CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION

1.1 Background

According to Sulloway (1997: 20) the family and being a child form the core of human behaviour, as this is where the key for development lies. It is commonly accepted that the mother-child relationship is the first and most basic relationship with which any human being is confronted (Stevens & Mathews 1978: 3).

Keirsey (1998(b): 1) quotes DH Lawrence: "Let us beware and beware and beware ... of having an ideal for our children. So doing we damn them."

As can be seen from the quotation above, parents should be very careful of the impact of their expectations on their children.   Most parents believe that they have a responsibility to raise their children to play an active role in society by guiding them to become mature adults. The parent-child relationship includes a serious dimension of interpersonal manipulation as part of the parent's job description. This often leads to rebellion and a struggle between parents and children (Keirsey 1998(b):1).

According to Keirsey (1998(b): 1 - 3), the root of the problem is that parents tend to assume that their children are the same as they are, extensions of themselves, who will follow in their footsteps. In order to address this problem it is advisable for parents to take their children's different temperaments into consideration.

This leads to a discussion of temperament, an aspect over which there are many different opinions and theories found in literature as well as on the Internet. Carey and McDevitt (1995: 1) state that some misconceptions have even caused damage in children's lives as their temperaments were not taken into consideration and situations were poorly handled, causing considerable sorrow that could have been prevented.

According to Watson (2000: 16), temperament is partly heritable and to some extent already present at birth. Wachs and Kohnstamm (2001: 1) agree that temperament is innate. The possibility that it is innate, makes it part of the most basic relationship in any person's life, namely the mother-child relationship.

1.2   Analysis of the problem

The analysis of the problem will shed some light on how I became aware of the problem. Furthermore, it includes a preliminary literature study on temperaments and the mother-child relationship as well as other related concepts. A problem statement will also be formulated.

1.2.1   Awareness of the problem

Every child is unique. Even two siblings growing up in the same home with the same mother and father are each unique beings. Each child has his or her own temperament, which does not necessarily correlate with the temperaments of the parents or the siblings.

When I realised how different my own children are, I searched for guidelines on how to best handle both of them. At first I attended parent guidance meetings where the different temperaments were described using a model which Dr Arnold Mol, a well-known industrial psychologist, uses when doing couple counselling. I purchased a book "*Understanding your child's temperament"* by Beverely LaHaye (1997). This book shed some light on the matter and helped me to cope better with my own children. The underlying principle in the book is to identify your child's temperament and consider that knowledge when you are interacting with your child.

While engaged in case studies for the first year of my M Ed degree, I also identified some temperament differences. On the basis of both the senior and the junior case study, I developed the view that if the mothers had considered the children's temperaments, certain problems would have been avoided.

For example the Grade 11 boy with whom I worked is a very sensitive boy and interprets all criticism as a personal attack, while his mother has good intentions and actually tries to motivate him. This stimulated my thinking. If his mother had realised that he was sensitive and had transformed the criticism into positive reinforcement, she would probably have motivated him more and both would have been content.

I also argued that if a therapist could develop a method to help mothers to identify their children's temperaments and then act accordingly, it could have a positive influence on the mother-child relationship. It could also prevent or solve certain problems stemming from this relationship.

The different temperaments of children are a phenomenon which has interested me for some time. It seemed to me that the value of knowledge on children's temperaments in education should be taken into consideration. The following quotation of Carey and McDevitt (1995: 4) sums up the problem aptly: "Despite abundant support for the existence and clinical importance of temperament differences in children, the phenomenon is not well understood by the general public or by child health and education professionals".

Although LaHaye's book is excellent and can be of great help to both parents and educational psychologists, I still think that this is a field which justifies further investigation. There seems to be a need for guidance with regards to temperaments in the mother-child relationship for both parents and educational psychologists. Especially after the different viewpoints I came across in the literature. This study can also serve as groundwork for further study

1.2.2 Preliminary literature study

The purpose of the preliminary literature study is to gather more information in the literature on the concepts of this research. The concepts are the mother-child relationship and temperaments. Firstly, the parent-child relationship which forms the background for the mother-child relationship, will be discussed.

Traditional research has construed socialisation as the effects of parent-child relationships (Lytton 1980: 1). Lytton also states that the influence on behaviour not only comes from the parent, but also from the child. In other words it is a mutual process of interaction and influence.

Ruchkin, Eisemann and Hägglöf (1999: 707) state that parental rearing is an influential factor in personality development. For example, mothers, with problem focussed reactions, were positively linked to social functioning of children. Furukawa (1992: 317) assumed that the early experiences with the parents exert great influence on the child's psychological adjustment later in life.

"The heart and centre of the parent-child relationship is knowing and understanding each child" (LaHaye 1997: 20). Knowing and understanding your child implies knowledge of the child's temperament. Temperament could be defined as follows: "... relatively stable, early appearing, biological based individual traits" (Rothbart & Bates in Wachs & Kohnstamm 2001: vii).

LaHaye (1997: 23) emphasises that nobody has a single temperament. Each person has a unique combination of at least two, or occasionally, three temperaments. She distinguishes four basic temperaments: sanguine, choleric, melancholic and phlegmatic. She extends this to 12 possible blends. These four temperaments are often mentioned in popular South African magazines and are referred to by the creativity guru, Kobus Neethling (Parent Guidance meeting, 2000). This view has its origin in the theory of Hippocrates. He named the four temperaments after the four secretions: Sanguine (blood from the heart); Choleric (yellow bile from the liver); Phlegmatic (phlegm from the lungs); and Melancholic (black bile from the kidneys) (Hedges 1997: 1).

For example, Carey and McDevitt (1995: 16 - 17), distinguish nine dimensions of temperament: activity, rhythmicity, approach, adaptability, intensity, mood, persistence/attention span, distractibility and sensory threshold. The effect of these dimensions in different situations is observed and then categorised in terms of temperament risk or protective factors.

Watson (2000: 16) refers to temperament as follows: "... the concept of temperament implies that these observed individual differences are at least partly heritable and that they are to some extent already present at birth. Secondly temperaments emerge as broader, more general dispositional constructs that subsume various emotional traits, along with other associated cognitive and behavioral characteristics."

Cattell (in Watson 2000: 174 - 177) is famous for the 16 Personality Factor test (16PF), an assessment tool with which personality factors can be identified. Researchers have refined these 16 factors into the following five factors: neuroticism, extroversion, conscientious, indulgence and openness. The five factors represent the broadest and most general dimensions of individual differences.

According to Watson (2000: 176), Eysenck narrowed the factors down to the Big Three namely; neuroticism, extraversion and disinhibition or psychotism. Watson (2000: 177) concludes as follows: "... one essentially can transform the Big Three into the Big Five by (1) decomposing the third dimension into Conscientiousness and Agreeableness and (2) including the additional dimension of Openness."

Halverson, Kohnstamm and Martin (1994: 86) confirm the validity of the five factor model (Big Five), by stating that most of the temperaments' scales used fit reasonably well within the structure of these five factors. The five-factor model also represents a comprehensive framework for systematic classification and interpretation of temperament.

Keirsey (1998 (a): 1) emphasises the uniqueness of each person by saying: "People are different in fundamental ways. They want different things; they have different motives, purposes, aims, values, drives, impulses and urges." Keirsey (1998 (c): 1-2) compared the four dimensions of function types of Myers and Jung: thinking, feeling, intuition and sensory, combined with extroversion versus introversion and judgement versus perception, with his own four intelligence types: rationals, idealists, artisans and guardians. The purpose of the comparison was to determine temperaments or as Keirsey (1998 (c): 1-2) puts it: "... try to figure out how each intelligent type functions in different situations."

The preliminary literature study illustrated a few of the many viewpoints on temperaments and gave some background for the mother-child relationship. The study also provides a basis for more detailed literature study in Chapters 2 and 3.

1.2.3   Problem statement

The literature seems to indicate that temperaments have an influence on behaviour. It also came to light that the parent-child relationship is a mutual relationship. I believe that the way in which a mother perceives her child plays a role in the way that she will handle the child. Some mothers are unaware of this.

The problem, which will be researched, is:

In what way does a mother's perspective of her child's temperament influence their relationship?

In the following section the aims and objectives of this research are given.

1.3   Aims and objectives

The general aim of this study is to ascertain if a mother's perspective of her child's temperament influences their relationship. The more specific objectives will be to determine the following:

- What is temperament?
- Finding possible temperaments.
- Developing a unique model of temperaments.
- Determining some mothers' perspectives on temperaments.
- Helping mothers to become aware of their children's temperaments.

In order to achieve the above aims and objectives, a suitable research method has to be used. The research method is briefly indicated in the next section.

1.4   Research method

According to Charles (1995:5), research literally means " to travel through or survey". In order to do research, it is necessary that the researcher has a viable research method to investigate the phenomenon.

An investigative, descriptive and explanatory literature study will be the starting point with the aim to investigate temperaments as well as the mother-child relationship. Related concepts, such as personality traits and perspectives, will also be considered.

An empirical investigation will be carried out. Rich descriptive data will be gathered from five to seven biological mothers by applying group work techniques and by requesting them to write two naive sketches. The first sketch will entail a description by the mother of her experience of her child/ren's temperaments. The second sketch will follow after the focus group, even a week or two later as part of the personalisation phase of the group work process and will entail the mothers' experience of the previous session. The sketches and their relevance to temperaments will then be analysed and interpreted. The research will be qualitative and investigative.

1.5   Definition of important concepts

The following concepts are explained to clarify understanding.

Temperaments: " ... a person's character, disposition and tendencies" (McLeod & Hanks 1985: 1204). Watson (2000: 16) described temperaments as observed, individual differences which are partly heritable and to some extent present at birth. John Bates (Chapter 9, Wachs & Kohnstamm 2001: 177) defines temperament as biologically based, early appearing, relatively stable personality characteristics. My personal view of temperament is that it is an observed inborn characteristic, unique to each person and closely related to his or her personality.

Personality traits: "... the sum total of all the behavioural and mental characteristics by means of which an individual is recognized as being unique" (McLeod & Hanks 1985: 844). According to the Department of Psychology of Flathead Valley Community College (FVCC) (2003: 1), Allport defines **personality** as the dynamic organization of the psychophysical systems that determine characteristic behaviour and thoughts of the individual. Personality involves the interaction of biology and cognition. Cattell (FVCC 2003: 1) defines a **trait** as the potential of a person to react in a certain way. In my opinion personality traits are those characteristics which distinguish one person from another.

Perception: "... the process by which an organism detects and interprets information from the external world by means of the sensory receptors" (McLeod & Hanks 1985: 839). According to Carey and Mc Devitt (1995: 10), perception is a mixture of parental and child data. Siegler (1991:92) sees perception as the contribution of biological inheritance to the way in which the world is perceived. He also states that some parts of perception might be a learned skill. My view of perception is that it is the way that one interprets different stimuli from the outside world using a number of senses.

1.6 Research programme

Chapter 1 is an outlay of the context, problem statement, objectives of the research, research method as well as a definition of some of the relevant concepts.

The focus of this research is temperaments in the mother-child relationship, therefore **Chapter 2** will concentrate on literature on the mother-child relationship and different perceptions regarding this relationship. **Chapter 3** closely relates to Chapter 2 by exploring literature on temperaments and related concepts such as personality traits.

Chapter 4 focusses on the research design which includes the research method. **Chapter 5** reports the research process, the analysed data and the interpretation thereof. Finally, **Chapter 6** will give summaries and conclusions as well as the limitations of and recommendations regarding the research project.

1.7 Summary

Chapter 1 served as an orientation for the research and the emphasis fell on the background to the research, analysis of the problem, objectives of the research, research method, a description of the relevant concepts as well as a clarification of the research programme.

A literature study is necessary to gain the background knowledge needed as basis for the empirical research. Chapter 2 explores the mother-child relationship as part of the phenomenon which will be researched.

CHAPTER 2:   THE MOTHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

2.1   Introduction

The quality of the parent-child relationship plays a very important role in the socio-emotional development of the child. Because this is a dissertation of limited scope, the focus will fall on the mother-child relationship. Another reason for this focus is that the mother-child relationship is the first and most basic relationship of a person's life. Misunderstandings between mother and child can impede the whole developmental process.

In this chapter the mother-child relationship will be investigated with the help of recent sources, but certain fundamentals of this relationship will be illustrated by reference to some older works. The concept of the mother-child relationship will be described and the origin of this relationship will be discussed.

Attention will be given to factors influencing this relationship as well as complementary roles of mothers and fathers. Possible characteristics of the effective mother-child relationship will be highlighted. The importance of the uniqueness of each child will be highlighted at the end of the chapter in order to link it to the next chapter.

2.2   The concept mother-child relationship

As mentioned above, the mother-child relationship is the first and most basic relationship in which one engages. Before the mother-child relationship can be explored, it is important to know what the concept relationship means. Mills (1998: 524) describes a relationship as follows: "... cognitive generalizations, thought to derive from representations of self and others formed in early relationships which serve to organize thoughts, feelings and responses in interpersonal interactions."

To illustrate the importance of the mother-child relationship as the most basic relationship I refer to Becky Jackson (2002: 1) who spent four years pursuing an education degree and learned valuable lessons about what and how to teach. Thereafter, she became a full time mother and said: "I learned more about education

from being a mother. In fact I've discovered the effective way that young children learn is not a program for effective teaching or a whole language approach, but only the natural relationship between a mother and her child."

The mother-child relationship is the prototype of all subsequent attachments. Infants appear to relate to their mothers primarily as sources of security (Stevens & Mathews 1978: 33).

The birth of a child initiates a human being into a life-long process of mutual adaptation between the child, his other intimate relationship partners and the broader social environment. A human being's first intimate relationship is the mother-child relationship. The need for security and comfort play an important role in shaping this interaction (Cardillo, Pendry, Pizzuro & Trzop 1998: 1-2).

Trzop (in Cardillo et al 1998: 7) agrees that the mother-child relationship is the first important step in determining how the child will learn and how the child will perceive his or her own relationships. Early bonding with the mother teaches the child warmth and affection and has a physiological effect on the child.

The mother-child relationship is a constant two-way flow of influence processes, the child adapting to the mother and she, in turn adapting to the child. In a sense it can be seen as truism (Lytton 1980: 278). Stevens & Mathews (1978: 3) also support this dual relationship: "Now it's recognized that the infant contributes significantly in helping to maintain this interaction within mutually pleasurable beneficial ranges." Both the mother and child contribute to the establishment of an optimal interaction (Stevens & Mathews 1978: 4).

Klaus and Kennel (in Stevens & Mathews 1978: 5) emphasise the importance of attachment in the mother-child relationship. Attachment refers to the affectional bond between the infant and mother (Ashton in Stevens & Mathews 1978: 31). This attachment is crucial for the survival and development of the child. Rall (2000: 2) maintains that attachment is a prerequisite for the mother-child relationship.

Stice and Gonzales (1998: 6) state that being a mother is composed of two relatively orthogonal dimensions: control and support. Control refers to consistency of discipline while support includes companionship, intimacy, affection, aid and expression of admiration. Dr James Dobson (2002: 94) says: "A mother must be a psychologist, physician, theologian, educator, nurse, chef, taxi driver, fire marshal and occasional police officer. If she succeeds in each of these responsibilities, she gets to do it all again tomorrow."

One can therefore assume that the mother-child relationship is the first and most basic relationship a person is involved in and it serves as foundation for almost all the other relationships to come. I conclude that this relationship is one of dual interaction and factors such as attachment, adaptation, control and support play an important role.

