Researcher: | That sounds interesting. Who do you play with? |
| Pupil J: | Anyone from there can come and play with us. |
| Pupil K: | We formed our own club and Navesh's father is the coach. |
| Researcher: | Do you have to pay? |
| Pupil K: | No, but it is still a club so you can't come at anytime and just join because we have teams. You must first come and ask. |
| Pupil Bo: | I go to a running club with my uncle and the same people are there every time. |
| Researcher: | What do you do there? |
| Pupil Bo: | Run. |
| Researcher: | Where to? |
| Pupil Bo: | On the road side or sometimes like Saturday on the beach. |
| Pupil K: | But there is no beach in Umlazi, how can you run on the beach? |
| Pupil Bo: | No, we go by taxi to town or maybe Toti. |
| Pupil M: | Did you ran in a race? |
| Pupil Bo: | Yes, short races. |
| Pupil M: | What did you come out? |
| Pupil Bo: | You have to finish the race. |

*All members looking at Bonga.*

| Pupil R: | Do you like to run in the Comrades? |
| Pupil Bo: | How! I am too young but maybe I can try one day. |
| Pupil K: | Then you will be on TV. |

*Indian group members looking at each other.*

| Pupil Lakshmi: | Then you must tell us and we can look out for you. |
| Researcher: | Yes. I think we all will be very pleased to see you compete in such a famous race and we will look out for you in a few years' time. Would the girls in the group now like to tell us about the groups that they belong to? |

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil R: | I go to girl guides. My mother and another lady started the group for the girls in the school. |
| Researcher: | What do you do? We go on hikes along the beach. Make fires. Build campsites and at the end of the year we will get medals. |
| Pupil K: | Do you stay in a camp? |
| Pupil R: | No. |
| Pupil K: | Then what is the use of building a camp if you don't stay there? Maybe if we go to the beach during the holidays we can make a camp if there are lots of people. You don't have to make a camp and live there as long as you know how to make a camp. |
| Pupil T: | *(Hand goes up).* |
| Researcher: | Yes, Tandeka? |
| Pupil T: | Bongiwe and me, we go dance with the other girls and boys in the church. |
| Researcher: | When do you go to dance? |
| Pupil T: | Every Saturday afternoon. |
| Pupil L: | I go to Indian dance classes. |
| Researcher: | Tandeka, what type of dances to you learn? |
| Pupil L: | We do Zulu dances but mostly modern dances, like ballroom. |
| Researcher: | That sounds very interesting. |
| Pupil B: | Yes, it is very nice. The people that teach us to dance go to dance anywhere. |
| Researcher: | Like where? |
| Pupil B: | Like birthdays or some parties. |
| Researcher: | So they are professional dancers? |
| Pupil B: | *(Looking confused).* |
| Researcher: | Do they take part in competitions and win prices? |
| Pupil B: | Yes. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil Bo: | Do you like the Zulu or ballroom dance? |
| Pupil B: | The two are nice. |
| Pupil R: | On Sundays we also go to Bible classes. Our pastor comes to school and we use room 68. |
| Pupil Bo: | I go to Sunday School. |
| Pupil J: | We pray and tell stories about God. |
| Researcher: | And what do you do at Bible class Reshma? |
| Pupil R: | The same thing. |
| Researcher: | So outside the school everyone has friends that they do things with? |

*Group nodding, indicating yes.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Researcher: | And you enjoy having friends that you can share ideas with and do various things together? |

*Group nodding heads or saying 'yes'.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Researcher: | Now that we have got to know each other a little better, I think we should choose a partner that we can work with for the rest of the activities. I am not going to put you in pairs you can decided for yourself who you would like to work with, remember if you are an Indian then you will choose a Black partner and if you are Black then you will have to choose an Indian partner. |
| Pupil M: | *(Very quickly)* I choose Jabulani. |
| Pupil K: | I will take Bonga. |
| Pupil L: | I want Bongiwe. |
| Pupil R: | Me and Tandeka. |
| Researcher: | Now that you have decided with whom you want to work, please swop places and sit with your partners. |

*Movement, pupils get up and rearrange themselves.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Researcher: | Now that you have a partner I want you to talk to your partner |

and find out three facts about him or her, after which you will be required to tell the others what you have discovered about your partner.

