

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

M.ED. RESEARCH

**Below the Surface: African learners' experiences of schooling in a predominantly
Indian School, in KwaZulu Natal.**

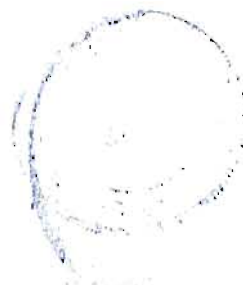
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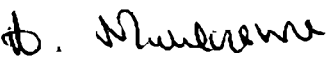


DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Thanjamah Pillay, declare that this research report, entitled “ Below the Surface: African learners’ experiences of schooling in a predominantly Indian School”, is my own work, and that all sources I have quoted or used have been acknowledged.


T. Pillay

Durban, 2004



29,04,04

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the experiences of African learners in a school in which they constitute the minority. The aim of the study is to investigate how African learners perceive of their day to day experiences in an ex-House of Delegates school that still has a predominantly Indian learner population. The study was conducted in a primary school situated in a small suburb south of Durban. Ten African learners from grade seven were interviewed through semi-structured interviews in this qualitative study. This was followed by a focus group discussion with the ten respondents to further investigate specific issues and to serve as a debriefing since strong emotions had surfaced. Interviews were recorded on audiotape, and non-verbal indicators were recorded in the form of written notes. Non-participant observations were also conducted on the playgrounds. The content analysis method was used to analyze the data. Themes were identified and related to the conceptual framework of the study. The analysis revealed that learners experienced various exclusionary pressures as African learners in a predominantly Indian school. Unequal power relations are perpetuated through the intersection of race, class and ability as well as through a hidden curriculum. Racism as a form of oppression was evident in the racist name-calling and racist stereotyping. There appears to be a lack of a caring pedagogy as African learners feel marginalized. The findings reveal the need for a whole-school policy on anti-racist education. In addition, educators need training to help them interrogate the cycle of socialization to which they have been exposed. The implications are specific to the context. The formulation of a whole-school policy on anti-racist education and an educator intervention program are some of the recommendations.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

South Africa's history of apartheid had forced upon a nation unjustifiable and unnatural compartmentalization and racial barriers. After decades of oppression, various race groups have found the physical demarcations and barriers suddenly removed. However, the crucial question is whether the psychological barriers can indeed be erased by legislation. To many people, the desegregation of schooling is synonymous with the end of apartheid (Pampallis, 1996). Whilst South Africa acknowledges rule by the majority, small pockets of this majority could become the minority in another context.

Racial integration in public schools has been a very emotional process. Learners, educators and parents have not been equipped with skills to overcome the subtle difficulties that have made integration a trying process (Pampallis, 1996). Racial integration in schools remains a one way process with African learners seeking admission in former Indian, Coloured and White schools, whilst Indian learners seek admission in former White schools.

However, racial integration is not the reason for these moves. In most cases, parents, who often make such decisions on their children's behalf, elect to have their children in these schools because of better learning conditions, lower teacher-learner ratio, and better resources. Often, learners from disadvantaged backgrounds find themselves facing new experiences, environments and norms and cultures in physical settings where they are

perceived of as the outsider (Naidoo, 1996). Those already in the system exercise control over the newcomers, in a manner, which reflects that, as controllers, they are unprepared for integration (Pampallis, 1996).

The experiences of the black learners in a desegregated school, documented through their own stories, can expose inclusionary or exclusionary practices. Such practices are very often of a covert nature. Educators and learners are often unaware of their negative contribution toward the social construction of minority groups within the school. This study investigated how African learners perceive of their day to day experiences in an ex-House of Delegates school that still has a predominantly Indian learner population.

This research was prompted by observations of the behaviour patterns of the black learners at the historically Indian school at which I teach. Being primary school learners, they would most certainly have had the choice of school made by their parents. I have observed that they tend to be almost totally unresponsive in the classroom, but vociferous on the playground where they are in the company of their fellow black learners. This has sprung many questions to mind. Has our ten-year old democracy been truly embraced by all South Africans or has the surface concealed what lies beneath? Do these learners feel excluded in the classroom?

I believe this study will shed some light on what it feels like to be a minority group at this school. It will also define processes of inclusion and exclusion within the context of this school, and this could raise awareness in other schools where similar observations may be recorded. Although this is a small-scale study, the over-arching aim is to provide necessary information that will impact on the policy formulation at the school level, thereby, facilitating positive change.

The specific aim which underpins this study is to elicit, through interviews with learners, some of the critical incidents they have experienced both in and out of the classroom. The process will provide learners with a platform on which they can relate such experiences and uncover their thoughts on these issues. The key research question is, therefore: How do African learners experience schooling in a historically Indian context?

Issues of race relations at school level have been widely documented both locally and internationally. These have highlighted and clarified many of the concepts that channeled the course of this research. In the chapters that follow, the conceptual framework will be discussed within the context of the various sources of literature; the research design and methodology will be outlined, followed by a detailed analysis and discussion of results, and possible recommendations.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

This chapter will explore concepts and theories related to integration and desegregation in schools. I have drawn on more than one theory, namely, the theory of inclusion and exclusion and the theory of oppression. Key concepts that arise are integration and desegregation, power, racism and stereotyping. These formed the framework of this study.

2.2. Theoretical Considerations

2.2.1. Inclusion and Exclusion

Issues of inclusion and exclusion have recently been central to the educational debates in South Africa and internationally. Such debates on the nature of the concepts result in the absence of singular understandings on the definitions of the concepts. Booth, Nes and Stromstad (2003) suggest that inclusion is about consciously putting into action values based on equity, entitlement, community, participation and respect for diversity. This would imply a concern for the reduction in inequality, both on a social and economic level. Social and economic differences have been the basis for discrimination. However, gender, class, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity and family background are also basis for discrimination. Inclusion is about reducing such discrimination by focussing on the development of the culture, policies and practices that can make schools responsive to the diversity of learners. The end to which inclusion strives is to value all learners in a

school equally. Booth *et al* (2003) describes this as the transformative approach to inclusion which is in contrast with the assimilationist or “melting pot” approach. In the “melting pot” approach, learners, irrespective of their socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, interests, gender, attainments and disabilities, are expected to fit into a monocultural education system. African learners in desegregated schools perceive of themselves as “black” not as a social category but as an excluded group because they carry the academically and socially disabling features of the Bantu Education system. An inclusive policy will work at eroding this type of exclusion.