2.3   The origin of the mother-child relationship

When a women conceives a child, her life changes in many ways (Winnicot 1957: 3). Winnicot (1957: 4) goes on by saying that to become a mother you go through a great deal and it is just this that enables the mother to grasp certain fundamental principles of infant care. These principles take years of study for those who are not mothers. Stevens and Mathews (1978:9) support Winnicot by saying that during the first stage of pregnancy, a woman must come to terms with the knowledge that she will be a mother.

A mother learns to be a mother by taking full responsibility for her child and acting in a way that comes naturally to her (Winnicot 1957: 13). "... there seem to be little intellectual understanding of the process of mothering. One is left with the impression that what goes into mothering is something not thought through, not conceptualized, possibly because mothering is seen as mainly a biological process" (Brody & Axelrad 1978: 37).

I conclude that the mother-child relationship has its origin at the conception, gestation and at the birth of a baby as well as with the interaction between a child and the person who consistently meet that child's needs.

2.4   Factors influencing the mother-child relationship

In Table 2.1 a few of the many factors influencing the mother-child relationship are given.

The mother's perception	Attachment	Environmental factors	Child rearing style
The mother's perception of herself and of herself as a woman.

The attitude which the mother expressed prior to birth of the baby.

How the mother perceives herself as a mother (Hanes & Dunn in Stevens & Mathews 1978: 57).

A mother's behaviour goes hand in hand with her perception and she models it to her children (Harris & Liebert 1991: 445). | Odendaal (2002:23 - 33) highlights different kinds of attachment between mother and child which have different impacts on their relationship:

* Very close relationship - the mother provides unconditional support and security.
* Avoiding relationship - the child shows signs of active avoidance of the mother, to protect himself from her possible aggression.
* Ambivalent attachment - the child is looking for physical contact with the mother and at the same time resisting it due to lack of sensitivity on the mother's side.
* Unorganised attachment style - the mother is emotional unstable and it leads to insecurity in the child.

According to Harris and Liebert (1991: 198) the attachment between a mother and her child gives the basis for the child's social referencing. | Dobson (2001:20) highlights the following three factors:

* A child's mother is the single most important environmental factor in the life of a child.
* The nature of the child's living areas.
* The amount and nature of direct language directed at the child.

Marriage, divorce, single parenthood - love and acknowledgement for the child, from the mother, form the prerequisites for success within the relationship.

The mother's occupation - full-time, part-time, housewife.

Wealth - the level of wealth may link to health, violence and conflict (Odendaal 2002: 23-33). | Pychyl (1998:5) identifies the following three child rearing styles:

* Permissive - high nurturance, low maturity demands, control and communication.
* Authoritarian - high in control and maturity demands low in nurturance and communication.
* Authoritive - high in control, maturity demands, nurturance and communication.

Odendaal (2002: 23-33) refers to the above mentioned three, but also include the following styles:

* Overprotection - either a very dominant mother or an obedient mother.
* Perfectionism - mother is over-critical.
* Lack of social modelling by the mother.
* Suspicion - the mother distrusts her own abilities and expects the child to fail. Child has a poor self-esteem and performs according to expectations of mother.
* Coercive - mother decides on almost everything, without consulting or really considering the child.
* Consistent reprimanding - aggression towards child, claiming that it is in the best interest of the child.
* Neglect - lack of physical or emotional support from the mother.
* Rejection - constant pre-conditions for acceptance. |

Table 2.1 Summary of factors influencing the effective mother-child relationship

Although there are many factors influencing the mother-child relationship, only the following four groups of factors were discussed in Table 2.1: The mother's perception, attachment, environmental factors and child rearing style. Viewpoints from different sources (see above) were included with each factor.

Smetana, Kochanska and Chaung (2000:410 -411) add that "mothers' everyday rules" and their conception of these rules, also play an influencing role in the mother-child relationship. At first the mother applies rules for the child's protection, then the rules develop into guidelines for conventional functioning.

It became clear to me that the mother-child relationship does not exist in isolation but is influenced by various factors. Some of these factors include the mother's perception, attachment, environmental factors and child rearing style.

In the next section the emotional aspect of the mother-child relationship will be investigated.

2.5 The emotional systems in the mother-child relationship

Relationships entail attribution of meaning, involvement and experience (Oosthuizen, Petrick & Wiechers 1990: 29-31). All three concepts play a very important role in the development of different relationships. However, as this is only a dissertation of limited scope, I will focus on the emotional (experience).

As mentioned, in Section 2.4, love and acceptance play a very important role in the efficiency of the mother-child relationship. As love and acceptance form the basis for the mother-child relationship, the emotional system will be investigated.

Westman (1973: 266) states that mother-infant affectional system goes through the following three stages of maturation and learning:

i)   **Maternal attachment and protection,** which starts at the time of birth. This
        stage is characterised by protective, maternal response such as cradling, nursing
        and restraining the infant when he or she attempts to leave.

ii) **Maternal ambivalence of transition,** which is characterised by increasing indifference and occasional punishment by the mother.

iii) **Maternal separation and rejection** usually take place when another sibling is born.

The infant-mother affectional system develops in four stages (Westman 1973: 267-269):

i) **The reflex stage** is associated with reflexes of nursing and intimate physical contact.

ii) **The stage of comfort and attachment** implies the development of security via the protection that the mother gives.

iii) **The stage of security** is the phase in which the infant explores the environment with mother as a secure base.

iv) **The separation stage** is associated with a certain amount of ambivalence.

Pychyl (1998: 7) identifies the following as the affective basis for the mother-child relationship:

• Desire for proximity when stressed.

• Security when mother is present.

• Feelings of trust.

"(M)aternal sensitive and gentle discipline is expected to promote a secure attachment relationship with the child" (Van der Mark, Bakermans-Kranenburg & van Ijzendoorn 2002: 364). Mothers who are less intrusive and more sensitive were associated with more compliance from their children (Van der Mark et al 2002: 373). Yewchuk and Schlosser (1995: 83) found that affectionate and understanding mothers had a positive influence on the level of achievement of their children.

In my opinion love, acceptance and affections accompany a strong and efficient mother-child relationship. However, the role of the father should not be ignored.

2.6   The complementary roles of mothers and fathers

To be able to see the mother-child relationship in perspective, I found it apt to differentiate between the roles of the mother and the father. Firstly, Lytton (1980: 274-275) arrives at the following generalizations:

i)   Fathers engage in much more rough-and-tumble, physical contact, while mothers are far more involved in verbal exchanges with the child.

ii)   Fathers' interactions are mostly positive, usually because the mother is worn out by the activities of the day.

iii)   The mother takes the main responsibility for the child, while the father assumes the supportive role.

iv)   The mother is seen as the main source of comfort and nurturance and the father is seen as the playmate.

Montague and Walker-Andrews (2002: 1348) speculates that infants first become attuned their mothers, because mothers spend more time directly interacting with them than fathers do.   In research done by Marshall (2001: 485) she comes to following conclusion: "Both male and female respondents view themselves as mattering more to their mother than to their father".

The purpose of the above discussion was to put the mother in the mother-child relationship into perspective. Although the father also has an important role to play, the reason for focussing solely on the mother-child relationship in this study, and not on the father- or caregiver-child relationship is because it is a dissertation of limited scope.

2.7   The characteristics of the effective mother-child relationship

Ideally every mother strives for the ideal and effective mother-child relationship and tries her utmost to attain that.   Furthermore, this relationship has an impact on the development of the child as a being as a whole.   In Odendaal's (2002: 19 - 23) research, she identifies the following characteristics and emphasised that they must be present in a balanced way to realise the most effective relationship.

2.7.1 Trust

The child's development of trust in the world around him or her depends on the quality of care and love that he or she receives from his or her mother (Jernberg in Odendaal 2002:19). Louw (1990: 62) refers to Erikson's model of development where trust versus distrust forms the core of the first year of a child. If a mother is reliable and consistent in her handling of the child, the child knows that he or she can rely on her and trust develops (Harris & Liebert 1991: 87). According to Odendaal (2002: 19), the child gains this trust through physical contact with the mother.

2.7.2 Involvement

Harris and Liebert (1991: 57) emphasise the importance of mothers being warm and responsive in their relationship with their children. The child experiences a feeling of mattering to the mother and this is very important in developing an individual identity (Marshall 2001: 473).

2.7.3 Unconditional acceptance

Keirsey (1998 (a): 1) emphasises the uniqueness of each person by saying: "People are different in fundamental ways. They want different things; they have different motives, purposes, aims, values, drives, impulses and urges." If a mother unconditionally accepts her child's uniqueness, it may lead to support and positive reinforcement in the development process. A mother must recognise each child's individual personality and temperament and act accordingly (Odendaal 2002: 20).

2.7.4 Balanced realistic expectations

A mother must give reasonable challenges to her child, keeping her own personality as well the child's ability and personality in mind. If the pressure on the child is not too high, it contributes to the development of self-respect and self-esteem (Odendaal 2002: 21).

2.7.5   Emotional guidance

An infant's first expression of affection occurs in the family context and the mother plays a significant role in this (Montague & Walker-Andrews 2002: 73). Eisenberg, Losoya, Fabes, Guthrie, Reiser, Murphy, Shepard, Poulin and Padgett (2001: 183) state that maternal practices and behaviours influence a child's learning regarding emotional expression.

Warmth and positive emotions are primarily linked to children's appropriate expression of emotions (Eisenberg et al 2001: 200). A mother ought to recognise and reflect a variety of emotions, for example, happiness, sadness, madness, frustration, anxiety and concern. It is important that the child learns to handle both positive and negative emotions (Odendaal 2002: 21).

2.7.6   Discipline

Mothers need to learn how to react to their children's behaviour in an appropriate and effective way - by giving positive attention when the child is being cooperative, and by dealing with misbehaviour promptly and firmly (Harris & Liebert 1991: 326). When a mother demands obedience from her child, gives proper limits and routine, it may lead to development of security as well as a sense of responsibility in the child. This also implies that a mother should not be judgmental and she should allow her child to ask questions. In other words she must maintain a balanced authority style (Odendaal 2002: 22).

2.7.7   A mother's modelling

A mother has a responsibility to model a good example to her child. This is particularly important in communication, handling of conflict and socialisation, because it empowers the child's most fundamental life skills and gives guidelines for forming his or her own relations (Odendaal 2002: 22 - 23). Children's behaviour with others are a reflection of how their mothers behaved with them (Harris & Liebert 1991: 445). In my opinion, one must see the above characteristics as integrated parts of the whole mother-child relationship.

2.8   Summary

Rall (2000: 3) summarises it as follows; "A whole parent (mother) is one who respects children just as they are with their individual temperaments and personalities. Rather than feeling that the child is a lump of clay that needs moulding, they realize that the child is like a flower that is unfolding. They realize that parenting is simply guiding the process that is already in place, and that parenting is simply being flexible and patient."

The first task of a mother is to recognise the different temperaments of her children and also recognise the role her own temperament plays in the way of bringing up her children (Keirsey 1998 (b): 1).

In the next chapter (Chapter 3) temperaments will be investigated on the basis of a literature review.

CHAPTER 3:   TEMPERAMENTS

3.1   Introduction

The first task of a mother is to recognise the different temperaments of her children and also to recognise the role which her own temperament plays in the way of bringing up her children (Keirsey 1998(b): 1). As part of its theoretical definition, the concept of temperament includes, an inherited neurochemical and physiological profile, linked to emotions and behaviour (Kagan 1994: 33). "The concept of temperament has by now been widely recognized as one of the basic aspects of the psychological mechanism of behavioral functioning" (Chess & Thomas 1996: 3).

In this chapter temperaments will be investigated with the help of recent sources. An attempt is made to define temperaments and distinguish it from personality. Furthermore, some of the most predominant theories are investigated. Finally, the importance of temperaments in the mother-child relationship is addressed.

3.2   The concept: temperaments

Temperaments are one of the basic aspects of behavioural and psychological functioning (Wachs & Kohnstamm 2001: 1), therefore it will be useful to explore the concept of temperaments in more detail. Chess and Thomas (1996: 32) describe temperaments as a general term referring to the *how* of behaviour, while ability concerns the *what* and *how well* of behaving and motivation the *why*. Temperaments can be synonymous with behavioural style and are influenced by environmental factors (Chess & Thomas 1996: 32).

Temperaments can be seen as a complex set of hypothetical constructs. However, it can generally be defined as biologically rooted individual differences in behavioural tendencies that are present in early life and are relatively stable across various situations and over the course of time (Kohnstamm, Bates & Klevjord Rothbart 1989: 4).

Wachs (in Halverson, Kohnstamm & Martin 1994: 209) agrees with the idea of stability in temperaments, because he defines temperament as the biologically based domain of personality that appears early in life and is stable across time. Bates (in Wachs & Kohnstamm 2001: 177) explains the concept of biologically based as follows: it can mean a variety of things, but for most temperament traits, it means genetic predisposition and implies variations in numbers and types of nerve cells and their neurotransmitter chemicals in characteristic locations of the brain.

Temperaments comprise the subclass of personality traits that have been inherited, in other words the basic building blocks of personality (Hagekull in Halverson et al 1994: 227).

According to Kagan (1994: 40), "temperament conventionally refers [sic] to stable behavioral and emotional reactions that appear early and are influenced in part by genetic constitution." Kagan (1994: 41-42) goes on to identify four criteria for the temperamental category. Each category refers to a quality that

- varies among individuals;
- is moderately stable over time and situation;
- is under genetic influence; and
- appears early in life.

In conclusion, I refer to Watson (2000:16), who describes temperaments as individual differences which are at least partly heritable and already present at birth. Temperaments emerge as broader, more general dispositional constructs that subsume various emotional traits, along with other associated cognitive and behavioural characteristics. The stability of one's temperament through life, is one thing on which most of the other researchers are agreed.

3.3   Temperament and personality

Thomas and Chess (in Kohnstamm et al 1989: 250) describe personality as the composite of those enduring psychological attributes which constitute the uniqueness of

the individual and which are expressed in diverse behaviours and different life situations.

Personality can be viewed as a more inclusive term than temperament, in that personality includes cognitive structures such as self-concept, in addition to specific expectations and attitudes toward the self and others as well as strategies for adaption (Rothbart in Kohnstamm et al 1989: 220). He explains that the cognitive aspects of personality will increasingly influence the expression of the temperament across development. Personality differences therefore greatly contribute to experience and expression of temperament. An infant's whole personality virtually consists of temperament, but as an individual develops, more aspects of personality start having an effect on emotions and behaviour.

Temperaments are the subclass of personality traits that are inherited and they differ from other personality traits in their initial appearance during the first year of life. The inheritance and early appearance suggest that temperaments are the basic building blocks of personality (Buss in Kohnstamm et al 1989: 49). Temperament influences personality development and personality influences the expression of temperament, but in both cases idiosyncratic factors - sometimes explicable, sometimes not - as well as unpredictable life events, play a important role in the personality-temperament-interaction (Thomas & Chess in Kohnstamm et al 1989:257).

Finally, no matter what theoretical orientation a researcher may have, the nature and development of personality cannot be equated with temperament. Seven of the different theories regarding temperaments are discussed in the next section.

3.4   Different theories

In the light of the preceding discussion on temperaments and personality, some of the existing theories regarding temperaments will be investigated. The first is the theory of Hippocrates, secondly Keirsey's research which developed from the work of Jung and Myers, then the theory of Eysenck. Thereafter, the nine categories of Chess and Thomas (with the help of Birch) follow and the link between the nine categories and the development of the 'Goodness-of-Fit' model will be explained. Then the four basic

temperaments proposed by Buss and Plomin will be highlighted , followed by the Big Five factors and lastly, the five temperamental dimensions according to Rothbart will be investigated.

Due to the limited scope of this research the theories are only discussed in brief in order to introduce the reader to pertinent theories about temperaments.