*Group begins to very softly communicate. Nodding of heads, smiles, use of hands in pointing to directions.*

Researcher:    If you are ready we can discover what new information you have about your partner. Who would like to start first?

Pupil R:    Me.

Researcher:    Alright let us hear what you have found out.

Pupil R:    Tandeka does not like the science teacher because she shouts a lot, she has to wash her school dress every day and she likes platforms.

Researcher:    Tandeka can you tell the group what you have discovered about Reshma?

Pupil T:    She does not like science, she likes her class teacher because she does not hit, she prays in the morning and when she eats and when she goes to sleep, she likes K-TV.

Researcher:    I am sure everyone found that very interesting.

Group:    Yes.

Researcher:    Shall we now listen to one of the boys?

*Hand goes up.*

Pupil J:    I know that Mahendra does not like to fast, he must only eat vegetable, he wears jeans, when he passes he is going to get a bike.

Pupil M:    *(Smiling)* Jabulani does not like the science teacher because she favours, he likes to wear jeans and after school he has to wash his own clothes.

Pupil K:    *(Hand goes up)* Bonga likes to buy Chicken Licken when he goes

to town, he says that the science teachers favours Indians and he wears jeans.

Researcher: Very interesting. Bonga can you tell what you now know about Krishna?

Pupil Bo: When ge gets good marks he will get Nikes, he likes Kentucky and pizza and he likes jeans.

Researcher: Now we know which two boys like chicken.

*Laughter.*

Researcher: Let us now listen to what Bongiwe has to say.

Pupil B: Lakshmi likes jeans and platforms. She likes TV. When she was small she cried when she got no present because she thought that they forget it is her birthday but they were just playing.

Researcher: If this had happened to you what would you have done?

*A few group members cried.*

Pupil L: She does not like people that fight, she does not fight, she washes her own clothes and she likes wearing short dresses.

Researcher: Have you noticed that many of you share a lot of things in common?

*Nodding and exclamations of yes.*

Researcher: Now would it have been possible to know these things if you do not talk to each other.

*Shaking of heads - indicating no.*

Researcher: We need to remember that we can not assume things about anyone if we have not first got to find out about that person. If you get to talk to others then you may come to see that you share a lot of things in common and can also get together and do things together. It is only by speaking to each other that we can develop trust of each other. If we get involved with each other

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instead of listening to what others tell us then we can experience what it is like to be friends. If we listen to what others tell us about someone, then it is unfair to that person and this is how we come to distrust each other because we think that we are very different from each other.

*Group very attentive to what is said but no comment made.*

Researcher:        Bearing in mind what I have just told you, let us see if you can try and find out something about your partner that he or she would not have told you had you not become involved in the group. Can we do this?

Group:             A loud yes.

*Communication among pairs gets louder. Excitement - all talking at the same time.*

Researcher:        Are you ready to tell?

Pupil Bo:          Yes! *(laughing)*. He stole mangoes after school.

*No pause in time.*

Pupil Jabolani:    Mahendra went with him and the uncle chased them with a big stick.

*Group burst out laughing.*

Pupil M:           *(Head down)*. But it was not only us, the other boys came too and the mangoes was hanging over the fence.

Pupil Bo:          But you still got chased.

*Group laughter. Bongiwe - clapping hands.*

Pupil M:           But Jabulani got shambokked when he spent his train money and had to stay at home.

Pupil K:           When Bonga went to school in Umlazi he bunked with his friends and still his mother does not know.

Pupil R:           No Bongiwe.