Haug (2003) believes that inclusion is about recognising and understanding all learners irrespective of their attainment, interests, talents, gender, class and ethnic background. Many African learners, for example, experience language difficulties. This lack of proficiency in English places them immediately in an excluded group. This difference is placed under the spotlight, and the learners are constituted as the “other” in the context of the majority who are the “same”. Often, as D’amant, Sader and Sader (2003) argue, the “other” learners are expected to cope the best they can with little or no effort on the part of the school to adapt in any way to accommodate their needs. This attitude reflects the assimilationist approach to school integration, and this broadens the debate to include basic human rights.

Inclusive education, as Ware (2003) suggests, is part of a human rights approach to social relations and conditions. Whilst social justice, equity and democratic participation are central to the human rights approach to inclusion, it is even more important to establish

access to such participation by first identifying, challenging and removing barriers that hinder inclusion. Sayed (2002) states that students are often denied access based on their geographical location since many schools accept learners from within their designated zone. The other level of access is more institutional. The school's dominant culture undermines the minority cultures through alienation of certain groups of learners or the adoption of the "colour-blind" approach which purports to see no difference, thereby ignoring diversity. Access policies determine who does or does not have access to a particular institution. Muthukrishna (2003) agrees that inclusion is about the question of access for all people, and adds that it is about which learners are valued in the educational mainstream and who is relegated to the status of "other".

Another barrier is the lack of teacher education interventions and research into such programmes in South Africa (Moletsane, Hemson and Muthukrishna, 2003). The lack of adequate training of educators in inclusive education results in educators being swallowed by the ideological framework of the education system within a school, namely, the standards agenda. According to Ainscow (2003), inclusion is restricted by the focus on outcomes rather than on the conditions for learning, including the quality of relationships in the school. Learners need to feel welcome and included. This means that school policies must consider how to include "previously excluded" learners, and to make them recognise the incentives available for them to include themselves in the system (Sayed, 2002). From the afore-mentioned literature, it is evident that there are many perspectives on the concept of inclusion and as Muthukrishna (2003) highlights there are authors who stress the need to avoid the notion of a single perspective.

The next issue is the link between inclusion and exclusion. According to Booth (2003), there is a strong link between the two. When one talks of inclusion one obviously thinks about exclusion and vice versa. Many attach meaning to the concept of inclusion because they understand what it is to be excluded (Booth, 2003). Sayed (2002) comments that some literature focus on inclusion only whilst others focus on exclusion yet the concepts are juxtaposed in that the inclusion of groups or persons implies the exclusion of others. However, Sayed (2002) discourages the assumption that inclusion and exclusion are opposing terms. The two concepts involve processes, co-option and control. According to Sayed (2003), the act of inclusion opens the debate on what the included have become included in, on whose terms, and what new exclusions the very act of inclusion presents to them. The process of inclusion may result in the included still experiencing a sense of exclusion. Integrated schools are examples of this argument. Previously disadvantaged learners are included in the schools but experience exclusion in their everyday participation. Poverty is closely aligned to disadvantage. Sayed (2002) believes that poverty and exclusion are also closely related. It is suggested that poverty and social identity could well be determinants of exclusion.

In South Africa, Africans constitute the majority, yet within some desegregated schools these learners can still be marginalized. Brandt (1986) believes that the constant reinforcement of “otherness” and peripherality, and the relegation of Black issues to an ‘add-on’ status are strong indicators of marginalization. Often educators might, with good intentions, ask a learner of a minority group to explain or clarify certain of their cultural

practices. This could be demeaning to the learner who could feel embarrassed. This is also rather exclusionary as it highlights difference. Gillborn (1995) states that these small groups of learners resent being representatives of their entire community. They do not appreciate being expected to know everything related to their particular ethnic group.

The task of education in the “new”, post-apartheid South Africa ought to be to promote inclusion.

2.2.2.Theory of Oppression

According to Adams, Bell and Griffin (1997), the theory of oppression emphasizes the pervasive nature of social inequality. Social inequality is intertwined throughout social institutions, and even embeds itself within the individual’s consciousness, often resulting in the internalization of the oppression. Oppression fuses institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry, and social prejudice in a complex web of relationships that permeates most aspects of societal life. Structural and material constraints are placed on a person’s life chances and sense of possibility. Adams, *et al* (1997) argue that oppression restricts both self-determination and self-development. Oppression involves a hierarchical relationship between a dominant group and a target group. The dominant, privileged group benefits from disempowering the subordinated, targeted group. Colonialism has historically bestowed upon Whites access to social power and privilege not equally available to people of colour. This, together with unequal distribution of positions of power and wealth, has impacted on the life expectancy, mortality, income, housing, employment, and educational opportunities of black people (Adams, *et al*, 1997). Oppression is often internalized by targeted groups as well as the

dominant groups because the human psyche embeds that which it confronts in social situations. Thus, poor people believe that they are responsible for poverty and deserve it. Similarly, African learners in a desegregated school might believe that they are less worthy than their counterparts of other race groups.

There are different forms of oppression. However, South Africa's history of apartheid makes racial oppression a distinctive feature within our social and historical contexts. Arising from racist oppression are other oppressions as well. Some of these oppressions are based upon class, gender, ethnicity and poverty. Patterns demonstrate an interconnection and reinforcement of the different oppressions. Sayed (2003) refers to the intersection of race, gender, class religion and language, amongst others, as the interlocking model. This intersection produces unique and peculiar experiences which, according to Sayed (2003), must be viewed from a multi-dimensional perspective since there is no single or dual categories of oppression that result in the experiences that people have. In other words, all forms of oppression interlock to produce the outcome. However, Sayed (2003) also encourages the use of the non-synchronous model which contends that there is a dominant articulating principle. Many forms and levels of injustices or oppressions become embedded in the one dominant problem, and all interact to produce complex social relations. For example, African learners have historically been disadvantaged based on their race. The cycle of oppression begins with racist oppression. Being black, they are oppressed. This excludes them from a good education which, consequently, results in poor job opportunity, low income, poor housing and sanitation

which results in poor health; transport restrictions, lack of access to amenities and low social status. Women have the added injustices of gender oppression.