3.4.1 The four classic temperaments - Hippocrates

Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine, suggested that individual differences can be divided into four distinct groups, which he called temperaments. He proposed that each temperament was formed by unequal secretions coming from the heart, the liver, the lungs and the kidneys. He named the four temperaments after the four secretions: Sanguine (blood from the heart); Choleric (yellow bile from the liver); Phlegmatic (phlegm from the lungs); and Melancholic (black bile from the kidneys) (Hedges 1997: 1).

Galen (Kagan 1994: 2-4) combined the above temperaments with the bodily qualities which are: warm versus cool and dry versus moist. This idea stems from the Greeks and Romans. He compiled the following theory:, the sanguine was warm and moist, the choleric was warm and dry, the phlegmatic was cool and moist and the melancholic was cool and dry. According to Galen, these concentrations are influenced by external events such as climate and diet. Galen was convinced that the differences of temperament were positive rather than negative (Hedges 1997: 1).

Kant (Kagan 1994: 8) accepted Galen's four temperaments, he just added his view that the sanguine and the melancholic were emotional types, while the choleric and the phlegmatic were action types. Kant distinguished between affect and action, because he believed that humans possessed a will that could control behavioural consequences.

LaHaye (1997: 24, 25-72) also based her findings on this theory of the four temperaments: sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic and melancholic. She went further and described twelve possible combinations, because she felt that the four categories were too narrow. Figure 3.1 gives a diagrammatical representation of the four main categories and the twelve possible blends.

SanPhleg	PhlegSan
SANGUINE **(Red)** SanMel SanChlor	**PHLEGMATIC** **(Blue)** PhlegMel PhlegChlor
MelSan MelPhleg **MELANCHOLIC** **(Green)** MelChlor	ChlorSan ChlorPhleg **CHOLERIC** **(Yellow)** ChlorMel

Figure 3.1 The four main categories of temperaments and twelve possible blends

The above figure can shortly be explained as follows: According to LaHaye (1997: 25-29) the Sanguine is talkative, fun-loving and cheerful. Children with this temperament will stand out as the loud and boisterous, with a short interest span. They also tend to be daring and impulsive and sometimes lack persistence due to their restlessness. The Sanguine does not like it to be alone and appears to be a good follower, who demands strong supervision.

The Choleric temperament tends to be independent and self-sufficient with strong will and a determined spirit. They usually are active persons and good leaders, but their self-confidence can cause them to be untactful when speaking. The choleric child needs definite areas of responsibility and leadership (LaHaye 1997: 30-35).

LaHaye (1997: 42-46) states that a Phlegmatic temperament is naturally quiet, easygoing and calm. They are usually introverts with a lack of motivation and sometimes are selfish. They tend to bend to peer pressure very easily.

The Melancholic is the most gifted of all the temperaments, but may suffer from an inferiority complex, because they are very sensitive and prone to mood swings. Negativism is a habit pattern distinctive of the melancholic temperament. They also set very high goals for themselves and are very faithful (LaHaye 1997: 36-41). In Figure 3.1 the twelve possible blends according to LaHaye (1997: 47-71) are also illustrated, but not discussed, due to the limited scope of the dissertation.

3.4.2 Eysenck's theory

Eysenck's theory is based primarily on physiology and genetics (Kohnstamm et al 1989:559). Eysenck defines temperament as that aspect of personalities that is genetically based and inborn (Sheppard 2000: 1). At first he conceptualized two biologically-based categories of temperament, namely **extraversion vs introversion** and **neuroticism vs stability** (Sheppard 2000: 1). These two categories can be seen as two axes of the following quadrants:

- **Stable extraverts** - **sanguine** with qualities such as outgoing, talkative, responsive, easygoing, lively, carefree and leadership abilities.
- **Unstable extraverts** - **choleric** with qualities such as touchy, restless, excitable, changeable, impulsive and irresponsible.
- **Stable introverts** - **phlegmatic** with qualities such as calm, even-tempered, reliable, controlled, peaceful, thoughtful, careful and passive.
- **Unstable introverts** - **melancholic** with qualities such as quiet, reserved, pessimistic, sober, rigid, anxious and moody (Sheppard 2000: 1).

After further research Eysenck (Sheppard 2000: 1) realised that a third category was required: **psychotism vs socialisation**. Psychotism is characterised by some of the following traits: aggressiveness, assertiveness, egocentricity, unsympathetic, manipulative, achievement-oriented, dogmatic, masculine and tough-minded. Socialisation stands directly opposite to these characteristics. From the above it seems clear that Eysenck acknowledged and valued the theory of Hippocrates (as in Section 3.4.1).

3.4.3 Jung, Myers-Briggs and David Keirsey's theories

Jung (Hedges 1997: 1) diverged from these four temperaments and proposed that individual behaviour is not random, but has a pattern to it. The pattern in an individual's behaviour is governed by the person's preferences and, according to Jung, each preference is chosen from a pair of opposites (Hedges 1997: 1).

Hedges (1997: 2) goes on to highlight the contribution of Katherine Briggs and her daughter, Isabel Myers. Briggs and Myers agreed with the theory of Jung and they developed the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). The MBTI can be seen in Figure 3.2

Focus on attention	**I** **Introvert**	**E** **Extrovert**
Acquiring information	**S** **Sensing**	**N** **Intuition**
Making decisions	**T** **Thinking**	**F** **Feeling**
Orientation to outside world	**P** **Perceiving**	**J** **Judging**

Figure 3.2   Dimensions of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)
(Plsek, P E & Associates 2001: 1)

The MBTI was developed from the theory that each individual has a primary mode of operation within the following four categories:

- **Flow of energy** - this defines the way in which one receives the essential part of one's stimulation: is it received from within (**I**ntroverted) or from external sources (**E**xtraverted)? It establishes whether the dominant function is external or internal.
- **How information is acquired** - this deals with the preferred method of taking in and absorbing information: are the five senses (**S**ensing) trusted to acquire information, or alternatively, are instincts (i**N**tuitive) used?

- How individuals **prefer to make decisions** - this refers to whether decisions are based on logic and objective consideration (**T**hinking) or on personal, subjective value systems (**F**eeling).

- The **basic day-to-day lifestyle** preferred - either purposeful, more comfortable with scheduled, structured environments (**J**udging) or flexible and diverse, more comfortable with open, casual environments (**P**erceiving) (BSM Consulting 2000:2).

David Keirsey (Hedges 1997: 4) based his research on the theory of Jung and the data collected by Briggs and Myers. Keirsey organised the dimensions of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) into four temperaments and gave them titles (BSM Consulting 2000: 1):

- Sensing/Judging (SJ) – Guardians;
- Sensing/Perceiving (SP) – Artisans;
- Intuition/Thinking (NT) – Rationals;
- Intuition/Feeling (NF) – Idealists.

Keirsey (1998 (d): 1) gave the following people as examples for each temperament:

- The Rationals - Margaret Thatcher and Albert Einstein;
- The Idealists - Mahatmar Gandhi and Eleanor Roosevelt;
- The Artisans - Ernest Hemingway and Barbara Streisand;
- The Guardians - George Washington and George Truman.

Hedges (1997: 4) states that Keirsey's Temperament Theory is a model which is used for human behaviour in industry, social work, education and counselling throughout the world.

3.4.4 The work of Chess and Thomas: The nine categories of Birch and the 'Goodness-of-Fit' model

The previous three theories saw temperaments as characteristics, while Chess and Thomas (1996: 32-33) state that the term temperament can be equated to the term behavioural style. Chess and Thomas (1996: 31-35) approached Dr Herbert G Birch, a man with a brilliant talent for investigating and systematically analysing data, to use the data collected by them through parental interviews to develop a system of categories. After Chess and Thomas had reviewed the nine categories, they concluded to the following:

1. **Activity level**. The motor component present in a given child's functioning and the diurnal proportion of active and inactive periods.
2. **Rhythmicity (regularity)**. The predictability and/or unpredictability in time of any function. It can be analysed in relation to the sleep-wake cycle, hunger, feeding pattern and elimination schedule.
3. **Approach or withdrawal**. The nature of the initial response to a new stimulus, such as food, toys, persons, situations, places and procedures. Approach responses are positive, whether displayed by mood expression or motor activity.
4. **Adaptability**. Responses to new or altered situations. The ease or difficulty with which reactions to stimuli can be modified in a desired way.
5. **Threshold of responsiveness**. The intensity level of stimulation that is necessary to evoke a discernable response, irrespective of the specific form that the response may take, or the sensory modality affected. The behaviours used are response to (a) sensory stimuli, (b) environmental objects and (c) social contacts.
6. **Intensity of reaction**. The energy level or response, irrespective of its quality or direction.
7. **Quality of mood**. The amount of pleasant, joyful and friendly behaviour versus unpleasant, crying and unfriendly behaviour.
8. **Distractibility**. The effectiveness of extraneous environmental stimuli in interfering with or in altering the direction of the ongoing behaviour.

9. **Attention span and persistence**. The length of time particular activities are pursued by the child, with or without obstacles.

Chess and Thomas (1996: 35-39) distinguish three major clusters of the nine categories, based on clinical observations and factor analysis. Carey and McDevitt (1995: 12) describe the three clusters as follows:

1. **The difficult child**, who is irregular, low in approach, slow to adapt, intense and displaying many negative moods.
2. **The easy child**, who is regular, approachable, adaptable, mild and predominantly positive in mood.
3. **The slow-to-warm-up** or shy child, who is typically withdrawn in novel situations, slow to adapt, low in activity and intensity and displays a very negative mood.

The simple appeal of these three labels lead to extensive use by professionals and others. Unfortunately it has also led to various misuses. A newer and more neutral term was needed and it appeared in the form of "temperament risk factors".

These factors lie on a continuum: on the one hand, they are conceived as any temperament characteristic predisposing a child to an incompatible relationship with his or her environment, caretakers and problems with the child's health, behaviour and development. On the other hand, they are seen as temperament assets or protective factors which promote a good fit in certain circumstances and are conducive to the child's development and behaviour (Carey & McDevitt 1995:13).

The second group of factors reflect "(T)he development of an individual's temperamental characteristics depends on the **'Goodness-of-Fit'** between the special characteristics of the individual and the nature of the demands and conditions imposed by the developmental context" (Mednick, Hocevar, Schulsinger & Baker 1996: 398). Chess and Thomas (1996: 52) define goodness-of-fit as the situation where the organism's capacities, motivations and behaviour style are in accord with the environmental demands and expectations.

Carey and McDevitt (1995:14-15) identify the following factors to take into consideration when goodness-of-fit is evaluated:

- the strength and duration of the temperament characteristics;
- other characteristics of the individual;
- the environment;
- the outcome.

Finally it can be said that the goodness-of-fit model posits that two children with the same temperament profile may have very different outcomes, depending on the demands of their particular environments. There has to be a goodness-of-fit between the child's temperament and his or her environment (Kawaguchi, Welsh, Powers & Rostosky 1998: 78).

3.4.5 Buss and Plomin

Cardillo et al (1998: 1-2) reflected the four basic temperaments proposed by Buss and Plomin as follows:

- Emotionality is the tendency to express negative emotions such as anger and fear frequently and vigorously.
- Activity is the degree of physical movement that a person typically shows.
- Impulsivity is the degree to which a person acts quickly without deliberation, moves from one activity to the next and finds it difficult to practise self-control.
- Sociability is the tendency to be outgoing and friendly and to enjoy the company of others.

This theory of Buss and Plomin (Cardillo et al 1998: 2) states that individuals are born with tendencies to develop these four temperaments to different levels. A unique interpersonal style can be seen as a function of temperament.

3.4.6 The Big Five

There is a close relation between temperament and personality factors. The opinion of some researchers is that the five factors of personality, or the Big Five, represent universal dimensions which also describe the structure of temperament (Angleitner & Ostendorf in Halverson et al 1994: 70). According to Costa and McCrae (in Wachs & Kohnstamm 2001:20), the Big Five according to Angleitner and Ostendorf are:

- general emotionality and poor inhibition;
- experience seeking, flexibility and low rhythmicity ;
- anger, boredom and susceptibility;
- sociability, approach and positive mood;
- tempo, vigour and persistence scales.

Ahadi and Rothbart (in Halverson et al 1994: 190) have a slightly different view of the Big Five: **Extraversion**, **Agreeableness**, **Conscientiousness**, **Neuroticism** and **Openness to Experience**. There remains some confusion on how the Big Five is defined.

The Big Five provide a target framework for identifying temperamental dimensions (Ahadi & Rothbart in Halverson et al 1994: 202). The factors of the Big Five can be seen as an adequate measure for individual differences including temperament (Zhang, Kohnstamm, Slotboom, Elphick & Cheung 2001: 165). These five factors have some resemblance to the theories of Eysenck, Chess and Thomas as well as Buss and Plomin. This is discussed in the next section.

3.4.7 The five temperamental dimensions according to Rothbart

Rothbart (in Molfese & Molfese 2000: 90) organised his study on temperaments in the following five temperamental dimensions:

1. **Fear** - proneness to distress evoked by novelty or challenge and angry, irritable, angry distress evoked by limitations. To a certain extent fear overlaps with the approach-withdrawal dimension of Thomas and Chess.

2. **Frustration-Irritability** - part of a negative pole of mood.

3. **Positive affect and approach** - can be linked to emotionality (Chess & Thomas 1996) and sociability (Buss & Plomin 1998).

4. **Activity level** - most frequently studied dimension of temperament in children.

5. **Attention duration of orienting** - closely related to distractibility and attention span of Thomas and Chess.

The above seven perspectives are only a few of the many ways that temperaments can be viewed, but they are the ones which appear the most frequently in the literature and are widely used. Figure 3.3 gives a diagrammatic summary of the seven views.

As can be seen in Figure 3.3 the theories of Hippocrates, Eysenck and Keirsey can be linked, because all three of them see temperaments as characteristics. Eysenck based his four categories on the four temperaments according to Hippocrates. On the other hand, Chess and Thomas refer to temperaments as a behavioural style. One of their nine categories - **activity** - is similar to one of Buss and Plomin's four basic temperaments. Rothbart also identifies activity levels as part of the five temperamental dimensions. Finally the Big Five links temperaments with personality factors and although **Extraversion** is one of the five, it differs from the viewpoint of Eysenck.