Pupil T:           How? *(Hand over mouth)*.

| | |
|---|---|
| Researcher: | Now that we know about the boys' secrets let's hear the girls'. |
| Pupil M: | Yes tell us. |
| Pupil R: | Tandeka and Bongiwe went to a street bash without permission and got pulled out by their mothers. |
| Pupil Lakshmi: | And Bongiwe told me she got hit in front of everyone who started to laughing. |

*Laughter.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil R: | Why didn't you ran? |
| Pupil B: | Where? |

*Silence.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil L: | Don't be stupid, she will still have to go home. |
| Pupil Bo: | Yeah but at least no one will be there. |
| Pupil B: | It was funny when Lakshmi got locked the toilet. |

*Laughter.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil B: | She had to start to scream, open the door! Open the door! |

*Laughter.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil B: | You should have jumped through the window . |
| Pupil Bo: | It was too small. |
| Pupil B: | Then who opened the door? |
| Pupil Bo: | My father. |

*More laughter.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil T: | Reshma was copying and she went to the office and was crying. |

*Silence.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Researcher: | We have learnt a lot of different secrets some were funny and made us laugh together. |

*Laughter. Group pointing or looking in Lashmi's direction.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil L: | But that can happen to anyone. |
| Researcher: | That is true, can you imagine what you would have done in such |

a situation?

*Tandeka - hands over her mouth. Smiles on faces.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Researcher: | Now that we have laughed so much let's see if we can think of something good to say about our partners. Is there something nice that you can say about your partner? |
| Pupil B: | Yes, she can keep a secret. |
| Pupil L: | She is kind and caring. |
| Pupil T: | Reshma likes Africans. |
| Pupil R: | Tandeka is a good girl. |
| Researcher: | How interesting. It did not take too long to find out so many good things about each other. Let's hear if the boys have anything to say. Jabulani would you like to go first? |
| Pupil J: | Mahendra lent me a pen, he is a good boy. |
| Pupil M: | He does not like to pick on others. |
| Pupil Bo: | My partner does not like to tease people. |
| Pupil K: | My partner does not like to pick fights. |
| Researcher: | Does it not sound good to hear your partner tell good things about you? |

*Group - yes, nodding heads, smiles, eye contact with partners, turning to look around at each other.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Researcher: | Now lets hear how you felt when you heard good things said about you. |
| Pupil B: | (Hand up first). I feel happy, because when I looked at myself I did not see that I was good. |
| Pupil Lakshmi: | Happy. |
| Pupil R: | Good. |
| Pupil T: | Happy. |
| Pupil M: | I belong here. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil J: | Enjoyment and I want to come back. |
| Pupil K: | Welcomed. |
| Pupil Bo: | Happy and I will come back. |
| Researcher: | Can you say how you feel now that you have found out new things about each other and you have learnt about each other? |
| Pupil Bo: | I don't know we did the same things. |
| Pupil T: | I don't feel left out, like no one wants me. |
| Pupil M: | It was a mistake not to talk to each other. |
| Pupil K: | I think my partner is a honest person. |
| Pupil R: | We like the same things. |
| Pupil Lakshmi: | I like to talk to my partner. |
| Pupil J: | We need to talk. |
| Pupil Bo: | We are happy today. |
| Researcher: | Then I think that we all now can see that by not joining each other we could not get to know each other and that this made us sometimes feel that we are better than the others, but now we can see that this is wrong. It is wrong to think that because you belong to any particular group that you are better or that you should not trust another group. By getting together we came to learn that no matter who we are we belong to groups outside the school and in many instances it were similar groups that we belonged to. We, as a group have also come to learn about character aspects of other group members, that previous to involvement, we were unaware of. We now know that we enjoy similar things and interests and there were positive things that we could tell about each other. This made us as a group feel good about ourselves when we came to realise that others had good thoughts and feelings about us. I can see that each one of you has |

big smile. Did you enjoy today's session?

Group:          Yes

Researcher:     Can I expect you back tomorrow?

*Shouts of yes.*

Researcher:     When I see you again we get to do some fun things, thereafter we will tell each other about our home environments. As we already know we have not visited each other and I am sure you want to know about the places that each one comes from. Do you want to learn about how each one lives.

Group:          Yes.