Sayed (2003) shows how the intersection of race, class and gender injustices is inextricably linked to social exclusion. Soudien (1998) refers to race, class and gender as “the big three”, and believes that even when all three are evident, one will supersede the others. In the South African context, racism is often identified as the form of oppression and whilst policies and reform focus on race, they overlook the embedded inequalities that stem from class, culture, gender, religion and language disparities. These play a big role in group experiences. One issue that is raised from this discourse is that of self-esteem. Verma (1989) leads a discussion on the effect of self-esteem on the academic achievement of learners. In schools, in particular, these intersecting oppressions have an impact on self-esteem. As was stated earlier, oppression restricts self-determination and self-development, thereby lowering self-esteem.

Another sociological issue linked to the theory of oppression is the cycle of socialization. Adams *et al*, (1997) explain that people are born with no sense of consciousness, guilt or blame. However, we are born into social identity groups with mechanics in place. These mechanics include stereotypes, prejudices and a historical background which impacts on our present lives. Through the socialization process, we acquire values, beliefs and attitudes. Children are taught on both conscious and unconscious levels by their parents, educators, relatives and others what are the acceptable norms, values, roles and rules. Institutions such as schools, businesses, religious bodies and the media reinforce the learned values. Based upon these reinforcements, people are accepted or stigmatised,

rewarded or punished, privileged or persecuted, discriminated against or empowered. This results in dissonance, silence, anger, collusion, guilt, self-hatred, stress, violence, crime and the internalization of patterns of power or oppression.

At this stage in the cycle, people might do nothing; make waves, or promote the status quo. Alternatively, they could bring about change, raise consciousness, educate, take a stand; question previously held values, and reframe social identity. This interrupts or breaks the cycle.

2.3. Conceptual Considerations

2.3.1. Integration and Desegregation

To begin with, integration and desegregation are often, incorrectly, used synonymously. Naidoo (1996) contends that whilst desegregation is a one-time shift in school conditions, integration is a social process which is a possible outcome of desegregation. Integration involves the interaction of learners of different races both in and out of school. There must also be equal status and equal opportunity provided to these learners. Gill, Mayor and Blair (1992) refer to the speech by the British Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins, who said that integration was not a 'flattening process of assimilation', but a type of system that offered equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity, in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance.

Given that schools in South Africa, because of legislation, are now desegregated, the issue of integration comes into focus. Naidoo (1996) describes desegregation as a mechanical process. It merely focuses on the physical proximity of the different groups of learners in a school. Whilst schools might genuinely try to be integrated, it is the level of integration that needs to be examined. Within the newly desegregated schools in South Africa, interactions between races are fairly harmonious but out of school, learners experience a social distance, thereby proving that integration is transient and context-bound (Gaganakis, 1992). In this case, the context is the school. In schools in which learners hail from different residential areas, social integration becomes difficult because of geographical limitations. In addition, exclusionary practices feed these social constraints.

2.3.2. Power and Power Relations

‘Power’, according to Epstein (1993), is a critical concept in any discussion of racial relations. This, as Adams *et al* (1997) explain, is because power is relational and dynamic. It circulates within the intricate network of relationships in which we all participate. Although power is sometimes imposed unilaterally in a top-down manner by a person or group, it is most often an ongoing system mediated by people simply going about their daily lives. Within the network of relationships, there are power relations which are constructed and reconstructed (Epstein, 1993).

In the school arena, there is shared space between the educator and the learner. Educators in an integrated school are adults, with more experience and knowledge, often of

different race and class to the child who is integrated into the school. Gender exacerbates the problem. There is an unequal power relation within this shared space because of the interconnection of race, class, gender, religion and language limitation, among other issues. The educator enters this shared space with greater power than the learners do. Paul and Smith (2000) argue that this power, when wielded in caring ways, can be life affirming thereby contributing to the learner's positive self-construction. Conversely, such power can be used to the detriment of the child.

Paul and Smith (2000) suggest that the issue of power is linked to inclusion/exclusion in that exclusion is a type of power and control that is used to dehumanize and alienate learners. Delpit (1997) identifies five aspects of power. Issues of power are enacted in the classroom. The educator's expertise, the curricula and the standards become issues of power. There is a 'culture of power' which is evident linguistically and in the way educators present themselves.

Power and power relations are nurtured in the "hidden" curriculum, which makes a powerful impact on exclusionary pressures on certain learners. Learners' emotional and social welfare are impacted by the implicit suggestions made through subtleties in the spoken language, body language, seating arrangements, pedagogy, distribution of responsibilities in the class, and through recognition/non-recognition of certain learners. Brandt (1986) agrees that the "hidden" curriculum is conveyed to learners through personal attitudes, policies and ideological underpinnings.

According to Burgess-Macey (1992), children are constantly immersed in an all pervasive “hidden” curriculum. Racist attitudes and expectations, power structures, assessment methods, and the division of classes surround the children through the “hidden” curriculum. For example, a wall full of pictures of White children subtly conveys the message that the world is full of Whites, or that people of colour are inconsequential.

Brandt (1986) considers the exposition of the “hidden” curriculum to be one of the most important functions of anti-racist teaching. He believes that the immaterial and intangible aspects of a school, often called the “ethos” of the school, form the most powerful tools of exclusion and marginalization. This view is supported by Colucci (2000) who believes that the “hidden” curriculum is the most nebulous and subtle form of negative pedagogy, yet its effect on learners can be devastating because of its insidious nature. In order to perpetuate the “hidden curriculum”, the educator wields the power he/she has acquired by virtue of his/her expertise and racial group dominance.