Although only seven perspectives on temperaments were discussed in Section 3.4, it provides a sound background to investigate temperaments in the mother-child relationship. This investigation is done in the next section.
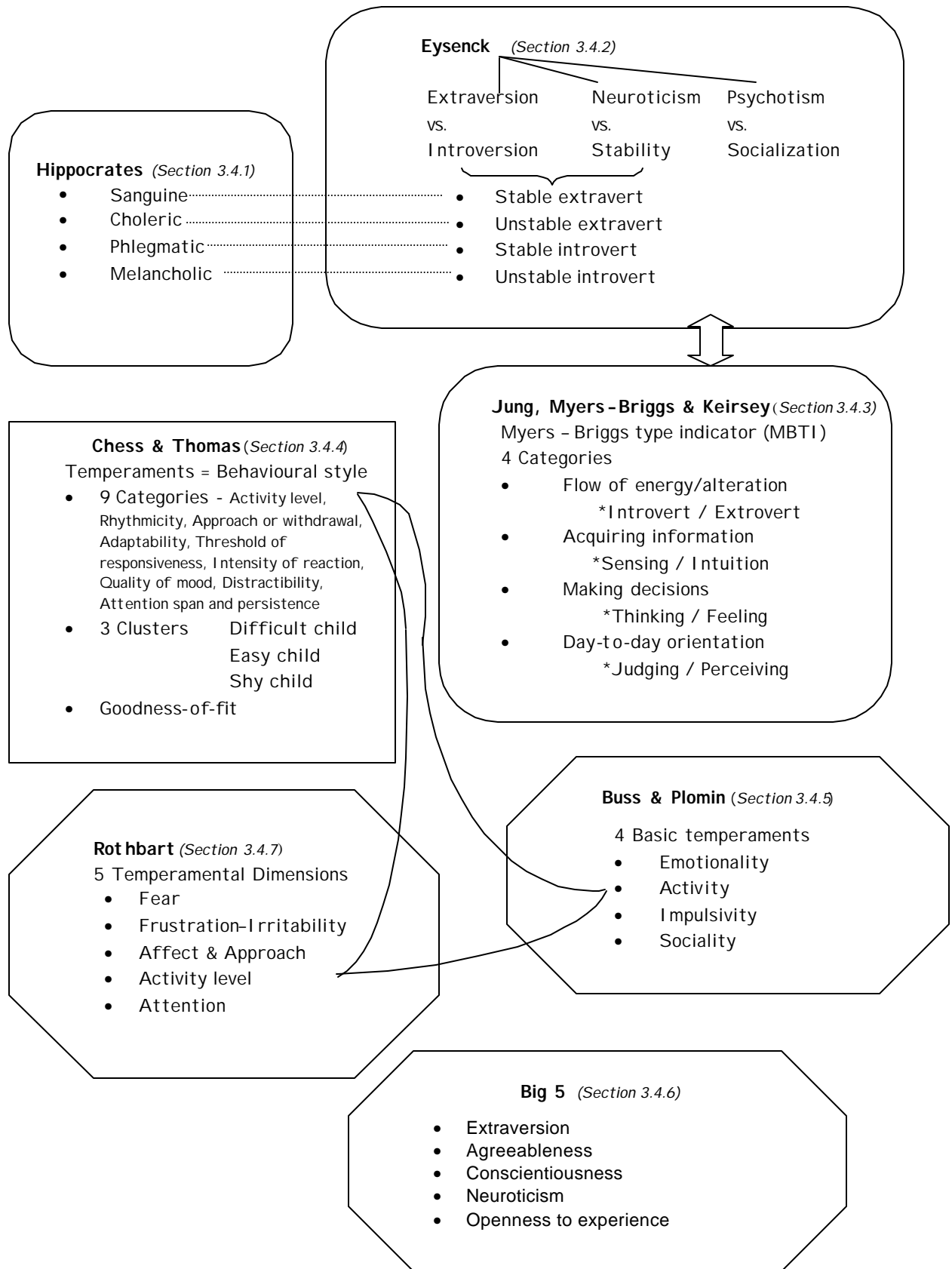
Eysenck *(Section 3.4.2)*

Extraversion   Neuroticism   Psychotism
vs.   vs.   vs.
Introversion   Stability   Socialization

- Stable extravert
- Unstable extravert
- Stable introvert
- Unstable introvert

Hippocrates *(Section 3.4.1)*
- Sanguine
- Choleric
- Phlegmatic
- Melancholic

Jung, Myers–Briggs & Keirsey *(Section 3.4.3)*
Myers – Briggs type indicator (MBTI)
4 Categories
- Flow of energy/alteration
    *Introvert / Extrovert
- Acquiring information
    *Sensing / Intuition
- Making decisions
    *Thinking / Feeling
- Day-to-day orientation
    *Judging / Perceiving

Chess & Thomas *(Section 3.4.4)*
Temperaments = Behavioural style
- 9 Categories - Activity level, Rhythmicity, Approach or withdrawal, Adaptability, Threshold of responsiveness, Intensity of reaction, Quality of mood, Distractibility, Attention span and persistence
- 3 Clusters   Difficult child
                    Easy child
                    Shy child
- Goodness-of-fit

Buss & Plomin *(Section 3.4.5)*

4 Basic temperaments
- Emotionality
- Activity
- Impulsivity
- Sociality

Rothbart *(Section 3.4.7)*
5 Temperamental Dimensions
- Fear
- Frustration–Irritability
- Affect & Approach
- Activity level
- Attention

Big 5 *(Section 3.4.6)*

- Extraversion
- Agreeableness
- Conscientiousness
- Neuroticism
- Openness to experience

Figure 3.3 Summary of theories on temperaments

3.5   Temperaments and the mother-child relationship

"Correlations between temperamental characteristics and maternal behaviour reflect bidirectional interactive processes as well as genetic linkages between mother and child characteristics" (Collins, Maccoby, Steinberg, Hetherington & Bornstein 2000: 222). There is evidence that early temperaments as perceived by parents, can predict behavioural adjustment in later years (Bates, McFadyen-Ketchum in Molfese & Molfese 2000: 157).

The role of maternal behaviour, in children's difficult temperaments, has received much attention, but not the effect on children's inhibited temperament (Rubin, Burgess & Hastings 2002: 485).   After a study was done by Rubin et al (2002:492-493) the following conclusions were made:

- If mothers were psychologically controlling, their toddlers, who show peer inhibition, will be likely to be socially reticent in later life.
- Mothers, who engaged in negative parenting, lead their inhibited toddlers to show a anxious-solitary behavioural profile.
- Maternal behaviour that is overly warm, unresponsive, intrusive and/or derisive increases the shyness of the toddler.

Collins et al (2000: 222) go on by stating that temperamental characteristics in the child may set in motion a chain of reactions from mothers. These reactions could include: difficultness, irritability and distress proneness in the child and may evoke hostility, criticism, avoidance, coercive discipline and a lack of playfulness from the mother. Mednick et al (1996: 398) discovered that early infant temperament influences the mother's reactions, which in turn influences the infant's temperament, in other words a bidirectional pattern in interaction.

In fostering conscience, maternal use of gentle child-rearing techniques was more effective with temperamentally fearful children than with bolder children. Bolder children required more maternal responsiveness and a close emotional bond in fostering a conscience. This and other findings imply that even though the mother's

behaviour is influenced by the child's temperament, the mother's actions contribute distinctively to the later behaviour of the child (Collins et al 2000: 222). Mills (1998: 523-537) found in her research that a mother's power schemas and patterns of control were moderated by their daughters' temperamental characteristics, especially in the case of fearful daughters; for mothers with a low power schema, the more fearful their daughters were, the more authoritarian, more protective and less consistent the mothers become.

Stice and Gonzales (1998: 24) found that temperament moderated relations between parenting and adolescent problem behaviour are interactive rather than additive. This finding supports the speculation that temperament may interact with maternal practices in determining the effectiveness of socialisation, especially for adolescents who are temperamentally at risk.

Chess and Thomas (1996: 90) raise the importance of mothers' getting to know their children's temperament and teaching the children to understand their own temperaments. Chess and Thomas (1996: 109) feel so strongly about this that they believe that environment, temperament -based consulting and anticipatory guidance has the potential to become a standard part of paediatric and psychiatric health.

3.6   Summary

Temperaments were investigated in this chapter. To some extent temperaments were defined and distinguished from personality. Seven of the most predominant theories were investigated and then linked to the mother -child relationship.

According to Bates et al (in Molfese & Molfese 2000: 157), there are firmly established empirical findings which indicate the importance of the child temperament-parenting. Kawaguchi et al (1998: 79) summarise it neatly: "....these studies and clinical interventions stress the importance of understanding the ways in which an individual's temperament affects the quality of his close relationships, particularly relationships between mothers and children."

Chapter 4 focusses on the research design which includes the research method.

CHAPTER 4:   RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1   Introduction

Chapter 2 was devoted to investigating the mother-child relationship with the help of relevant literature. In Chapter 3, literature was used to shed some light on the concept of temperaments.   The role of temperaments in the mother-child relationship was discussed, referring to existing research.   This chapter explains the design of the empirical research.

The research problem as well as the objectives of the empirical study, serve as a guideline for the procedures to be applied.   The research design is viewed from a qualitative research perspective.   The research method, data collection and data analysis are discussed in detail.   Matters such as the reliability, validity and ethical considerations are addressed.

4.2   Research problem

Temperament is a concept researched from a number of different view points.   The possibility that temperament is innate, makes it part of the most basic relationship, namely the mother-child relationship (see Section 1.1).   Furthermore, the literature tends to indicate that temperament influences behaviour, as seen in the mutual mother-child relationship (see Section 1.2.3).   I argue that a mother's view of her child influences her behaviour towards her child and that some mothers are unaware of this. Therefore, the research problem is:

Does a mother's perspective of her child's temperament influence their relationship?

In Section 4.3 the specific objectives of the empirical study are highlighted.

4.3   Objectives of the empirical study

The core of this research is to ascertain if a mother's perspective of her child's temperament influences the relationship. The specific objectives of the research can be stated as follows:

*   To determine some mothers' perspectives on temperaments, with particular reference to their own children's temperaments;

*   To help mothers to become aware of their children's temperaments.

With these objectives as guidelines, the research design is discussed in the following section.

4.4   Research design

De Vos (2001: 105) sees the research design as a blueprint to conduct research. The research design is the plan and structure of investigation of how data will be collected and analysed and how answers to research questions are obtained (Kerlinger 1986: 279).

For the purpose of this study a qualitative approach, which is explorative, descriptive and contextual, will be followed.

4.4.1   A qualitative approach

Qualitative research methods were developed in social sciences to enable researchers to study social and cultural phenomenon and are characterised as an attempt to obtain an in-depth understanding of the meanings and descriptions of the situation as presented by the informants (Boje 2001: 4). "Qualitative research is the inquiry process of understanding a social or human phenomenon, based on building a holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed reviews of informants and conducted in a natural setting" (Creswell 1998: 1). Qualitative research derives meaning from the perspective of the subject (De Vos 2001: 242).

Hancock (2002: 2) states that qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. In other words, it aims to help us to understand the world in which we live and why things are the way they are. "Qualitative research is concerned with finding the answers to questions which begin with: why? how? in what way?" (Hancock 2002: 2).

Hancock (2002: 4) identifies four major types of qualitative research design. They are as follows:

- phenomenology;
- ethnography;
- grounded theory;
- case study.

In this study, the phenomenological approach is applied to collect and analyse information. The phenomenological approach attempts to understand and interpret the meaning attribution of participants in their everyday life (De Vos 2001: 80).

Phenomenology is a way of describing something that exists as part of the world in which we live. A phenomenum is not an object that is extrinsic to the world, but it is the appearing of the world itself (Sandowsky 2002: 5). Varela and Shear (1999: 3) view some phenomena as what one thing is for something else. Phenomena may be events, situations, experiences or concepts (Hancock 2002: 4). Hancock (2002:4) goes on to state that phenomenological research begins with the acknowledgement that there is a gap in our understanding and that clarification or illumination will be of benefit. It does not necessarily provide definite explanations but it does raise awareness and increases insight.

In qualitative research, there is usually little information about a specific phenomena available, therefore an inductive reasoning strategy which is explorative, descriptive and contextual is followed (Poggenpoel, Myburgh & Van der Linde 1999: 411-412). This inductive strategy uses the researcher as instrument.

In the next subsections, the researcher as instrument as well as the explorative, descriptive and contextual characteristics are discussed.

4.4.1.1 *The researcher as instrument*

The researcher acts as in instrument in the process of describing the interpretation and phenomenon of the interactions with the participants in which the researcher personally was involved (Denzin & Lincoln 1994: 108). In this study, this interaction takes place in the natural environment of the participants and the researcher is actively involved in the process by means of a focus group.

The research design in qualitative research need not be rigid and applied as originally planned. Qualitative research gives the opportunity for the researcher to make adjustments to the way in which data are collected in order to gain the most effective way of collecting information with regard to the phenomenon (Schurink 1998: 243).

4.4.1.2 *Explorative*

The research is explorative in the sense that one gathers new insights into the phenomenon, without the domination of a preconceived hypotheses (Mouton & Marais 1990: 45). According to Mouton and Marais (1990: 45) the objective of explorative research is the exploration of relatively unknown research areas. In this study, the intention is to gain new insights in the role of temperaments in the mother-child relationship. The explorative method exposes the perspectives of mothers on their children's temperaments.

4.4.1.3 *Descriptive*

The purpose of the descriptive study is to get an accurate and precise description of the phenomenon which is researched (Mouton & Marais 1990: 47). Creswell (1994: 63) states that by collecting data, the researcher develops a detailed description of the specific phenomenon.

The researcher can use bracketing, probing and clarifying as some of the advanced verbal response skills applied in phenomological interviews (Okun 1996: 75). In this study the researcher aims to describe the perspectives of mothers on temperaments accurately and as precisely as possible.

4.4.1.4 *Contextual*

During qualitative research the phenomenon will be investigated within its specific context. The interpretation and explanation of human behaviour in such a study cannot be generalised for any other population (Mouton & Marais 1990: 52). The context of this study will be the mothers in their relationships with their children.

4.5   Population and sampling

Sampling is a process of selecting the people who will be participants in the research (Burns & Grové 1997: 58). The researcher finds an area where the phenomenon is the most likely to appear and the purposive choice is influenced by the availability of suitable participants as well as their willingness to be involved (Merriam 1998: 183).

Sampling criteria are described to make the population as homogeneous as possible. This is a process of listing the prerequisite characteristics for membership of the target population (Burns & Grové 1997: 293). To be included in this study, the mothers must:

- have at least one, preferably two children;
- be willing to participate voluntarily in the study;
- be willing to participate in group sessions;
- be committed to the study until the data are saturated.

The sampling size will be approximately between five and seven biological mothers resident in the same suburb in Pretoria and members of the same culture in order to create a homogenous group.

4.6   Research method

The research method includes a variety of activities. The process starts with group work as a method to allow the mothers to become aware of temperaments in general, also to create an atmosphere in which every mother feels at ease. Then the data collection takes place by asking the participating mothers to complete a naive sketch as part of the awareness process, followed by a focus group discussion with them. This phase entails the exploration phase of the group work (see Section 4.6.1).

Next the data are analysed and after a few weeks, further short individual interviews with each mother will follow. The mother will be asked to write another naive sketch on her experience of the previous session in order to determine if personalisation took place.

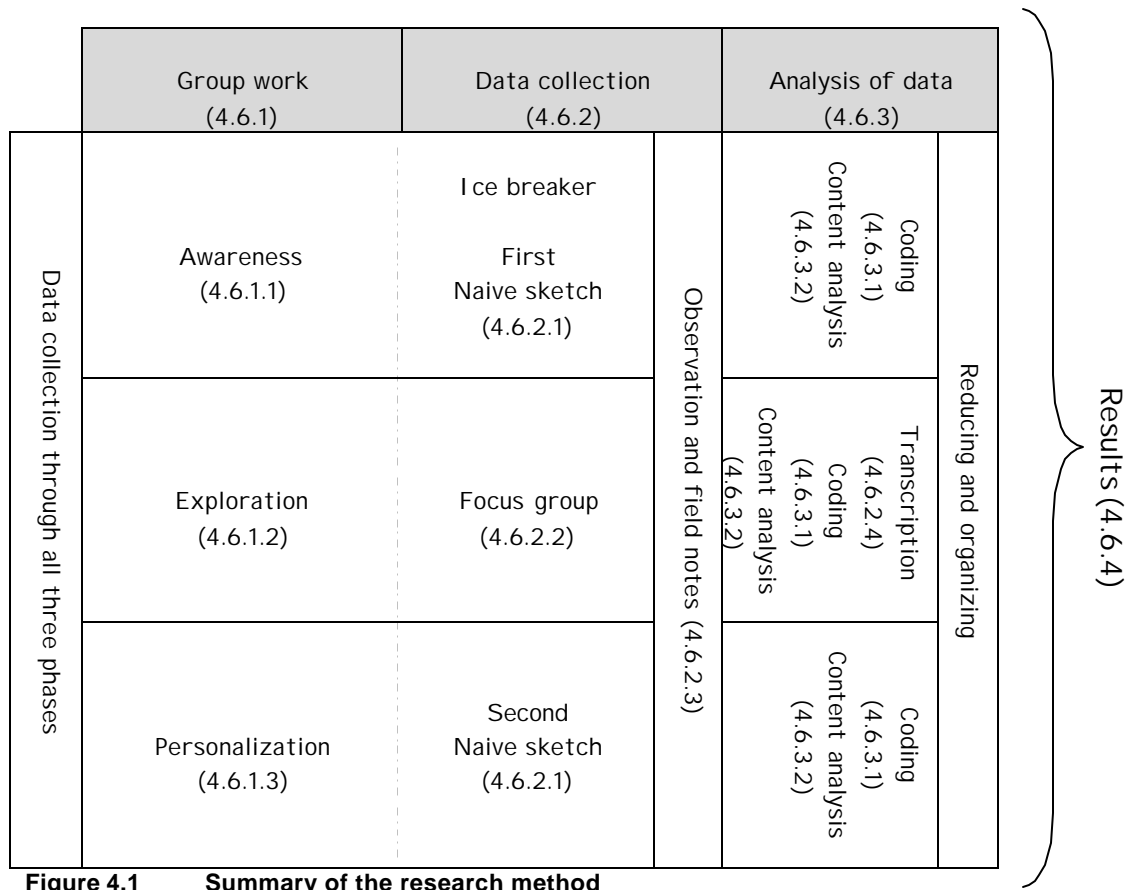Diagrammatically the research method can be summarised as in Figure 4.1:

Figure 4.1   Summary of the research method

The summary in Figure 4.1 is discussed in the following subsections.