Researcher:     Then we will get to know a little about each other when we meet again. Thanking you for coming and we will meet again tomorrow.

**SESSION SIX**

Researcher: Welcome to our session today and I want to tell you once again how happy I am that all of you have decided to carry on with the group work and that no one is having problems. I am now going to give each pair one sheet that I have with me. There are a lot of numbers on the sheet and they are all mixed up. I want you to follow the numbers in the correct order and join the dots together so that you can discover who your mystery friend is. I have here pencils and rubbers that I am going to give to you to use. Once you receive this you must decide who will join the numbers together. You both can't do this, only one person can join and the partner must help along. Just take one sheet, one pencil and one rubber when it comes around. Tandeka will pass this to you.

*Tandeka gets up, walks to the front and does not let the group help themselves but gives the stationery personally to each pair.*

Researcher: You can begin as soon as you are ready.

Pupil M: You join, I will find the numbers.

Pupil K: What do you want to do?

Pupil M: Give me the pencil and rubber.

Pupil L: I will join and you point out, but you always get to do everything, let me join. Have a turn then.

Pupil R: You take the pencil and I will count the numbers. No, give me the rubber, it will be faster if I rub out the mistake.

Pupil L: Make it faster, wait I have to look for the numbers.

Pupil K: I think Mahendra and them are beating us.

Pupil J: Yeah, because you are looking there and not for the numbers.

Pupil L: I can see what this is.

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil B: | Don't tell them, let's finish. |
| Pupil R: | Don't stop, it is almost finished. |
| Pupils B and L: | It's a bird! |
| Pupil M: | Don't stop, let's finish. |
| Researcher: | So everyone has found out that the mystery friend is a bird? |
| Pupil Bo: | Let's colour the picture, then we can see whose is the best. |
| Researcher: | Not now but you can take it with you and colour in. I also have some spare pictures that you can have. No don't get up now, you can have them when you leave. It is very nice to see you all work together and help each other complete the picture. Can you tell me how you felt when you were working together? |
| Pupil T: | Happy. |
| Pupil R: | Happy. |
| Pupil M: | Good. |
| Pupil J: | Happy. |
| Pupil K: | Happy. |
| Pupil Bo: | Good. |
| Pupil B: | Happy. |
| Pupil L: | Excited. |
| Researcher: | That goes to show that we can work together with other cultures, complete what is required of us and still be happy with what we have done. We need now to remember that it is possible to work with each other and still achieve what we initially set out to do, as was the case now. |
| | For our next activity I want you to think of an object from nature that you can identify with, for example you can be a flower, water or even the sunset. Write down what you have chosen, fold the paper and when I come around you will place the paper in the |

box. I will then draw one at a time out and you get to tell me the characteristics of the object. Then you can guess who identified with each object and that person will tell us why he or she chose that particular object.

Now that we have all the pages, I will draw out one at a time and you tell me what characteristics come to mind.

First one, flower!

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil R: | Pretty. |
| Pupil B: | Different colours. |
| Pupil T: | Pretty colours. |
| Pupil Bo: | Bright, beautiful. |
| Pupil M: | Beautifies the place. |
| Pupil L: | Used for special occasions to make the place colourful. |
| Pupil K: | Sweet smelling. |
| Pupil J: | Different kinds. |
| Researcher: | Next, flower again, let's think of other characteristics. |
| Pupil L: | Provides pollen for bees. |
| Pupil R: | You get wild flowers. |
| Pupil B: | Different petals. |
| Pupil M: | Can grow on their own or be planted. |
| Pupil L: | Some only grow outside. |
| Pupil M: | Needs the sun to grow. |
| Researcher: | Can you think of any more characteristics? |

*Silence.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil M: | I think we gave all. |
| Researcher: | Then let's draw out the next. Sunset! Characteristics? |
| Pupil B: | Not so hot. |
| Pupil R: | The sun is going down and the birds and animals know that it is |

time to go to sleep.