2.3.3. Stereotyping

Stereotyping is closely related to issues of prejudice and racism. It is defined by Adams, Bell and Griffin (1997) as an undifferentiated, simplistic attribution that involves a judgement of habits, traits, abilities, or expectations, and is assigned as a characteristic to all members of a group regardless of individual variation, and with no attention to the relation between the attributions and the social contexts in which they have arisen.

The negative portrayal of blacks in literature has an impact on negative stereotypes of the race. Parker cited in Gill, Mayor and Blair (1992) reveals that writers of the Elizabethan era portrayed blacks as stereotypical and inferior. He also quotes from a list of African stereotypes, some of which are that they are physically: bad-smelling; mentally: incompetent and uncultured; morally: liars and thieves, always late, savage and good servants; emotionally: good dancers and singers. According to Connolly (1998), stereotyping of Africans as biologically inferior and “animal-like” in their intuitions and behaviour provided a justifying ideology for their enslavement and inhumane treatment, particularly in the decades of colonialism. This initiated the logic for separating the human population with the inevitability that people begin to see themselves in opposition to others, thereby feeding the stereotypes of “us” and “them”.

A self-fulfilling prophecy comes into operation as a result of stereotyping. Africans are considered aggressive and are, therefore, more likely to be under the watchful gaze of the educators. They are also more likely to land themselves in trouble. They begin to rebel, drop grades, and resist unfairness. Such attitudes result in their being described as volatile and aggressive. Out of school, a similar situation arises but with greater consequences. Reluctance to employ Africans results in unemployment, hence poor living standards. This confirms the popular stereotypes.

Sleeter and Grant (1994) explain that people are more comfortable with individuals who fit into stereotypes than with those who do not. This is so because stereotypes provide a

“map of reality” that guides our interpretation and actions towards people. Children as young as two or three years are aware of visible differences among people, but they are not aware of the meanings that society attaches to these differences. The media, school and home bombard them with interpretations that develop into stereotypes.

2.3.4. Racism

According to Cohen (1988), “race” is a social construct and is the object of racist discourse. “Race” cannot function outside such discourse. Racism, therefore, is the perpetuation of such discourse. Epstein (1993) agrees that racism is socially constructed, therefore, it is situated within institutional arrangements. However, she articulates the complexity of defining “racism” since it is a process, which changes over time and place, and varies according to macro- and micro-political conditions and organisations. The school is one such micro organization. Troyna (1993) also refers to organizational culture. He suggests that racism describes the way in which social relations and practices are organized. Children enter school with early perceptions of difference among people. These perceptions would most likely have been influenced by parents or other significant adults. Within the school, children begin to build on these perceptions. They construct and reconstruct the meanings of their realities in relation to that of other learners.

Naidoo (1996) adds that racism is a manifestation of an ongoing collective process of group interactions. In his research, Naidoo (1996) refers to Carrim and Mkwanzazi’s (1993) definition of racism as “ the systematic oppression of people of colour. It may be overt or covert, intentional or unintentional.” Miles (1995) agrees with the

aforementioned definitions but he adds that there is also a specific emphasis on the consequences of the beliefs, actions and processes for the domination of one group over another. Racism is, therefore, determined by the consequences of a sentiment and not by its surface qualities.

Racism, whether overt or covert, is a system of oppression that stigmatizes the subordinate group. According to Adams, Bell and Griffin (1997) racism is often revealed through unconscious attitudes and behaviours. Such attitudes and behaviours are the result of an unacknowledged yet pervasive dominant cultural norm. Supremacy is exposed in language and cultural practices, which serve the dominant, and excludes the subordinate. Whilst these factors remain unmarked as channels of power, they bolster the power position of the dominant group.

As stated before, the consequences of racist sentiments and actions are of importance. Gillborn (1995) adds to this by engaging in a radical approach to racism. This removes intent from the actions and rules that promote racism because any action or rule that disproportionately disadvantages a particular race may be judged as racist, irrespective of its intent. Another critical consequence of racism is the internalization of negative perceptions. Adams, Bell and Griffin (1997) identify that target groups often begin to incorporate feelings of inferiority and self-hatred. These bring about resignation, isolation, withdrawal, powerlessness and general lack of confidence. This consequently nourishes the feelings of superiority and power that the dominant group enjoys.

Racism embodies stereotypes. Adams, Bell and Griffin express agreement with this by stating that subordinate or minority groups are often oppressed on the basis of their group status. Africans are racially stereotyped as academically deficient therefore, a black learner who excels is considered atypical and an exceptional individual. However, if he under-performs, he may be seen as a true representative of his group. Yet, according to the Swann Report (Verma, 1989), it is evident that discrimination against children of colour in British schools was the major ingredient in their underachievement.

Troyna and Hatcher (1992) show how mistakenly held stereotypes and negative patronizing attitudes play vital roles in racism. They hinder expectations and create misunderstandings that constitute racism. They also elaborate that when racism is entrenched in policies, thereby informing practice, it designs the very pattern of opportunities that people have. An excellent example is South Africa's apartheid policy.

2.3.5. Assimilation, Critical Multiculturalism and Critical Antiracism

Naidoo (1996), explains that **the assimilationist approach** attempts to make the minority learners fit into the existing ethos of the school. An element of racelessness is encouraged and learners are expected to disregard their ethnicity, at least for the period during which they are at school. Since, as Rist (1978) argues, learners are expected to conform to the values of the dominant group, integration becomes synonymous with instilling one perspective in all learners. This is not the goal of integration. As Hlakanyana (1999) articulates, assimilation is a deceptive approach that appears smooth but is rugged inside. During the early years of democracy, between 1990 and 1994, the assimilationist

approach to integration was adopted. This, according to D'amant *et al* (2003), allows the presence of different racial, cultural, and ethnic groups within a single institution. The dominant culture prevails and the "other" learners are expected to 'fit in'. These schools make no attempt to cater for the needs of the diverse learner population. Instead, they continue with a "business as usual" attitude. In addition to the assimilationist approach, there is also the colour-blind approach (Naidoo, 1996). Educators claim to see all children as the same. There is a conscious effort by educators to suppress their negative feelings by claiming that they see no colour. The cultural realities of the learners are ignored and the dominant culture is thrust upon them. D'amant *et al* (2003) claims that these learners feel alienated from the classroom teaching.