4.6.1 Group work

Group work in general can be defined as a method of participatory intervention (Rooth 2000: 24). Brown (1992: 8) suggests that group work provides an environment in which individuals help each other. Ideally group work should result in each member moving through the following phases:

- Awareness;
- Exploration;
- Personalisation (Department of Secondary School Teacher Education 2002: 81).

4.6.1.1 *Awarenes* **s**

Awareness can be seen as the origin of all cognitive development and therefore participants should become aware of what is to be discussed. It should include self-discovery toe certain extent. The participants are unaware of their personal involvement and at this stage the awareness is still impersonal (Department of Secondary School Teacher Education 2002: 90). In this study an icebreaker and a naive sketch are applied to stimulate awareness. The ice breaker entails a game where everyone is blindfolded and has to find the person who stood next to her at the beginning of the game. The purpose of this game is to raise an awareness of personal differences in the participating group, that is, how each person reacts differently. These different reactions can be linked each person's own temperament.

4.6.1.2 *Exploration*

Exploration entails gaining knowledge and insight (Department of Secondary School Teacher Education 2002: 90). The researcher used the literature as in Chapter 2 and 3 to prepare as background for this phase. The participants must collect facts, formulate opinions and make statements about temperaments in the mother-child relationship. The researcher plays the role of facilitator in leading them towards the goal. If the

situation permits it, missing facts regarding temperaments are given to the group members based on the literature study in order to complete the exploration phase.

4.6.1.3 *Personalisation*

The facts and insights gained during the exploration phase need to be applied to the participants own situations.   Personalisation involves self-evaluation and is done privately by each individual (Department of Secondary School Teacher Education 2002: 91).

A second naive sketch is used to determine if the participants experienced personalisation in this study. The following figure illustrates how the participants moved from an impersonal level to a personal level through the group work process.
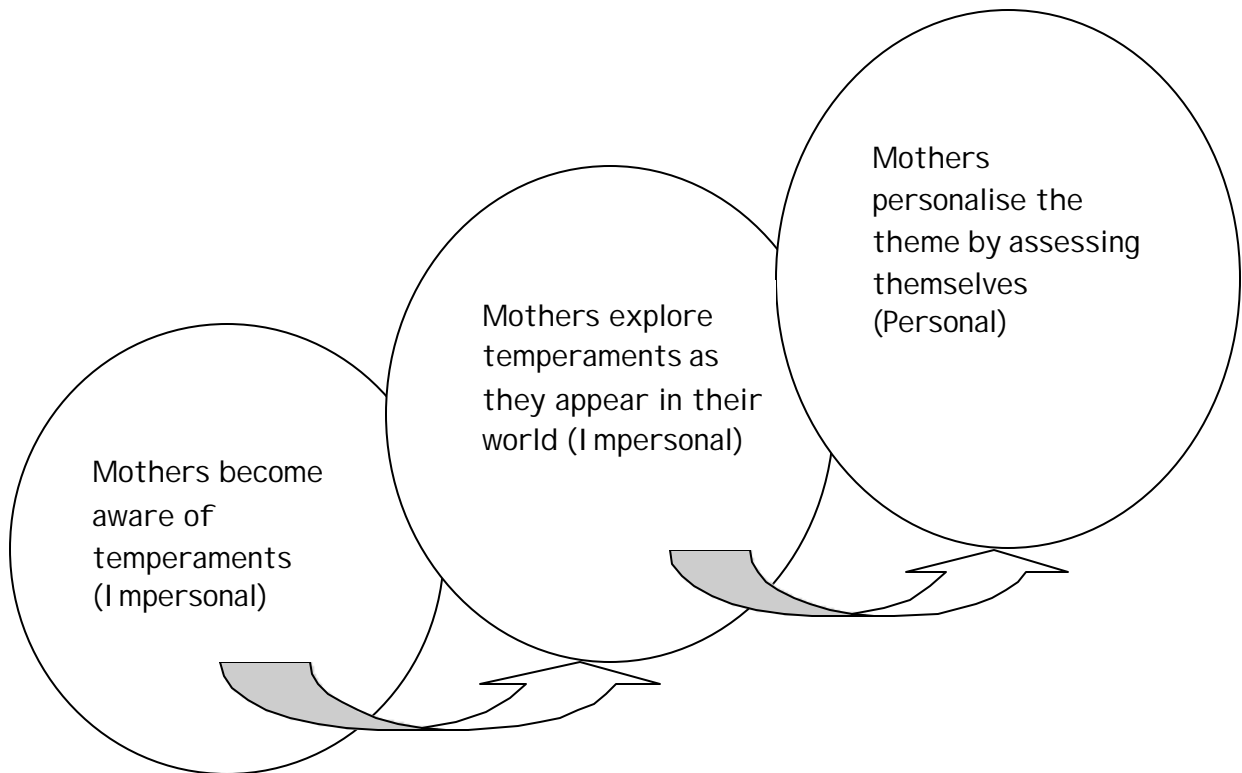
Mothers personalise the theme by assessing themselves (Personal)

Mothers explore temperaments as they appear in their world (Impersonal)

Mothers become aware of temperaments (Impersonal)

Figure 4.2   Movement from the impersonal to the personal through the group work process

The facilitator (researcher) uses the group work to lead the mothers through a process of awareness and exploration in order to help the mothers to personalise the new insights that they gained during the process.

Throughout the group work process, the researcher collects data. In the next section, the process of data collection is discussed.

4.6.2 Data collection

For the purpose of this study, the participants complete naive sketches and discuss the topic of research in a focus group. Thus direct data collection methods are used. Indirectly, group work, the field notes and the transcription of the recorded sessions also generate raw data. In the next subsection, the use of naive sketches is discussed.

4.6.2.1 *The naive sketch*

The naive sketch is a method of data collection similar to open-ended questions. The single most important characteristic of the naive sketch is that one open-ended question/statement is posed and individuals are asked to complete it in writing (Burns & Grové 1997: 368-370).

- The open-ended phrase for the first naive sketch in this study is:

How do you as mother experience your child/ren's temperaments?

This first naive sketch is a integral part of the awareness phase of the group work. The purpose of the naive sketch in this instance is to let the mothers become aware of their knowledge and perception of temperaments and to stimulate their thinking for the exploration phase.

- The open-ended phrase for the second naive sketch is:

How did you experience the previous session?

Although the second naive sketch take place at the end as part of the personalisation phase, it is handled in this section to prevent duplication. The question is aimed at the experience of the process during the group work session.

The data collected with the naive sketches and data from the group sessions are supplemented with observation notes, field notes (see Section 4.6.2.3) as well as the transcription of the sessions on audio tape (see Section 4.6.2.4).

4.6.2.2 *Focus groups*

Focus groups can be seen as a small number of individuals discussing a specific topic under the leadership of a facilitator (Krueger 1994: 16). The purpose of these discussions is to collect information and to gain new insights. The researcher uses the opinions of the participants and the new information with the help of inductive reasoning to bring the new concepts in relation with the phenomenon.

Hancock (2002: 11) sets the following prerequisites for focus groups:

- Only a small number of interviews must be undertaken;
- It is possible to identify a number of individuals sharing a common factor;
- Group interaction among participants has the potential for greater insights to be developed.

The interview in the focus group context takes the form of an open discussion during the exploration phase of group work where each member has ample opportunity to share their experiences and opinions (Schurink, Schurink & Poggenpoel 1998: 315). The participants' awareness of the core concept was raised during the awareness phase. The focus group forms part of the exploration phase. The main question follows on the open-ended question from the first naive sketch. This question is: "What are temperaments?"

4.6.2.3 *Observation and field notes*

Talbot (1995: 478) states that field notes include observational notes. Field notes are just what they imply - notes that the researcher takes while in the field. In other words, written accounts of what the researcher heard, saw, experienced and thought during

the process of data collecting. Talbot distinguishes between the following four categories of field notes:

- **Observational notes** - According to De Vos (2001: 286), these notes attempt to describe the setting, the people and what they do from the perspective of the researcher. Observation sometimes gives information which cannot be picked up with direct interaction (Hancock 2002: 12). Hancock (2002: 13) mentions four different techniques for data collection with observation, namely written descriptions, video recording, photographs and documentation. In this study mainly written descriptions are used.
- **Methodological notes** - These compare the planning of time to spend on systematically collecting data with the actual time spent (De Vos 2001: 286).
- **Personal notes** - This refers to notes which the researcher does not want to include in the actual reports (Boje 2001: 3).
- **Theoretical notes** - The researcher interprets, infers, hypothesises, conjectures, develops new concepts and links them with old ones (De Vos 2001: 101).

As mentioned before, the group work sessions are also recorded on audio tape which are transcribed to form part of the data.

4.6.2.4 *Transcribing qualitative data*

The recordings, made during the research process, ensure that the whole discussion is captured and provide complete data for analysis. This means that cues that were missed the first time can be recognised when listening to the recording (Hancock 2002: 14). Good quality transcribing must include tone and inflection, because only a small proportion of the message is communicated in actual words.

In the next section the steps in the research process are summarised.

4.6.2.5 *The steps in the research process*

The following are the research activities during the empirical research:

- Sampling : selection of participants;
- Group work process followed;

  ~ Awareness phase using an ice breaker and a naive sketch;
  ~ Exploration phase applying focus group discussions;
  ~ Personalisation determined by a second naive sketch.

- Data collected continually;

  ~ First naive sketch (awareness phase);
  ~ Recording of focus group (exploration phase);
  ~ Second naive sketch (personalisation phase);
  ~ Observational and field notes.

    - Observational notes
    - Methodological notes
    - Personal notes
    - Theoretical notes

- Analysing of data

  ~ Reducing and organising

    - Transcription
    - Content analysis
    - Coding

- Results

When the naive sketches, different notes and the transcription are available, the researcher can start with the process of analysing the data.

4.6.3 Analysing of data

Analysis of data in a research project involves summarising the mass of data collected and presenting the results in a way that communicates the most important features. In qualitative research the researcher is also interested in the big picture (Hancock 2002: 16).

4.6.3.1 *Coding*

The first basic step in the analysis of data is coding (De Vos 2001: 271). Data are broken down into segments and then investigated for similarities and differences (Hancock 2002: 16). To be able to do the coding of a transcription, Hancock (2002: 17) suggests that content analysis be done.

4.6.3.2 *Content analysis*

Content analysis can be done on data from interviews, focus groups and observation or documents, because it is concerned with analysing the text. According to Hancock (2002: 17), the steps in content analysis are as follow:

1. Take a copy of the transcript and read through it, make notes of important things in the margin.
2. Look through the notes in the margin and make a list of different types of information you have found.
3. Read through this list and categorise each item in a way that describes what it is about.
4. Try to link some of the categories and prioritise them from major to minor categories.
5. Compare and contrast your categories and start to develop the 'big picture'.
6. Move on to the next text and repeat steps 1-5.
7. Collect all the extracts together and put them into categories.
8. Review all the categories.
9. Try to group categories together in themes.
10. Go back to the original texts and look at all the text that was not highlighted and make sure that the previously excluded data should not be included.

It is apparent that the process of content analysis is a continuous process. The 10 steps mentioned above have some similarities with the process applied by Sonnekus and Schulze (2002: 139 - 140) to analyse the naive sketches they used in their research project.

4.6.4   Presenting the results

According to Hancock (2002: 22), qualitative data have several features which need to be taken into consideration when planning the presentation of findings. The data are subjective, interpretative, descriptive, holistic and copious, making it difficult to know where to start. A good starting point may be to structure the results using the themes and categories which emerged. This structure can then be presented in a diagrammatic form or a list which explains new insights, as is done in this study.

The purpose with qualitative research projects is to generate findings that are true to reality. This implies that certain specifications must be met. These specifications are discussed in the next section.

4.7   Reliability and validity

During the research process, the researcher attempts to use methods that increase objectivity in order to achieve a higher level of reliability and validity (Mouton & Marais 1990: 92).

4.7.1   Reliability

Kerlinger (1986: 405) implies that reliability can be seen as a synonym for stability, dependability and predictability. Poggenpoel (1998: 348-350) refers to the credibility value, consistency, applicability and neutrality.

- **Credibility value** of information is when the description is of such a nature that a person who has knowledge of the phenomenon will be able to identify it.

- **Consistency** implies that more or less the same results will be gained if the study is repeated with the same participants in the same circumstances.
- **Applicability** refers to which extent the findings can be applied in different groups.
- The researcher must always try to be as **neutral** as possible, without any bias.

The descriptions in this study are of such a nature that a person who has knowledge on temperaments will be able to identify it. The matter of consistency is also applicable in this study.

4.7.2 Validity

Validity is the degree to which the research does what it intended to do (Kerlinger 1986: 417). The transcribing of the discussions increases the validity of the research (see Section 4.6.1.4). It will also help if another subject expert can be consulted with analysis of the text. The aim of this study is to determine whether a mother's perspective of her child's temperament has an influence on their relationship and that will be the focus throughout the whole empirical investigation.

Research must also abide with ethical considerations and not just with reliability and validity.

4.8 Ethical considerations

Conducting research ethically starts with the identification of the research topic and continues through to the publishing of the study (Burns & Grové 1997: 195). Ethical considerations include informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, avoiding harm to respondents and ensuring privacy.

4.8.1 Informed consent

The process of informed consent implies that participants must be supplied with accurate and adequate information about the purpose of the investigation, the

procedures, possible disadvantages and advantages, dangers to the respondent as well as the credibility of the researcher (De Vos 2001: 25). The researcher informs the mothers (participants) beforehand on the purpose and the process of the investigation. They have the opportunity to participate willingly.

4.8.2   Confidentiality and anonymity

For the purpose of a dissertation of limited scope, confidentiality and anonymity can be treated as synonyms. The cornerstone of confidentiality intends that the dignity of the respondent should be respected (De Vos 2001: 306). The identity of the participants is never revealed during or after the research process and confidentiality will also be maintained.

4.8.3   Harm to respondents

De Vos (2001: 25) suggests that the researcher has an ethical obligation to protect participants from any form of physical discomfort which may emerge from the research project. The researcher must ensure that emotional harm is prevented as far as possible, even though this is harder to predict than physical harm. Due to the nature of the research, any harm to participants is very unlikely.