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil Bo: | The sun look like a big orange. |
| Pupil M: | The sun sets later in summer, you can stay out and play and the sky is orange and yellow. |
| Pupil Bo: | It is a happy time, everyone is coming home. |
| Pupil T: | It is quiet. |
| Pupil L: | It is a peaceful time, there is less noise. |

*Silence.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Researcher: | Flower again, I think we will pass as we have given all the characteristics like Mahendra pointed out, unless anyone can think of any more? |
| Pupil Bo: | No, carry on. |
| Researcher: | Water! |
| Pupil T: | We need water to bath and wash our clothes. |
| Pupil B: | Also to cook and to grow things. |
| Pupil M: | It is a home for sea creatures. |
| Pupil K: | It gives food, like fish. |
| Pupil Bo: | You can swim in water. |
| Pupil L: | You get salt and fresh water. |
| Pupil R: | It is colourless, no smell or taste. |
| Pupil L: | It is a liquid. |
| Researcher: | Next, water again! Any more characteristics? |
| Pupil M: | It can be dangerous, if you can't swim. |
| Pupil J: | It can be rain. |
| Pupil L: | It can cause damage if it rains too much. |
| Researcher: | Any more characteristics? |
| Pupil L: | Lets see the next one. |

*Group nods.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Researcher: | Water again! Let's try the last one, water! |
| | Shall we now guess who wrote what. |
| Pupil M: | Yes. |
| Pupil B: | (Smiling and moving from side to side on the chair). Yes let's guess. |
| Researcher: | Sunset? |

*Group start yelling names.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Pupil L: | Bonga? |
| Researcher: | No. |
| Pupil M: | Krishna? |
| Researcher: | No. |
| Pupil R: | Jabulani? |
| Researcher: | No. |
| Pupil T: | Bongiwe? |
| Researcher: | Yes. Tell the group why you choose the sunset. |
| Pupil B: | Because the sun in the evening is not hot, it is warm and does not burn you and I am kind and happy, not hot and burning like the daytime sun. |
| Researcher: | That is very interesting. |
| Pupil M: | The three flowers are the other three girls. |
| Researcher: | Is that correct? |
| Pupil L: | I choose a flower because they are colourful and I like colourful clothing. I don't like looking plain. |
| Pupil R: | I choose a flower because they smell sweet and I like perfume. |
| Pupil T: | They have pretty petals and I am pretty just like a flower. |
| Researcher: | We know that four others chose water and this would have to be the boys. Will you tell the group why you decided to choose water? |

| Pupil K: | I go to the cuttings to fish with my father and I like fishing. |
|---|---|
| Researcher: | Tell the group what the cuttings is. |
| Pupil K: | It is the beach near the canal in Merebank. |
| Pupil M: | I choose the water because I like to go to the pool or even the beach to swim. |
| Pupil J: | I like to swim and to run on the sand. |
| Pupil Bo: | I choose water because sometimes on Saturdays we take the taxi to Mini Town Beach. We take sandwiches and juice and even buy meat to braai and we swim. |
| Researcher: | You were in most instances able to identify with the same objects from nature. Only by being able to talk to each other were you able to discover this. If you decided not to talk then you would not have known that you were able to share so many things in common. By talking you were able to feel good and was therefore able to contribute to the discussion. However, if you were not willing to talk then no one would have wanted to talk to you. You can only make friends if both individuals are willing to participate in the relationship, it cannot be one-sided. If you refuse to talk then obviously that other person will give up trying and not want to become involved with you. It is only by speaking to each other that friendships can develop and you will come to see that you do share things in common.