Multicultural education is advocated to promote race relations, promote social cohesion and to encourage equality of educational opportunity (Verma, 1989). Multiculturalism has been widely celebrated in South Africa as a means of encouraging cultural tolerance. Symbols such as 'Rainbow Nation' and 'Simunye, we are one' are expected to magically instill feelings of unity in diversity. Whilst multicultural education acknowledges the cultures of all learners, it has been criticized for token representation of diverse cultures. Schools acknowledge cultural diversity during concerts and cultural days simply as a means of representing diverse cultures in the school programme. Carrim and Soudien (1999) quote the comments made by educators when asked about the level of multiculturalism in their schools.

Oh, when we have our concert, the Zulu kids put up a Zulu dance

in traditional Zulu costumes. (Indian)

Our parent days are like the United Nations. We have all the food and costumes of all the cultures. We are very multicultural. (White)

Multicultural education does not address the key issues of racism. D'amant *et al* (2003) warn that danger of the multicultural approach is that whilst it breaks away from colour racism, discrimination exists in other aspects such as culture and unequal power relations persist in these areas. Gillborn (1990) argues that one of the main criticisms against multiculturalism is that it fails to address the social, political and economic power relations which exploited minority groups.

It is evident that multicultural trends seem to be a reconstruction of racism. Paul and Smith (2000) argue that multicultural education is often presented in superficial ways like the celebration of holidays and the exploration of ethnic foods. Often multiculturalism is the reinforcement of stereotypes. Cultures tend to become caricatured. This form of multiculturalism depicts culture and identity as static. There is a failure to acknowledge acculturation and relocation. Zulu children, for example, are expected to know the "gumboot dance" and the significance of all ethnic Zulu practices. This interpretation of multiculturalism ignores power dimensions of racism. Carrim and Soudien (1999) believe that it focuses on lifestyles rather than on life chances and opportunities. Lifestyles are celebrated whilst practices continue unabated.

Brandt (1986: 117) uses this powerful analogy to effectively explain multiculturalism :

Multiculturalism is seen as the 'spoonful of sugar' which makes the medicine go down. But as is widely known, in scientific terms, not all elements mix and

when they do, the properties of one or both can be slightly or even drastically changed, if the elements are not 'sympathetic' to each other. Thus the 'sugar' can so drastically change the medicine that the latter is made impotent.

These negative notions of multiculturalism have led to the development of **critical anti-racism**. Brandt (1986), argues that whereas multiculturalism seeks to respond to ethnic minorities' experiences, anti-racism accords them an active and central role. Anti-racism is, therefore, dynamic and active and its processes are described as dismantling, deconstructive and reconstructive. Carrim and Soudien (1999) add that anti-racism rejects "race" and replaces it with ethnicity. It confronts cultural essentialism and acknowledges difference, whilst incorporating the power dimensions of racism. May (1999) believes that anti-racism overtly confronts questions about the power dimensions of racism and would insist that equal attention is given to cultural differences among all people, including those within racialized groups. Carrim and Soudien (1999) assert that ignoring cultural diversity within racialized groups is actually a reconstructed form of racism. Racial groups are treated as homogenous.

The implications of these concepts will be dealt with later.

2.4. Conclusion

This chapter explored the theories and concepts that contributed to the framework of this study. The common concept linking the theories and concepts is the intersection of race, class and gender with other aspects of social integration.

CHAPTER 3: EMPIRICAL RESEARCH ON INTEGRATION AND DESEGREGATION

3.1. Introduction

There is a large body of local and international research on integration and desegregation. The aim of this chapter is to examine the findings of these studies, and the critical issues and trends that emerge from them.

3.2. Studies in South Africa

Research on integration and desegregation in South African schools has yielded much-needed data to enable one to establish patterns of practice. The studies quoted in this review reveal certain over-arching trends in integrated schools. Many of these issues have been explored in the conceptual framework. They include inclusion and exclusion, the “us/them” discourse, stereotyping, racism and multiculturalism.

Bhana (1994) conducted a study at a Durban ex-House of Delegates primary school. She was a staff member at the school that was populated by predominantly Indian learners who constituted 88.8% of the school population. The educators were of the Indians race group. The aim of the study was to explore the processes and practices through which educators constitute themselves in relation to the African child. It explores how educators become implicated in anti-racist behaviour.

Bhana (1994) selected a sample of ten educators who spent the most amount of time with the African learners. The approach used was the case study, and the research tool was

interviews. Fieldwork was done by means of classroom observation, general school observation, and non-participant observation. The researcher conducted covert observation during staff meetings, committee meetings, and general discussions. Although Bhana (1994) acknowledges that covert research is considered unethical, she explains that it is justifiable since her rich source of data would have been distorted if the subjects were aware of being observed.

The findings revealed that Indian teachers at this ex-Indian school viewed the African and Indian learner as binary opposites which means that these two groups of learners were seen in terms of bipolarity. The educators align themselves with a dominant discourse that is constituted as being the “same”. Indian learners were considered to be the “same” whilst the African learner became the negative “other”. Success at school is determined by the extent to which the “other” has become the “same”. Linked to this discourse is the educators’ use of “them” and “us” in which “us” indicated collective superiority. During interviews, the educators revealed stereotypical notions of Africans. All Africans were associated with domestic workers and school support staff. The deficit model underpinned the relationship between Africans and Indians at this school with the African learners being looked upon as lacking.

Bhana believes that educators operate on the level of inclusion and exclusion. Inclusion is about the prevention of barriers to learning and participation for all children whilst exclusion implies entrenching the barriers. Educators made fewer demands on the African learners, and condoned their failure to do homework because they did not receive

the same support from parents that Indian learners did. Again this emphasizes the “otherness” of the African child, and reinforces marginality.

Bhana (1994) also identified that African learners met at a particular point on the playgrounds. Educators reprimanded African learners for their loudness and encouraged the African learners to be more like the “same”. Learners were expected to adopt the existing ethos of the school, even if it implied shedding their cultural uniqueness. This study revealed that so-called progress in desegregating schools conceals inequality and promotes difference. The educators play an important role in the construction of domination and exclusion despite their good intentions. The study also brings to the fore issues of power, marginality, oppression, racism, and the logic of “us” and “them”. All of these issues are intertwined to present a complex model of oppression.