4.8.4   Ensuring privacy

Privacy implies the elements of personal privacy, which must be respected and is closely related to confidentiality (see Section 4.8.2). Another point of ethical consideration is the credit which must be given to sources used (Odendaal 2002: 54).

4.9   Summary

This chapter discussed the research process in detail. The research problem as well as the objectives, were mentioned and the research design was viewed from a qualitative research perspective. The research method, as data collection, data analysis and data presentation, were discussed.   Matters such as the reliability, validity and ethical considerations were also highlighted. Chapter 5 reflects the data collected and presents a discussion thereof.

CHAPTER 5:   DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1   Introduction

Chapter 4 discussed the research design in detail. In this chapter, the empirical investigation is discussed. Group work was done with seven mothers. Each wrote a naive sketch at the beginning of the group work session and another after a few weeks. The data, gathered from these two sketches as well as the transcription of the focus group discussion, the observational and field notes were processed with the aim to answer the research question: *"Does a mother's perspective of her child's temperament influence their relationship?"* This chapter systematically reflects on the steps in the research process which includes the analysis of the data. Finally, the processed results are discussed.

5.2   The steps in the research process

In the following section, attention is given to the sampling of subjects for the research, the time and duration of the process as well as the role of the researcher as facilitator. The analysis of the data, which includes reducing and organisation of the data, are also discussed. The steps in the research process are summarised in Section 4.6.2.5 in the previous chapter.

5.2.1   Sampling: Selection of participants

The subjects were seven mothers from the same cultural group. They all have children who attend a primary school in the area where the researcher lives. After informal discussion concerning the research, approximately 20 mothers showed interest in participating in the project and met the criteria as set out in Section 4.5. Seven names were selected randomly. These seven mothers have children with ages ranging from four to twelve years old. Five of the mothers have two children, one mother has three sons and another mother has only one child, namely a boy. Three of the mothers are housewives, one is a teacher, two are computer analysts and one is a dentist. It is clear that the group contains a variety of mothers.

The selected mothers took part voluntarily. They were all very enthusiastic to take part in the research process. Table 5.1 gives a systematic summary of the participants that took part in the research process.

Mothers	Occupation	Number of children	Age of children	Boy(B) or girl(G)
1	Housewife	One	6 years	B
2	Housewife	Two	12 and 8 years	B and G
3	Computer analyst	Two	8 and 6 years	B and G
4	Computer analyst	Three	7, 6 and 4 years	B, B and B
5	Teacher	Two	5 and 4 years	B and G
6	Housewife	Two	8 and 5 years	G and B
7	Dentist	Two	6 and 3 years	B and G

Table 5.1   Summary of participants

5.2.2   The group work process: Time and duration

The initial group work session comprising of the awareness phase (see Section 5.3.1) and the exploration phase (see Section 5.3.2) took place on a Thursday evening and it lasted between one and a half hour and two hours. The subsequent individual sessions with each mother to complete the second naive sketch took approximately 30 minutes each and took place on different days a few weeks later, according to each mother's schedule. In this final session, the mothers were allowed to personalise their own ideas of temperaments.

5.2.3   Data collected continually

Raw data were gathered during the whole process. In the awareness phase the first naive sketch was used as method. A focus group discussion which was transcribed formed the primary part of the data in the exploration phase. A second naive sketch

was used in the personalisation phase. Furthermore, the observational and field notes served as continuous raw data.

In the next section the analysis of the collected data are discussed.

5.2.4   Analysis of data

This study is qualitative of nature and the researcher aims to explore temperaments in the mother-child relationship (see Sections 4.3 and 4.4). The raw data consist of the first naive sketch (awareness phase), recordings of the focus group (exploration phase), second naive sketch (personalisation phase), observational and field notes. All the raw data are in the vernacular of the group and had to be translated in English. The analysis of data is the process by which order, structure and meaning is gained from the raw data.

5.2.4.1 *Transcription*

Hancock's (2002: 14; 16; 17 - 20; 22 - 23) approach was used as guideline in processing the data from the group work session (see Section 4.6.2.4). The recordings of the focus group discussion were transcribed in order to be analysed.   These transcriptions included tone and inflection. Due to a power failure the recording of the first part of the discussion was not as clear as the rest and therefore some assumptions on the actual dialogue were made.

5.2.4.2 *Coding*

The analyses of both naive sketches were done by coding according to Sonnekus and Schulze (2002: 139 - 140) (see Section 4.6.2.2 and 4.6.3).   Colour codes were allocated to terms with approximately the same meaning/intention.

5.2.4.3 *Content analysis*

Raw data are processed by identifying themes, categories and subcategories. In this study this was done with the transcription of the focus group discussion and both naive

sketches. According to Creswell (1998: 153) content analysis alone does not provide answers. The researcher must interpret and explain the information in order to construct meaning. From these interpretations it might be possible to answer the research question. The next sections entail the discussion of the results which are based on the analysed data.

5.3   Discussion of results

The interpretation of the raw data is done according to the phase in the group work namely the awareness phase, which includes the ice breaker and the first naive sketch, followed by the exploration phase derived from the transcription of the focus group discussion. The second naive sketch forms the core of the personalisation phase and lastly the observation and field notes give some additional data on the whole process.

5.3.1   The awareness phase

An icebreaker in the form of a game where every mother was blindfolded and had to find someone else, was the starting point of the awareness phase.   This game made the mothers aware of how different every person is, which may be an indication of every person's temperament.

The first naive sketch followed and the mothers were asked to write a paragraph dealing with the following question:

How do you as mother experience your child/ren's temperaments?

They all described both/all three of their children. The identified themes and categories are summarised in Table 5.2.

Categories	Subcategories *(Examples from raw data)*
THEME 1: ACHIEVEMENT DIRECTED	
Perfectionism	Always has to do well
	Does not like to make mistakes *("Everything must always be in its right place")*
Analysing	Afraid of risks *("Analyses everything")*
	("Not daring")
Conscientious/Responsible	Reliable with tasks *("More responsible")*
	Not so responsible
Achieving/Winning	Does not like to lose *("Have to perform well")*
	Not concerned about winning or losing
	Does not pressure self to achieve
Creativity	Creative
THEME 2: HUMAN RELATIONS	
Towards family/mother	Attached to mother *("Takes time to trust other adults")*
	Used to adults
Attitudes	Caring *("Helping, concerned")*
	Wants to please
	Good human relations
	Peace maker *("Always tries to maintain peace")*
	Easily disturbed by small things
	Humorous *("Clown in the family")*
Socialising ability	Trust *("Takes time to trust, trusts promptly, takes time to trust, relax later on")*
	Socialises easily *("Goes to others easily")*
	Popular
	Has difficulty to make new friends

Categories	Subcategories *(Examples from raw data)*
Friendships	Number of friends *("Only has few close friends, many friends")*
	Close friendships
	Long term friendships
	Dependent on friends
	Does not like to be alone
THEME 3: PERSONAL NATURE	
Confidence	Self-confidence *("Confident in familiar situations, uncertain in unfamiliar situations")*
	Innovative and creative
	Independent (*"Spontaneous, gives own opinion")*
	Sometimes uncertain without prediction
Kindness	Tender and loving
	Sensitive
	Tender hearted *("Small heart")*
Strong will	Wilful *("Follows own way")*
	Manipulating and dominating *("Fighter")*
Adaptability	Uncertain in unfamiliar situations (*"Needs to be prepared")*
	Complains if things don't go according to own wishes
	Independent
	Accommodating
Orderliness	Likes routine *("Uncertain in unfamiliar situations")*
	Neat
	Takes good care of property

Categories	Subcategories *(Examples from raw data)*
Mood	Temperamental when tired
	Good-natured *("Sunshine child")*
	Friendly
	Cheerful *("Bubbly")*
Personality	"Fighter"
	Introvert *("Timid")*
	Quiet and calm
	Does not like conflict *("Does not like being scolded")*
	Happy child *("Teases, comedian")*
	Strong personality
	Sentimental
THEME 4: GROUP versus ALONE	
Group	Does not like to be alone
	Dependent on friends *("Not able to occupy self")*
	Communicates easily with strangers
Alone	Able to stay busy on own for a long time
	One-to-one person, rather than group *("Quiet in group")*
	Does not give in to group/peer pressure
THEME 5: ATTITUDE	
Routine	Thrives on routine *("Uncertain without routine")*
	Not bothered by routine
Order	Not orderly
	Neat *("Everything in its place")*
Positive/Negative	Optimistic *("Always ready for a joke, enjoys life")*
	Sometimes only sees the negative

Categories	Subcategories *(Examples from raw data)*
Sensitive	Peace maker
	Unexpected *("Unhappy due to what might happen in future")*
	Easily feels excluded
	Bothered by the way people speak *("Does not like when people scream")*
THEME 6: EMOTIONS	
Visibility	Represses emotions *("Does not like crying, does not show feelings, not over emotional")*
	Shows feelings *("Asks for cuddling, love hugs and kisses")*
Anger	Not angry for long
	Gets very angry *("Very angry when things do not go planned way")*
	Keeps a grudge
Tender	Tender and loving
	Tender hearted *("Small heart")*
Happy	Enjoys humour *("Clown in family")*
	Cheerful and merry
Sensitivity	Upset by small things
	Sensitive for punishment
THEME 7: ASSERTIVENESS	
Unfamiliar situations	Uncertain *("Uncertain without mother")*
	Takes a while to become at ease
	Timid
When things do not go according to plan Responsibility	Complaining *("Cries and withdraws")*
	Temperamental when tired
	"Fighter"
	Conscientious *("Takes good care of own property")*
	Does not pressure self for achievement
	Depends on encouragement and love

Categories	Subcategories *(Examples from raw data)*
Peer pressure	Independent *("Goes on without others")*
	Does not give in to peer pressure
Towards other people	Takes time before trusting other
	Willing to listen

Table 5.2 Summary of the identified themes, categories and subcategories with some examples

In the table above the identified themes, categories, subcategories with examples from the raw data can be seen. The concepts were freely translated from the vernacular raw data of the naive sketches. The identified themes from the sketches imply that the mothers are aware of the fact that their children are unique and have to be handled accordingly. It also indicated that the mothers experience a need to communicate with other mothers on how to deal with their children under the supervision of a knowledgeable facilitator.

5.3.2 The exploration phase

The focus group discussions that took place during the group work session form the exploration phase of the group work process. These discussions were recorded and transcribed as accurately as possible. Due to the number of subjects and a power failure in the neighbourhood, the recordings were not of the best quality.

During the exploration phase, entailing the focus group discussion, the researcher acted as facilitator and summarised and reflected on what the participants had said. She then directed the discussion further with the following questions (appearing in different stages of the session):

- Can temperament change?
- Does temperament determine behaviour?
- How do you see temperament vs personality?
- What is the relation between temperament and sex?
- Will it help to know your own temperament when handling your children? Will it help to know your child's temperament?

These questions can also be seen as the focus group interview schedule. Three main themes are identified from the focus group discussions, namely:

- Relational factors;
- Characteristics of temperaments;
- Factors influencing temperament.

In the next paragraphs the categories and subcategories under each theme are given and illustrated with verbatim quotations. The schematic summary used by the researcher to complete the discussion is shown in Figure 5.1.

THEME 1: RELATIONAL FACTORS

- **Feelings/Emotions**
  "You do not know the feelings of your child."
  "Feelings are not the same as behaviour."
  "Emotions form part of temperaments."
  "Care for your child, be a safe haven."

- **Communication**
  "Communication is very important."
  "It is easier with only one child."
  "You must create an atm osphere where child will have confidence to speak to you."
  "Listen to your child."

- **Know your child**
  "We have the best intentions."
  "We think we know our children."
  "Children behave different when they are with other adults."
  "A mother knows which kind of person her child is."
  "Each child is unique."

"The child with which you are in conflict is likely to be like you."

"Know your child's temperament and your own."

- **Personality**

"It manifests in temperament."

" It is important in temperaments."

- **Handling of your child**

"How to know wrong from right."

"Handle every child differently, one you need to smack, the other you just stare at, some need a speech."

"Do not abuse the 'good' child to make all the sacrifices."

"Apply different rules, according to situation and child."

"Values, norms and rules are important."

"Conscious thinking of children's temperaments."

- **Guidance to children**

"Give guidance to the advantage of each individual child."

"Give guidance to child with regards to correct manifestation of temperament in certain situations."

"Give guidance with regard to positive direction of temperaments."

"Teach consideration for other people."

THEME 2:   CHARACTERISTICS OF TEMPERAMENTS

- **Heritable**

"Temperament is genetic, heritable and innate."

- **Stable**

"Temperament develops, but does not really change."

- **Determiner of behaviour**

"How one behaves in the ideal situation."

- **Every child is unique**

  "Differs from other children."

  "Every child is who he/she is."

- **Given**

  "Sometimes one needs to repress impulses."

  "Part of God's plan."

THEME 3: FACTORS INFLUENCING TEMPERAMENT

- **Environment/Situations**

  "Stress factors such as tiredness, illness."

  "Structure of situation."

  "Harder to handle one's own children."

  "Familiar vs unfamiliar situations lead to different behaviour."

  "Disturbance of normal situation."

  "Rural living vs urban living."

- **Development stage**

  "Determines the rules parents will apply."

  "Plays an important role in personality and temperaments."

- **People/Examples/Role models**

  "Peer pressure."

  "Positive acceptance may lead to positive behaviour."

  "Heritability of temperaments stronger than examples."

  "At first parents are role models then famous stars take over."

- **Role of gender**

  "Females are more emotional than males."

  "Boys are more competit ive than girls."

At the end of the discussion the researcher summarised by using the following schematic representation on a white board:

WHAT IS TEMPERAMENT?