Tomorrow we are going to play some fun games that involves a lot of moving around which I am sure you are going to enjoy. Thank you for today and I will see you tomorrow. |

# ANNEXURE III:

Categorising of contents of group sessions by
an outside person

CATEGORISATION OF CONTENTS OF SESSION ONE TO EIGHT

ACCORDING TO THEMES BY AN OUTSIDE PERSON

| THEME | CATEGORY | ANALYSIS |
|---|---|---|
| INVOLVEMENT | *linking | *Not hesistant in chosing a partner |
| | *connecting | *Able to bond with partner |
| | *Status | *Facial expression - happy to be working |
| | *Disclosures | together |
| | *Collaboration | *Ability to use animals to identify - equal status |
| | *Sharing | participation encouraged- no expression of |
| | *co-operation | insecurity / non co-operation - contact |
| | *Experiencing | visiably positive |
| | | *co-operative in disclosure of information of |
| | | personal nature |
| | | *Recognition of similar experiences - motivated |
| | | to become involved - positive experiencing of |
| | | contact - friendly,warm co-operative |
| | | environment |
| | | *Lack of reservation to physical contact - |
| | | indicative of mental well-being |
| | | *Contact experienced positively - able to |
| | | perceive themselves in relation to each other |

| THEME | CATEGORY | ANALYSIS |
|---|---|---|
| ACCEPTANCE | *Warmth | *Identification with peer groups outside school - |
| | *Security | assisted in positive character analysis - |
| | | appreciation of diversity |
| | *Identifying | |
| | *Cohesion | *ability to identify with common fears- |

*Social consciousness

*Distancing

*Responsibility

*Collabotation

encouraged disclosure of personal information-

displays competence in interaction - self

esteem increased through identification with

others

*Being able to identify with one another created

the feeling of security that allowed for others to

be perceived more positively - displaying the

emergence and acceptance of equal status

contact this undoubtedly lead to the ability to see

the need to accomodate diversity - willingness to

change created a more cohesive group that

helped enhance self worth

| THEME | CATEGORY | ANALYSIS |
|---|---|---|
| UNDERSTANDING | *Self expression | *Sharing knowledge about peer group created |
| | *Individuality | a perception of similar affaliations , this |
| | * Interaction | enabled the group to identify with each other |
| | *Self esteem | *By engaging the group to identify through |
| | | assuming roles of animals allowed for |
| | *Belonging | new information about the self and others to |
| | *Empathy | be assimilated and thus social perceptions of |
| | *Identifying | differences were corrected and self esteem |
| | *Collaborating | increased |
| | *Subordination of | *Being able to identify made it easier to |
| | own interests | share personal information about the self |
| | *Self disclosure | and lifeworlds which made empathy between |
| | *Equal status | group members possible |
| | | *Increased knowledge about the self and others |

allowed for the group to identify with their own

culture while still being able to identify socially

*Being able to identify socially encouraged the

group to accept the need to act more

responsibly towards not only themselves but

others aswell

*Increased accountability allowed for the

development of more responsible patterns of

behaviour that allowed group members to

percive the multicultural nature of larger society

*Becoming aware that all individuals were part

of a larger multucultural society allowed for

greater understanding of each other

*Increased contact made the group aware of the

fact that the environment was a shared

environment and that behaviour needed to be

adjusted in accordance with such diversity

*The ability to act more positively towards each

other made the group members perceive

themselves more favourably , thus making self

comparisons more favourable

| THEME | CATEGORY | ANALYSIS |
|---|---|---|
| COMMUNICAT-ION | *Attend and respond | *Attentative to discussion therefore able to |
| | *Human interaction | respond positively to discussion and move |
| | *Self expression | away from prejudical thinking and feeling |
| | *emotions | *Assumption of new roles to express |
| | *Attitudes | thinking and felling allowed for greater freedom |
| | *Competence | of self expression that encouraged unique |