Another related local study was conducted by Zafar (1996) at a secondary school in the south-Durban district, Merebank. This school showed a marginal enrolment of African learners during the period under study. It was, therefore, predominantly Indian. Like the school in Bhana’s (1994) study, the staff comprised Indians only. African learners attending this school travelled from neighbouring townships, such as Umlazi. The aim of this research was to examine the extent to which racial and linguistic differences negatively affects the communication and interaction between Indian educators and African learners. In achieving this aim, Zafar made racism and racial conflict the principle foci of the study.

The study is based upon the first-hand experiences of Indian educators and African learners at this desegregated school. Data was collected using both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Interviews were conducted with both educators and learners. Questionnaires were also completed by educators and learners. The information was verified through the researcher's observations whilst at the school. Unlike Bhana (1994), Zafar was an "outsider".

The findings of this research are very similar to those of Bhana (1994). The data revealed that educators and learners abhorred racism, yet the researcher's observations reveals that racism was present in a covert form in all sectors of the school community. African and Indian learners were prejudiced but denied being racist. Learners indicated that most educators treated them equally but that some made them feel they should not be there. Indian educators adopted the "colour-blind" approach by claiming to treat all learners the same. However, a few educators indicated their resignation to accepting desegregation at their school. Institutional racism was evident in the enrolment procedures. Whereas Indian learners gained automatic entry, Africans had to undergo subtle screening for English proficiency with many having to repeat the previous academic year. Inter-racial contact was influenced by prejudice and stereotypes such as poverty and deprivation. Prior to desegregation, Indian educators had little contact with Africans, and the little contact they did have was limited to domestic servants and gardeners, hence, the stereotype of Africans being poor and deprived.

The data reveals that the communication barrier intensifies the social difficulties that the African learners experience as “newcomers”. These learners also indicated their awareness of the racial undertones that prevailed at that school. These undertones were revealed in the mockery and teasing of the African learners by the Indians. The communication barrier also filters into the classroom where African learners are quiet and reluctant to volunteer answers. Educators and learners see this from different perspectives. Learners revealed that they were embarrassed to speak because of their limited proficiency in the English language. This language deficiency is emphasized by other learners.

Zafar (1996) also found contradictions in the educators’ beliefs and their actions. Whilst educators claimed to treat all learners alike, their practice in the classroom demonstrated difference in their interaction with Indian and African learners. This difference indicates that the colour-blind approach actually conceals racism. The assimilationist approach to desegregation, outlined in chapter 2, is evident at the school. Educators singled out those African learners who were able to “blend into the school”. Those learners who assimilated the dominant culture of the school were more acceptable to the educators.

In conclusion, Zafar’s (1996) study indicates that there is an outright rejection of racist practice by both educators and learners, yet there is sufficient evidence to suggest that there is an unconscious practice of racism by some individuals. Cultural differences and racial prejudices were the major factors in keeping the groups segregated in a desegregated school. The assimilationist approach is evident. Institutional practices also

impact negatively on integration at this school. The staff, for example, comprised only Indian educators. There were also blatant racial groupings outside the classroom.

Naidoo (1996) conducted an in-depth study into racial integration in South African public schools. The research was located in different geographic areas of Kwa-Zulu Natal, ranging from the larger metropolitan areas of Pietermaritzburg and Durban, to the smaller towns of Port Shepstone, Newcastle and Richards Bay. The sample comprised 26 ex-House of Delegates and ex-National Education Department schools. The aim of the study was to chart the process of racial integration in South African public schools thereby giving principals, educators, learners and parents the opportunity to evaluate their approaches to integration in schools. Interviews were conducted with parents, learners, educators and principals to gain insight into their perceptions of the desegregation process. Naidoo (1996) did a document analysis of national, departmental and school documents relating to admission policies.

The findings revealed that the majority of schools adopted an assimilationist approach whereby the black learners that enter a school must find ways to “fit” in. They had to conform to an existing ethos that was quite alien to their own backgrounds. The pressure to do this was exerted by institutional arrangements and attitudes of individuals. There was also the “colour-blind” perspective, which featured very strongly. As in the cases of Bhana’s and Zafar’s studies, the colour-blind approach claimed by educators is inconsistent with the racist practices. Contradictions emerged when the very educators who claimed colour-blindness referred to “us” and “them”.

Naidoo (1996) concludes that society has shifted the burden of desegregation to schools, and schools have shifted the burden to the learners. The educators' attitude of "business as usual" is not conducive to educating a diverse learner population. The immediate emphasis ought to be on changing attitudes and then on changing practices. The traditional curriculum with its middle class academic values does not address issues of inequities and the intersection of the various oppressions. Therefore, it served as a means of exclusion. Schools, he found, continued to operate on the premise that it was their function to adapt disadvantaged learners to a system that was intrinsically biased against them.

Schools in Naidoo's (1996) research appeared to be constructive and pleasant learning grounds where integration was successful and racism, non-existent. However, in-depth analysis of research data revealed and observations indicated militating features such as assimilation, the colour-blind approach, exclusionary talk such as "us" and "them", patronising attitudes towards accommodation, superficial accommodation and, in some cases, the maintenance of separate identities. It became evident that there were different approaches to integration. Some schools had a strong assimilationist approach. It became evident from dialogues with the respondents that the ethos of the school had to be maintained.

Most teachers felt that integration was long overdue. However, they did admit to feeling uncomfortable in the presence of the new learners, mainly because they had had limited contact with them. They also commented that the training they received was inadequate.

Stereotyping of the African learners was common practice. They were seen as being poor and deprived, therefore, attempts at integration were often done patronisingly. Educators also blamed the increase in theft on the African learners. This is another stereotype upheld by both educators and learners.