Communication
Situation / Environment
Temperament – known
Feelings – unknown
Interactive with other people
Examples / Role models
Development stage

Feelings / Emotions
Behavior
What we are in the ideal situation
You are what you are
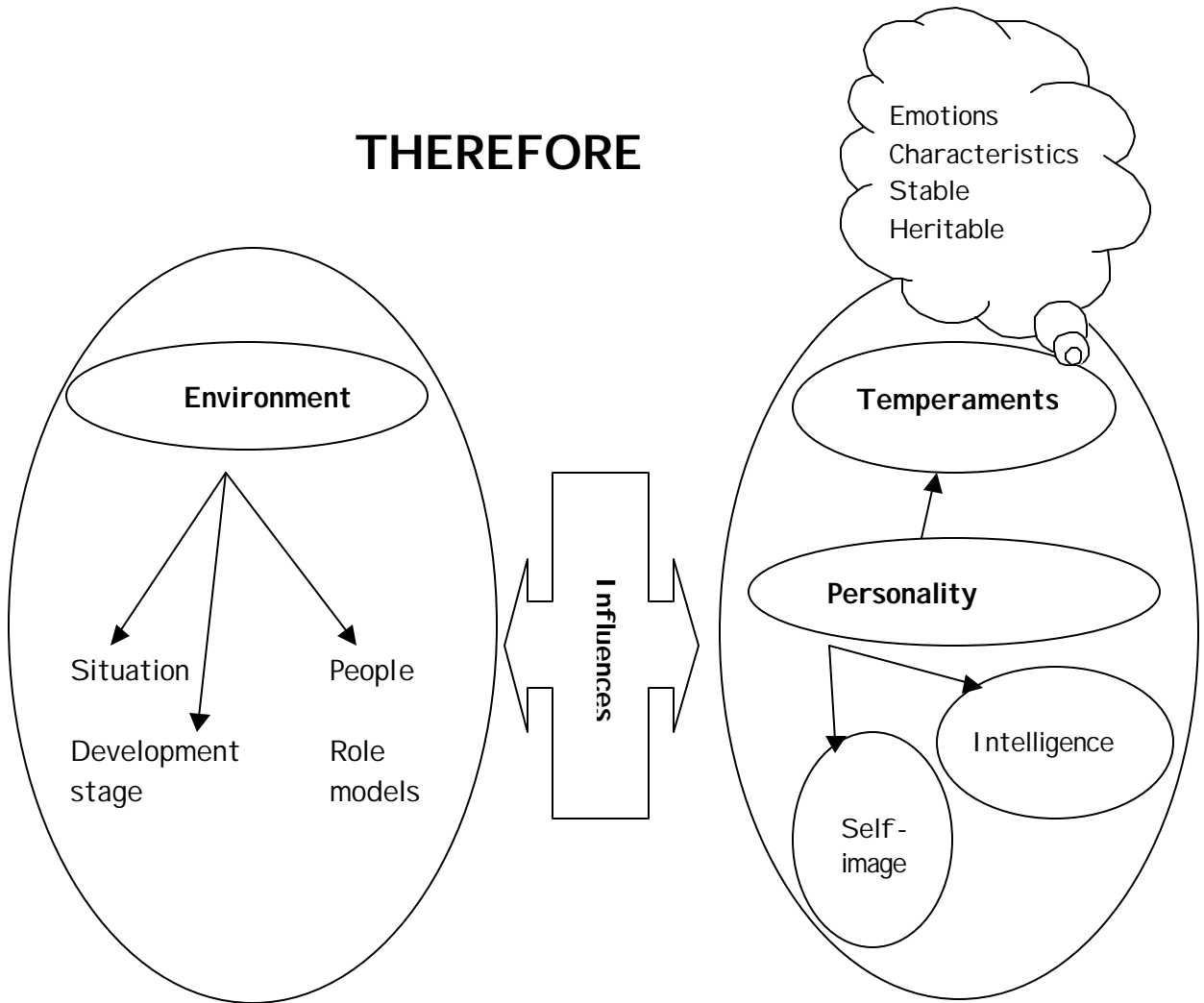Genetic
Determiner of behavior
Influences

THEREFORE

Emotions
Characteristics
Stable
Heritable

Environment

Situation

Development
stage

People

Role
models

Influences

Temperaments

Personality

Intelligence

Self-
image

Figure 5.1   Schematic summary of focus group discussion

5.3.3   The personalisation phase

The second naive sketch was done individually with each participant after a few weeks in order to determine if personalisation took place. Personalisation implies that new insight is now applied to the participants' own personal lives. The researcher met with each mother separately and they were asked to write a paragraph in response to:

How did you experience the previous session?

Six themes were identified and are illustrated with excerpts from the raw data.

5.3.3.1 *The actual experience*

The first theme was the actual experience of group work session. The mothers were quite positive in their reaction and this is visible on three levels:

- **Cognitive**
  "It is good to see how everything fits schematically."
  "It was insightful."
  "It was interesting."
  "I found it constructive."

- **Personally**
  "It was a delightful experience."
  "It was definitely worthwhile."

- **General**
  "One needs to stand still in the hectic daily life."

5.3.3.2 *Interaction with other mothers*

The second theme reflected the experience of the interaction with other mothers regarding the nature of the experience and the value of the experience.

- **Nature of the experience**

  "It was wonderful to be with other mothers."

  "It was a very pleasant exercise."

- **Value**

  "Good to hear other opinions and exchange ideas."

  "Very valuable to give ideas to each other."

5.3.3.3 *Heightening of awareness*

The third theme involved the awareness of similarities, uniqueness of each child and the things which are well-known but not applied.

- **Similarities**

  "Every mother is not an island, she is not alone."

  "We as mothers are not as bad as we think we are."

  "Similarities exist between children."

- **Uniqueness of each child**

  "Each child is unique and influenced by circumstances."

- **Wisdom not applied**

  "Things we as mothers know but not necessary apply."

5.3.3.4 *New knowledge*

Personalisation implies that new knowledge is applied in personal life. This can be seen in the mothers' new approaches to perceiving their family and children, behaviour and knowledge.

- **New approach to perceiving children and family**

  "I am going to enjoy my children more."

"I am going to try to accept my children as they are."

"Try not to expect the unreasonable."

"I recognised growth in my son."

"I will make a positive contribution towards their future."

"I want to focus on my children's emotions and individuality rather than my own."

"Take children's age and temperament into consideration."

- **New approach to behaviour**

  "Think before doing/Analysing."

  "Be more positive."

  "Listen to my children."

  "Be more calm and more patient."

  "Be stricter to prevent manipulation."

  "Give guidance with regards to control of emotions and assertiveness."

- **New approach to knowledge**

  "I am going to learn more about temperaments; my own and my children's."

5.3.3.5 *Introspection*

The naive sketches also indicated that introspection was relevant to a number of the mothers, especially on the following levels:

- **Guilt feelings**

  "I feel guilty about incorrect behaviour towards my children."

- **Similarities between mother and child**

  "The similarities bring mother and child closer."

  "The similarities may be the main cause of conflict."

5.3.3.6 *Better understanding of temperaments*

The last theme which is identified deals with temperaments. It seems that the mothers gained a better understanding of temperaments from the focus group discussions.

- **New knowledge**
  "Temperaments are heritable."
  "I was previously unaware of the importance of temperaments."

- **In future**
  "I will consider temperaments when handling my children."

From the above it seems clear that personalisation took place for all seven subjects. It furthermore emphasises the important role that knowledge on temperaments play in the mother-child relationship. In the next section, the observational and field notes are addressed.

5.3.4   Observational and field notes

The researcher took notes through the whole empirical process of what she saw, heard and experienced. The different notes are now mentioned:

- **Observational notes:** The researcher observed that some of the mothers were uneasy at the beginning of the group work session. This could be seen by their initial reaction to the ice breaker during the awareness phase.

  They settled down and participated actively in the focus group discussion as part of the exploration phase. It was also clear that the one mother was far more comfortable with the individual session afterwards than with the group work session.   Another observation made by the researcher was the great need which the mothers had to discuss their own perspectives and the relief they expressed when they realised the similarities between them and other mothers. It also seemed that the participants enjoyed the whole process.

- **Methodological notes:** There was a slight discrepancy between the actual time spent on the collecting of data and the planned time due to the power failure and irrelevant logistics.

- **Personal notes:** The researchers made notes on the behaviour of the mothers, which did not influence the actual research. Therefore these notes do not form part of the data.

- **Theoretical notes:** As these notes involve background literature, they are discussed in Section 5.4.

In the next section the role of the researcher is addressed.

5.3.5   Role of the researcher in the group work sessions

The researcher acts as an instrument in the process of describing the interpretation and phenomenon of the interactions with the participants in which the researcher herself was involved (Denzin & Lincoln 1994: 108). The researcher was also the facilitator of the group work session. Moreover, the researcher's own position of mother of a boy and a girl enabled her to fulfil the role of not only facilitator, but someone who was personally involved and as such also shared in the experiences.

5.4   Relationship between literature and empirical research

In Chapter 3 the concept of temperaments was explored in the literature and summarised in Figure 3.3. Some of the identified themes, categories and subcategories from the naive sketch in the awareness phase can be linked indirectly to the theories on temperaments in Section 3.4. As seen in Table 5.2 the terms used in the naive sketches are not necessarily the same as those used in the literature, but they can be seen as synonyms. The similarities between the literature and the themes/categories/subcategories from the first naive sketch are summarised in Table 5.3. (C = Category; Sc = Subcategory)

Terms from raw data	Terms from literature study
Theme 1 : Achievement directed	
Analysing (C)	Making decisions (Section 3.4.3)
Conscientious/Responsible(C)	Conscientiousness (Section 3.4.6)
Responsible (Sc)	Stable introverts (Section 3.4.2)
Not so responsible(Sc)	Unstable extraverts (Section 3.4.2)
Theme 2: Human relations	
Socialising ability (C)	Sociability (Section 3.4.5 and 3.4.6)
Peace maker (Sc)	Stable introvert (Section 3.4.2)
Theme 3: Personal nature	
Strong will (C)	Choleric (Section 3.4.1)
Adaptability (C)	Adaptability (Section 3.4.4)
	Flexibility (Section 3.4.6)
Orderliness (C)	Rhythmicity (Section 3.4.4)
Mood (C)	Quality of mood (Section 3.4.4)
	Positive mood (Section 3.4.6)
	Frustration-Irritability (Section 3.4.7)
Tender and loving (Sc)	Stable introverts (Section 3.4.2)
Temperamental when tired (Sc)	
Good natured (Sc)	Unstable introvert (Section 3.4.2)
	Stable introvert (Section 3.4.2)
Quiet and calm (Sc)	Easy child (Section 3.4.4)
	Phlegmatic (Section 3.4.1)
Theme 4: Group versus Alone	
Does not like to be alone (Sc)	Sanguine (Section 3.4.1)
Theme 5: Attitude	
Routine (C)	Day-to-day lifestyle (Section 3.4.3)
	Rhythmicity (Section 3.4.4)
Order (C)	Rhythmicity (Section 3.4.4)
Sensitive (C)	Melancholic (Section 3.4.1)
Sometimes only sees the negative (Sc)	Unstable introverts (Section 3.4.2)

Terms from raw data	Terms from literature study
Theme 6: Emotions	
All emotions	Emotionality (Section 3.4.5)
	General emotions (Section 3.4.6)
Anger (C)	Anger (Section 3.4.6)
Happy (C)	Positive affect (Section 3.4.7)
Theme 7: Assertiveness	
Unfamiliar situations(C)	Orientation to outside world (Section 3.4.3)
	Approach\withdrawal (Section 3.4.4)
	Adaptability (Section 3.4.4)
When things do not go according to plan (C)	Approach\withdrawal (Section 3.4.4)
	Adaptability (Section 3.4.4)
Complaining (Sc)	Difficult child (Section 3.4.4)
Independent (Sc)	Stable extroverts (Section 3.4.2)
	Impulsivity (Section 3.4.5)
Takes time before trusting (Sc)	Slow to warm up (Section 3.4.4)

Table 5.3 Summary of links between literature and themes/ categories/ subcategories from first
naive sketch

During the exploration phase, the focus group discussion touched on certain aspects of temperaments as it can be seen in Table 5.4. A few of the aspects found in the literature can be linked to the points that emerged during the discussion.

Facets of temperaments addressed in focus group	link with	aspects found in the literature
Emotions	«	Affect and approach (Rothbart) and Emotionality as basic temperament (Buss & Plomin)
Interaction with other people	«	Socialisation (Eysenck; Buss & Plomin)
Behaviour, what you are and determiner of behaviour	«	Temperaments as behavioural style (Chess & Thomas)
Situation and environment	«	Day-to-day orientation (Jung; Myers-Briggs; Keirsey)

Table 5.4   Core aspects from the literature linked with focus group discussion

The personalisation phase addressed experience and not necessarily knowledge. Therefore, linking the identified themes/ categories/ subcategories with the literature study is complex.   The one theme focused on a better understanding of temperaments

(see Section 5.3.3.6). The categories mentioned that temperaments are heritable and can be linked with the description by Watson (2000:16) (see Section 3.2).

Some aspects which are prominent in the literature study were not mentioned by the mothers. At the beginning of the discussion they did not distinguish between personality and temperaments and considered them synonymous. As the discussion developed they become aware of the differences and the link between these two concepts. Ideally the researcher ought to provide the missing information, but due to the nature of the situation as well as the richness of the knowledge gained from the exploration phase, it was not appropriate to provide more facts.

The fact that other facets such as communication, uniqueness of each child, influencing factors including the environment, development stage of the child, role models and gender, were also mentioned emphasises the importance of temperaments as overarching factor in the mother-child relationship.

Although the participants had not studied the concept temperament, many of their lay comments can be linked directly and indirectly to the literature study on temperaments. The information from the empirical study validates many of the findings from the literature study. The information that was not touched, can be relegated to a deeper level of knowledge which is needed for a better understanding of temperaments in the mother-child relationship. This matter is discussed in full detail in Chapter 6.

5.5   Summary

In this chapter the empirical investigation was discussed. The results obtained from the processing of the raw data were summarised. Different themes and categories were identified in each phase of the process. All three phases of group work; namely awareness, exploration and personalisation, have been addressed during the process of investigating temperaments in the mother-child relationship.

Chapter 6 will contain summaries and conclusions as well as the limitations and recommendations regarding the research project.

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARIES, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

My concern about the role of temperaments in the mother-child relationship was expressed in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 entailed a detailed investigation into the mother-child relationship as being one of the most basic relationships in a person's life. Temperaments were explored in Chapter 3. Then the empirical research was conducted according to the design presented in Chapter 4. The qualitative group work technique was implemented to research mothers' views of the importance of temperaments in the mother-child relationship. The raw data consist of the first naive sketch (awareness phase), recordings of the focus group (exploration phase), second naive sketch (personalisation phase), observational and field notes. All the raw data are in the vernacular of the group and had to be translated into English. The raw data were analysed and presented in Chapter 5.

This chapter serves as a summarising chapter in which the information from the literature study and the empirical research are summarised, compared and interpreted. Conclusions are formed, shortcomings highlighted and recommendations are made.

6.2 Findings

The following subsections will highlight the findings from the literature study as well as the empirical research.

6.2.1 Findings from the literature study

The literature study forms an integral part of the whole research process. The findings of other researchers serve as summary of that which is known of the particular knowledge area. The overview of the literature places this study in context and demonstrates the relevance thereof.

6.2.1.1 *The mother-child relationship*

In Chapter 2 the mother-child relationship was investigated. Firstly, the concept of mother-child relationship was defined from different sources (see Section 2.2). The mother-child relationship is the first and most basic relationship a person is involved in and it serves as foundation for almost all future relationships. This relationship is one of dual interaction and factors such as attachment, adaptation, control and support play an important role.

It is important to understand the origin of the mother-child relationship (see Section 2.3) in order to gain some perspective. The mother-child relationship has its origin at the conception, gestation and the birth of a baby as well as with the interaction between a child and the person who consistently meets that child's needs.

In Table 2.1 (Section 2.4), a few of the factors influencing the mother-child relationship are summarised. The mother-child relationship does not exist in isolation but is influenced by various factors. Some of these factors include the mother's perception, attachment, environmental factors and child rearing style.

In Section 2.5, the emotional system is investigated, because love and acceptance form the basis for the mother-child relationship. Linked with this matter are the complementary roles of mothers and fathers. Although the father also has an important role to play, the reason for focussing only on the mother-child relationship, in this study, and not on the father- or caregiver-child relationship, is solely because it is a dissertation of limited scope.

Chapter 2 ended with a few of the characteristics of the effective mother-child relationship (see Section 2.7) namely trust, involvement, unconditional acceptance, balanced realistic expectations, emotional guidance, discipline and modelling. These characteristics must be seen as integral parts of the whole mother-child relationship.

6.2.1.2 *Temperaments*

Chapter 3 shed some light on the concept of temperaments (see Section 3.2). Watson (2000:16) describes temperaments as individual differences which are at least partly heritable and already present at birth. Temperaments emerge as broader, more general dispositional constructs that subsume various emotional traits, along with other associated cognitive and behavioural characteristics.

Temperaments are the subclass of personality traits that are inherited and they differ from other personality traits in their initial appearance during the first year of life (see Section 3.3). The inheritance and early appearance suggest that temperaments are the basic building blocks of personality (Buss in Kohnstamm et al 1989: 49). No matter what theoretical orientation a researcher may have, the nature and development of personality cannot be equated with temperament.