*Isolation          individuality to emerge

                    *Ability to see each other as individuals

                    made sharing of personal information more

                    comfortable and were therefore able to feel

                    compent in identifying with each other

                    *Positive social interaction was able to lead to

                    greater self expression in an atmosphere devoid

                    of anxieties or insecurities allowed for cultural

                    isolation to be overcome

| THEME | CATEGORY | ANALYSIS |
|---|---|---|
| Stereotyping/ | *Social cognitions | *Change in cognitions at discovery of |
| Sensitivity/ | *Ridge boundaries | belonging to similar peer groups caused |
| Respect | *Limited contact | new awareness of the self and the self in |
| | *Similarities | relation to those previously perceived to be |
| | *Prejudices | "different" |
| | *Closed relationships | *Change in perceptions allowed for the |
| | *Tolerence | development of sensitivity,previuosly |
| | *Emotional sensitivity | hampered by ridge cultural boundaries |
| | *Inadequate socialisation | that limited contact |
| | *Cultural isolation | ⁂ Increased contact allowed for sensitivity |
| | *Social perceptions | towards prejudical attitudes that this allowed for |
| | | group members to mentally and emotionally |
| | | connect with the experiencing of similar fears |
| | | *Exposure to different lifeworlds increased |
| | | deficits in social cognitions caused by cultural |
| | | isolation and this enabled the development of |
| | | empathy |

*Engaging in telling about intimate detail of

cultural traditions and the discovery of

similarities in cultures allowed for the

development of sensitivity and respect between

individuals

*Being able to physically interact by allowing

their legs to be tied together in the "three

legged" race and the excitement arising from

this activity could be taken to indicate that group

members were appreciative , sensitive and

respectful to cultural diversity while being able

to co-operatively interact and accept that no one

person could be held responsible for the other

not winning

*The spirit of comradarie evoked by the activity

was indicative that positive social integration

between the cultures did in fact help to redirect

stereotyping

| THEME | CATEGORY | ANALYSIS |
|-------|----------|----------|
| TRUST | *Warmth | *No coecersion    in sharing information |
|       | *Insecurities |     about self |
|       | *Attend and respond | *Warm sincere interpersonal contact encouraged |
|       | *Connect |     interest in what was being said as well as an |
|       | *Integration of experiences |     enthusiasm to want to share information |
|       | *Categorisation |     about home environments |
|       |          | *Willingness to share "secrets"is indicative that |

insecurities have been overcome and a

connection between cultures has

occured

*Desire to share traditional foods

indicative of positive integration

of experiences that allows for

categorisation caused by

insecurities to be unlearnt

*Willingness to compromise on

language issue indicates group is

more trusting and secure with each other

# ANNEXURE IV:

Example of written after-test: Sustained
effectiveness of intervention programme

# EXAMPLE OF WRITTEN AFTER TEST: SUSTAINED EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERVENTION PROGRAMME

INSTRUCTIONS : Each of the questions below concerns the quality of present inter cultural relationships between Indian and Black pupils . Please answer the questions below as honestly as possible .

a. Irrespective of cultural heritage all pupils need to be afforded equal participation in school activities :

Yes there are, just like us we must allow them to take part in things that happen in school

b. School rules need to be changed to reflect the multicultural nature of the institution :

School must not be only for Indians .

c. I am aware of how my peers from different cultures spend their time after school hours :

I understand black pupils now.

d. I am now able to initiate cross cultural communication :

I find it easier to talk to blacks.

e. Pupils can be characteristically grouped together according to their culture :

No they are the same as us.

f. If they so wish pupils should be able to communicate in their own language :

yes.

g. In cross cultural conflict situations blame can be attributed to those different from my own culture :

no not all blacks like to fight.

h. I now have friend from other cultural groups :

I have many black friends.

i. There is a need to learn more about those different from ourselves :

yes we will not fight over nothing

j. Similarities do exist within the different cultures :

yes we are the same in many ways.

k. There are two distinct groups within the school environment :

we need to become one school group.

l. Presently most of my cross cultural experiences are positive / negative :
Positive I talk to other blacks

m. I would defend my Indian / Black peers even though we belong to different cultural groups :
I will help.

n. I am now more accepting of my cross cultural peers :
I am able to talk to them

o. Attending a multicultural school has its advantages :
Yes I know more about blacks.

p. If they so wish pupils should be allowed to express their own cultural opinions in the classroom :
Yes we will learn from each other.

q. There is no superior race or culture :
We are the same.

4.

r. It is possible to build harmony and unity within a multicultural context :

We can talk to each other and become friends.

s. Things can only improve in the future :

By learning from each other in the group we know that things can improve.