Naidoo's (1996) research reveals that there are varying degrees of classroom and social interaction between Africans and other race groups in a school. Most educators adjusted quickly to having African learners in the class and encouraged interaction in the form of lesson participation. However, many African learners experienced negative interaction with their educators in the class because of negative stereotypes and preconceived notions of what constituted the ideal learner. African learners were seen as a threat to classroom management. Discriminatory interaction was also evident as educators imposed sanctions on African learners, whilst the dominant group were pardoned for the same misdemeanor. All respondents indicated that African learners keep to themselves. Schools have done nothing to encourage social interaction. Some learners and educators believed that the separation indicated racial intolerance.

Naidoo (1996) concludes that it is important for everyone to be recognised and valued equally. Equal value and recognition are the core features of inclusion and it is what distinguishes between desegregation and integration. Naidoo (1996) defined desegregation as quantitative whilst integration is a qualitative process.

Hlakanyana (1999) conducted research on learners' perceptions of racial integration. This research was conducted in three schools, an ex-National Education Department school, an ex-House of Delegates school and an ex-House of Representatives school. The three schools were situated around Durban. In each school, he used one Grade 11 class that was made available to him by the school. The aim of his study was to investigate how learners interrelated in these schools after integration. He also wanted to establish if dominant/subordinate relationships existed in the schools. To achieve these aims, Hlakanyana used questionnaires and interviews to gather the necessary data. He used a 19-point questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.

The findings reveal that whilst schools reflect integration by virtue of their racial composition, other structures such as the governing bodies and teaching staff did not reflect the same. Learners revealed that contact amongst them was limited to school hours. It is also evident that schools are willing to change but that the lack of national and provincial guidelines allowed schools to do as they saw fit. This became problematic as educators who are the products of segregated schooling are expected to make radical changes.

The assimilationist approach was evident from some of the learners' responses. Others were against assimilation. Learners were against the idea of having to change their way of life and their culture. They felt that rules that enforced such changes were not in their interest. They felt that peoples' diversity should not be compromised.

Social interaction was limited to school hours but learners did not see this as a problem because they lived in different areas. This brings to the fore the problem of integration beyond the school. The separate residential areas make it difficult for integration in society as a whole.

The learners believed that it was important for educators to be trained to handle racially mixed classes. They felt that knowledge of the various cultures gave educators a better understanding of the learners. There was a clear “us” and “them” phenomenon that existed in the schools. This is similar to the findings in the previous researches. Hence, as Jansen (2001) suggests, learners tend to aggregate with learners who share the same colour and language. Hlakanyana concluded that there has to be policies and mechanisms in place to assist educators and learners to achieve smooth integration.

Research in South Africa highlights the need for a paradigm shift in responses to integration and desegregation. Educators and education authorities have failed to address some of the most common features in desegregated schools. The most important of these features is that of assimilation. Schools appear content with the misguided belief that their role in integration is complete when learners of colour are admitted into the school. South African research also highlights the need for in-service training of staff as educators have thus far failed to address diversity, although they believe they have. What has actually been done amounts to multiculturalism in which ethnic differences have been superficially presented. This only serves to widen the gaps between the groups. Another feature is the multiple disparities with which certain groups are faced. Africans who

attend urban integrated schools might face many barriers to their total participation. These include transport restrictions, poverty, fatigue, nonpunctuality, class oppression, gender bias, language difficulties amongst others. These are all interconnected in a web of oppression, yet only race is likely to be identified.

3.3. International Research

Gillborn (1990) carried out a two-year, intensive ethnographic research at a comprehensive school in London. The school had a learner population of 1000 from various ethnic backgrounds. The educator population was 65. There was only one Afro-Caribbean educator. She played a very peripheral role on the staff. The aim of the research was to investigate the day-to-day interactions, between educators and learners of different ethnic backgrounds.

The sample consisted of three mixed ability classes. Later this was reduced to two. There were 211 learners of whom 19 were Afro-Caribbean; 14 were South Asian and 10 were of mixed race. The remainder were all white, constituting 80% of the sample. The researcher conducted taped interviews with learners. Lessons, assemblies and formal and informal conversations were observed. He also made use of existing documents as evidence such as registers and punishment books. Questionnaires were filled in.

The data revealed many findings. Firstly, ethnicity was devalued. Educators believed that they should treat everyone the same. This, ironically, allowed them to deem ethnicity as

inappropriate since everyone has to be treated the same. Secondly, Gillborn observed that the Afro-Caribbean children were the most criticised and controlled of all learners. Critical and controlling statements were levelled at them. They were also singled out for criticism even when other children, both white and other ethnic groups, were involved in the same behaviour. This type of educator-pupil interaction was noticed by the learners. During interviews, Afro-Caribbean children complained of unfair treatment. This was confirmed by white learners who described how Afro-Caribbean learners received punishment whilst white children were let off for the same misconduct. This particular observation coincides with the findings in South African research and indicates the universality of racist discourse. Thirdly, educators believed that Afro-Caribbean learners challenged authority. Educators held the common view that Afro-Caribbean children presented a greater discipline problem than their peers of other ethnic groups. A cursory examination of the detention roster seems to support the educators' views. However, on scrutiny, it is clear that the Afro-Caribbean children at this school did not break clearly defined school rules. Instead, they were more often detained for offences that were identified by the educator's interpretation of learner attitude. Educators accept the myth that black children were very unprepared for the day's work. Gillborn's fieldnotes reveal incidents of racist name-calling and bullying. It is evident that Asian children were targeted by whites. They were subjected to racist attacks, both verbal and physical.

This study raises the issue of preconceptions of ethnocentrism. Educators tried to treat all learners fairly, but their deepset perceptions of Afro-Caribbeans as violent and disruptive led to actions, which were racist. Relationships between educators and learners are

characteristically conflictual. Another issue is that of negative stereotyping. This, too, coincides with other studies. However, in the case of Afro-Caribbean learners there is a cycle in operation. The learner has to adapt to his disadvantaged position without reinforcing negative stereotypes. It is very easy to fall foul of the educator. This causes resistance which confirms the stereotype that Afro-Caribbean learners are a threat to authority.