Section 3.4 investigated seven of the existing theories regarding temperaments. The first was the theory of Hippocrates, secondly Keirsey's research which developed from the work of Jung and Myers, then the theory of Eysenck. Thereafter the nine categories of Chess and Thomas (with the help of Birch) follow and the link between the nine categories and the development of the "goodness-of-fit" model. Then the four basic temperaments proposed by Buss and Plomin are highlighted , followed by the Big Five factors and lastly, the five temperamental dimensions according to Rothbart are investigated. These seven theories are summarised in Figure 3.3 and they provide a sound background to investigate temperaments in the mother-child relationship.

"Correlations between temperamental characteristics and maternal behaviour reflect bidirectional interactive processes as well as genetic linkages between mother and child characteristics" (Collins et al 2000: 222) (see Section 3.5). In Section 3.6 Kawaguchi et al (1998: 79) summarise it neatly: ".... these studies and clinical interventions stress the importance of understanding the ways in which an individual's temperament affects the quality of his close relationships, particularly relationships between mothers and children".

In the next section the findings from the empirical research are discussed.

6.2.2   Findings from the empirical research

The empirical research was done through a group work process (see Section 5.3) and the results discussed according to the different phases; namely the awareness phase, the exploration phase and the personalisation phase.   In the next subsections a summary of the themes and categories identified during each phase are given.

6.2.2.1 *The awareness phase (see Section 5.3.1)*

The raw data collected during the awareness phase entailed observational and field notes taken during the ice-breaker, entailing a blind fold game as well as the first naive sketch. In the first naive sketch the mothers were asked to write a paragraph in response to:

How do you as mother experience your child/ren's temperaments?

The following themes came from the coding of the first naive sketch:

- Achievement directed;
- Human relations;
- Personal nature;
- Group/Alone;
- Attitude;
- Emotions;
- Assertiveness.

In Table 5.2 the identified themes, categories, subcategories and examples from the raw data can be seen. These identified themes imply that the mothers are aware that their children are unique and have to be handled accordingly. The researcher also realised that the mother had a great need to communicate with other mothers about the handling of their children under the supervision of knowledgeable facilitator.

6.2.2.2 *The exploration phase (see Section 5.3.2)*

During the exploration phase (see Section 5.3.2), of the focus group discussion, the researcher acted as facilitator and summarised and reflected what the subjects said. She then directed the discussion further with the following questions (appearing in different stages of the session):

- Can temperament change?
- Does temperament determine behaviour?
- How do you see temperament vs personality?
- What is the relation between temperament and gender?
- Will it help to know your own temperament when handling your children? Will it assist to know your child's temperament?

These questions also comprised the focus group interview schedule. Three main themes are identified from the focus group discussions, namely:

- Relational factors;
- Characteristics of temperaments;
- Factors influencing temperament.

The categories and subcategories are discussed in Section 5.3.2. Figure 5.1 developed as a schematic summary to complete the focus group discussion. The most important aspects mentioned by the mothers were written on the white board. At the end of the discussion the researcher drew the diagrams to illustrate the influences between temperaments and the environment, consisting of situations, development stage and people. The figure also shows that temperaments form part of personality together with self-image and intelligence. Four of the main factors concerning temperaments namely emotions, characteristics, stable and heritable were mentioned.

The exploration phase had the potential to lead to maturation of knowledge to enhance potential personalisation.

6.2.2.3 *The personalisation phase (see Section 5.3.3)*

The second naive sketch was done with each individual participant after a few weeks in order to determine if personalisation had taken place. Personalisation implies that new insights are now applied to the participants' own personal lives. The researcher met with each mother separately and they were asked to write a paragraph in response to:

How did you experience the previous session?

Six themes were identified and they are in short as follow:

- The actual experience of the group work session;
- The experience of the interaction with other mothers;
- The awareness of similarities, uniqueness of each child and the things which are well-known but not applied;
- New approaches of the mothers to perceiving their families and children, behaviour and knowledge;
- Introspection;
- Temperaments.

It seems clear that personalisation took place for all seven subjects, because from their second naive sketches it was apparent that they all tried to apply the information they gained from the discussion in their personal lives. It furthermore emphasises the important role that knowledge on temperaments plays in the mother-child relationship. Some mothers were more at ease with the individual session than with the group work session (see observational and field notes in the Section 5.3.4). This observation is an indication of these mothers' own temperaments.

In the next section the correlation between the literature and the data from the research is drawn.

6.2.3   Similarities between literature study and the empirical research

From the naive sketch in the awareness phase (see Section 5.4.1) some of the identified themes, categories and subcategories can be linked indirectly to the theories on temperaments in Section 3.4.   The terms used in the naive sketches are not necessarily the same, but can be seen as synonymous.   The similarities are summarised in Table 5.3 and are discussed briefly in the next paragraphs.

6.2.3.1 *Awareness phase*

Theme 1: Achievement directed

Under Theme 1 analysing as category can be linked with how individuals prefer to make decisions.   This refers to whether decisions are based on logic and objective consideration (**T**hinking) or on personal, subjective value systems (**F**eeling) according to the dimensions of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) (Plsek, P.E & Associates 2001: 1) (see Section 3.4.3).   Another category was Conscientious/Responsible and that is related to Conscientiousness as part of the Big Five according to Ahadi and Rothbart (in Halverson et al 1994: 190) (see Section 3.4.6).

Being responsible and not being responsible are subcategories under Theme 1 which respectively links to stable introverts - phlegmatic with qualities such as calm, even-tempered, reliable, controlled, peaceful, thoughtful, careful and passive and unstable extraverts - choleric with qualities such as touchy, restless, excitable, changeable, impulsive and irresponsible (Sheppard 2000: 1) (see Section 3.4.2).

Theme 2: Human relations

Socialising ability is an identified category under Theme 2 which has relevance to sociability as one of the four basic temperaments according to Buss and Plomin (Cardillo 1998: 1-2) (see Section 3.4.5). It can also relate to sociability as part of the Big Five according to Angleitner and Ostendorf (in Halverson et al 1994: 70) (see Section 3.4.6).   Section 3.4.2 refers to stable introverts (Sheppard 2000: 1) which can be linked to peacemaker as subcategory of Theme 2.

Theme 3: Personal nature

Theme 3 included strong will as a category which can be related to the choleric temperament (see Section 3.4.1). The choleric temperament tends to be independent and self-sufficient with strong will and a determined spirit (LaHaye 1997: 30-35). Adaptability as category can be linked to adaptability as one of the nine categories according to Chess and Thomas (1996: 31-35) (see Section 3.4.4) as well as flexibility (see Section 3.4.6) as one of the five factors according to Angleitner and Ostendorf (in Halverson et al 1994: 70).

Rhythmicity as one of the nine categories according to Chess and Thomas (1996: 31-35) (see Section 3.4.4) has relevance with orderliness as category under Theme 3. Mood as category can be linked to three of the seven theories namely quality of mood as one of the nine categories according to Chess and Thomas (1996: 31-35) (see Section 3.4.4), positive mood (Angleitner & Ostendorf in Halverson et al 1994: 70 in Section 3.4.6) and frustration-irritability as part of a negative pole of mood according to Rothbart (in Molfese et al 2000: 90)(see Section 3.4.7). Section 3.4.2 refers to stable introverts (Sheppard 2000: 1) which can be linked to tender and loving as subcategory of Theme 3 as well as good natured as subcategory. The mentioned subcategory also relates to the easy child (see Section 3.4.4) as viewed by Carey and McDevitt (1995: 12).

Another subcategory is temperamental when tired and that links with the unstable introvert in Section 3.4.2 (Sheppard 2000: 1). In Section 3.4.1, LaHaye (1997: 42-46) states that a Phlegmatic temperament is naturally quiet, easygoing and calm, which correlates with the subcategory quiet and calm.

Theme 4: Group versus alone

In Theme 4 (Section 5.4.1), the subcategory of not liking to be alone can be linked with the Sanguine who does not like it to be alone and appears to be a good follower, who demands strong supervision (LaHaye 1997: 25-29 see Section 3.4.1).

Theme 5: Attitude

Theme 5 identified order and routine as categories which can be linked with basic day-to-day lifestyle preferred - either purposeful, more comfortable with scheduled, structured environments (BSM Consulting 2000:2 see Section 3.4.3) as well as Rhythmicity as one of the nine categories according to Chess and Thomas (1996: 31-35) (see Section 3.4.4).

Sensitive is another category which relates to negativism. It is a habit pattern distinctive of the melancholic temperament where people set very high goals for themselves and are very faithful (LaHaye 1997: 36-41 see Section 3.4.1). Melancholic also relates to the subcategory of sometimes only seeing the negative, which can also be linked with the unstable introvert in Section 3.4.2 (Sheppard 2000: 1).

Theme 6: Emotions

Theme 6 considers emotions which correlates with emotionality as one of the four basic temperaments according to Buss and Plomin in Cardillo (1998: 1-2, see Section 3.4.5) and general emotionality as seen by Angleitner and Ostendorf in Section 3.4.6 (in Halverson et al 1994: 70). Anger as a category relates to anger as described by Angleitner and Ostendorf in Halverson et al 1994: 70). Happy as a category links with positive affect as being one of the five temperamental dimensions according to Rothbart (in Molfese & Molfese 2000: 90) (see Section 3.4.7).

Theme 7: Assertiveness

The categories from Theme 7 are unfamiliar situations and when things do not go according to plan which both can be related to orientation to the outside world as one of the dimensions of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) (Plsek, P.E & Associates 2001: 1, see Section 3.4.3). It can also be linked to approach or withdrawal (see Section 3.4.4), which indicates the nature of the initial response to a new stimulus, such as food, toys, persons, situations, places and procedures and it also has relevance with adaptability (Chess & Thomas 1996: 31-35).

The difficult child (see Section 3.4.4) as cluster of temperaments according to Carey and McDevitt (1995: 12), links with complaining as subcategory. The subcategory of independence can be linked with the stable extraverts in Section 3.4.2 (Sheppard 2000: 1) and impulsivity as on of the four basic temperaments (see Section 3.4.5) proposed by Buss and Plomin in Cardillo (1998: 1-2). Takes time before trusting as subcategory relates to the slow to warm up child (see Section 3.4.4) according to Carey and McDevitt (1995: 12).

6.2.3.2 *Exploration phase*

In Section 5.4 the core facets of temperaments touched during the focus group discussion are summarised in Table 5.4. From the observational and field notes made during the focus group discussion as well as the actual dialogue the mothers agreed that the mother-child relationship is the most basic relationship and this correlates with Section 2.2. They also realised that the mother-child relationship does not function in isolation, but is influenced by the environment, situation and different temperaments of the mother and the child.

The discussion in the focus group confirmed the findings of Watson (2000: 16) that temperaments are already present at birth. The mothers agreed that temperaments are a given which form an integral part of a person's life.

In Section 3.3 temperament and personality are discussed. The literature and the empirical research corroborate that personality and temperaments cannot be equated. The mothers stated in the discussion that temperaments can be seen as a depiction of personality.

The researcher used Figure 5.1 to complete the focus group discussion. This figure includes facets of temperaments raised by the mothers. Only a few of these facets could be linked to the theory found in Section 3.4 and they are summarised in Table 5.4.

The mothers linked emotions with temperaments and this correlates with the temperamental dimension; affect and approach according to Rothbart (in Molfese et al 2000: 90) and to emotionality as discussed by Thomas et al (1996: 31-35) and

emotionality as basic temperament (Buss and Plomin in Cardillo 1998: 1-2) (see Section 3.4).

Interaction with other people is seen as part of temperaments by the mothers and this correlates with socialisation (Eysenck in Sheppard 2000: 1). Sociability is the tendency to be outgoing and friendly and to enjoy the company of others (Buss & Plomin in Cardillo 1998: 2).

A mother mentioned that temperaments can be seen in behaviour, what you are and can also be see as a determiner of behaviour. Chess and Thomas (1996: 32-33) state that the term temperament can be equated to the term behavioural style.

According to the mothers, temperament influences the situation and the environment and the situation and the environment also influence temperament. From the literature this has relevance for basic day-to-day lifestyle preferred - either purposeful, more comfortable with scheduled, structured environments or flexible and diverse, more comfortable with open, casual environments, according to Jung; Myers-Briggs and Keirsey in BSM Consulting (2000: 2).

6.2.3.3 *Personalisation phase*

In the personalisation phase the mothers emphasised the importance of knowledge of their children's temperaments for success in the mother-child relationship. It seems clear that personalisation took place for all of the mothers, because their second naive sketches showed that they tried to apply the information they gained from the focus group discussion to their personal lives.

6.2.3.4 *Observational and field notes*

From the observations made by the researcher it seems that some mothers were extroverts and others were introverts (see Section 3.4.2, 3.4.3 and 3.4.6). According to Section 3.4.1 all four temperaments were presented as well as some of LaHaye's (1997: 47 - 71) twelve possible blends. If one should measure them with Meyers-Briggs

type indicator (see Section 3.4.3), there will be at least one mother for each type. In the next section a conclusion is made on the purpose of the study.

6.3   Conclusion

The main purpose of this research was to determine in what way a mother's perspective of her child's temperament influences their relationship. Furthermore the researcher also attempted to investigate the following:

- What is temperament;
- Finding possible temperaments;
- Developing an unique model of temperaments;
- Determining some mother's perspectives on temperaments;
- Helping mothers to become aware of their children's temperaments.

The conclusion from this study, is that temperaments play a very important role in the mother-child relationship. The mothers who were involved in the study agreed that if they have more knowledge of their children's temperaments and apply the knowledge to their own mother-child relationship, it will enhance their relationships.

A summarised model on seven of the theories found in the literature, on temperaments was developed and appears as Figure 3.3. Correlations between the literature and the insights of the mothers are made in the previous section. The perspectives of the seven mothers are reflected in the raw data and the presentation thereof in Chapter 5. The final personalisation phase indicated that the mothers became aware of the importance of temperaments in their relationship with their children.

6.4   Limitations

The limited number of participants, typical of qualitative research (Lemmer 1989: 329) (see Section 4.4.1), is the most obvious limitation of this study. However, the research was designed to be exploratory and descriptive in nature (see Sections 4.4.1.2 and 4.4.1.3), utilising naive sketches and a focus group to elicit data from the mothers. The

primary goal was to explore and describe how the mothers who participated experienced their children's temperaments (see Section 1.3). No attempts were made to establish trends, to generalise or quantify the findings. Data were not quantified and was presented in descriptive terms only.

Furthermore, no attempt was made to predict behaviour or to establish cause and effect relationships under experimental conditions. The overview of the existing literature (Chapters 2 and 3) provided an important background for the group work, but no attempt was made to prove or disprove existing theories. The mothers were all from a homogenous group, which limits the relevance of the study to other groups.

The potential bias in the research was clearly acknowledged by the researcher. In qualitative research, the validity of findings depends in the researcher's ability to use the techniques chosen, in this case group work entailing naive sketches and focus group. However, the researcher was able to draw on her own experience as mother of two.

A qualitative study never has generalisation as an aim, the aim is depth of understanding.

6.5   Recommendations and possibilities for further research

Recommendations as generated from the study include the following:

- Workshops can be developed to accommodate the need of mothers to meet with other mothers and discuss temperaments and mother-child relationships.
- The possibility of a programme containing background information on temperaments should be investigated.
- Temperaments as part of a therapy programme when addressing problems arising from the mother-child relationship should be investigated.
- The same process can be applied to other groups of mothers to broaden perspectives and enrich relationships.

6.6 Summary

The aim of the educational psychologist is to enhance the emotional well being of children and their parents. It is clear from this study that the mother-child relationship plays a important role in the optimal development of the child and his or her mother. Emotionally healthy children develop into emotionally healthy adults who contribute positively to the society (Scott Peck 1985: 93). This study confirmed the importance of understanding temperaments in the mother-child relationship.

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