The issue of expectancy is also highlighted. Educators' beliefs that Asian children are well-disciplined and hard working led to positive expectations from the educator. Asian learners experienced school in different ways to the blacks. Social class is the next issue. It is evident that social class is strongly associated with academic achievement. Ethnic minorities suffer inequalities which are perpetuated by the power that the educators hold. Ethnic underachievement is well documented and is therefore used by educators and the system to absolve themselves of the responsibility of such underachievement. Gillborn (1990) also highlights multiculturalism and anti-racism.

Frederikse (1992) conducted research between April and October 1990 in Harare, Zimbabwe, where schools were integrated after years of minority domination. The aim of this study was to portray the experiences of educators, learners and parents who had experienced the process of integration in the decade since independence.

Frederikse (1992) used a sample of parents, learners and educators from desegregated schools. Firstly, it was found that the private and sub-urban schools attracted the wealthier blacks. This made these schools multi-racial and middle-class. On the other hand, the township schools remained uniraical and inferior. Secondly, a major implication of this study is that the integration of schools must be based on firm principles of redressing the inequities of the past. Failing that, a minority of blacks will be admitted to positions of privilege whilst society at large remains divided. The third finding was that Africans are assimilated into dominant cultures. African cultures, customs and languages are neglected in the suburban schools. The African learners were ashamed to speak Shona or Ndebele, and were sometimes forbidden from speaking African languages.

Frederikse's research uncovers a range of responses. Learners experienced difficulties during the transition but the majority of the blacks in the study indicated that they would not want to leave the integrated suburban school. They valued the "better" education they received. This research raises the issue of education and class by exploring peoples' responses with regards to private and government schools. Responses varied from those who were happy to enrol their children in private schools, to those who were totally against private schools. Those in favour of a private school were dissatisfied with the large teacher-pupil ratio in the government schools. They also found that the staff composition was in a constant state of flux, with qualified, experienced teachers leaving and being replaced by lowly qualified, inexperienced teachers. This scenario is currently unfolding in South Africa.

Paul and Smith (2000) conducted a study in the U.S.A. The study was entitled care and cruelty in the classroom. Stories told by adults in “Dear Teacher” letters about their memories of their schooling comprised the data. The study focused on the quality of life experienced by children in the classroom.

The aim of the research was to expose the many areas that affect the emotional, academic and physical well-being of children in the classroom. Negative pedagogy, which refers to a teaching-learning situation in which the child is scarred emotionally, intellectually and/or physically by the education process, is often insidious in nature. This study, in exposing care and cruelty in the classroom, hoped to make educators take a critical look at the underlying philosophies and implications of their actions in the classroom.

With regards to race, culture and ethnicity, the findings reveal that most of the negative pedagogy exists in the educator’s conscious beliefs about groups of learners and how they learn and behave. An educator who believes that learners who live in economically depressed areas have inferior intelligence might not put in much effort in educating these learners and will justify this by saying:

They won't learn no matter what I do, so why bother?

Letters revealed that children are sensitive to the hidden curriculum. Children were able to identify many issues related to negative pedagogy, including racism and cultural disrespect.

Paul and Smith (2000) conclude that the classroom is saturated with oppressions based on race, class, gender, ethnicity and ability. These oppressions are often layered or interlocked to produce complex social problems for individuals or groups.

Cecile Wright (1992) conducted research on experiences of racism in primary school classrooms in British schools. It aimed to examine the experiences of black children in the primary classroom, focusing particularly on their relationships with their educators and classmates. The study involved four inner-city primary schools during 1988/1989. Day-to-day classroom experiences were recorded. An ethnographic approach was used to chart these experiences. Approximately 970 learners and 57 staff were observed in the classroom. These observations were documented by note-taking, case-studies, tape-recordings and verbatim descriptions of events. Interviews were conducted with educators, support staff, learners and parents

The findings revealed that there was a pleasant atmosphere and a constructive relationship amongst the learners and staff. Most staff members displayed genuine commitment to equality of opportunity. However, classroom observation revealed subtle differences in the treatment of black children by their white educators.

Educators expressed frustration at the Asian learners when their poor English skills interfered with the lesson. Educators drew attention to this deficit by singling these children out. This prompted the white children to make disparaging remarks, such as, "Paki". Educators expressed disapproval of the Asian learners traditions and showed total disregard for their feelings. Educators were insensitive towards the conflicting

expectations between home and school. It was found that the educators' attitudes encouraged racist name-calling and harassment.

Afro-Caribbean learners were the most criticised and controlled. Only they were reprimanded for "unacceptable" behaviour even when other race groups were involved in similar behaviour. Written entries in the educators' classroom logs revealed stereotyping and racist insults.

Wright (1992) concludes that both Asian and Afro-Caribbean children faced negative educator interaction in the classroom. Educators based their classroom relations on their preconceived notions that Asian children are courteous, industrious and well-disciplined but lacked English language skills, socialisation skills and cognitive ability. Afro-Caribbean children were perceived of as badly behaved and in need of constant reprimands and control.

3.4. Conclusion

Research conducted, both locally and internationally, reveal the existence of racism in the classroom. This impacts negatively upon the social relations amongst learners out of the classroom where name-calling and anti-social behaviour are demonstrated. Wright (1992) explains that it is generally accepted that the foundations for emotional, social and intellectual development are laid in the early years of formal education. From evidence gathered, it would appear that children of colour are relatively disadvantaged at an early stage in their education.

South African and international research yielded common themes. Racist name-calling and mockery featured very strongly in all studies. It was also evident that educators often colluded with the dominant groups thereby encouraging exclusion. The assimilationist approach was apparent in most studies and multiculturalism was adopted by many institutions as an instrument to facilitate integration. However, multiculturalism met with wide scale criticism. The desired approach is anti-racism which ignores race in favour of ethnicity. Other issues include the intersection of oppressions, and oppressive discourse such as the use of “us” and “them”.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

This chapter details the research design of the study and the motivation for it. The methodological approach to the research question, the sampling process, and the data collection method will be discussed.

Since this research takes a deeper look at integration and involves emotional experiences, a qualitative research methodology was selected. Qualitative research relies on data in which meanings are expressed through words and other symbols or metaphors (Welman and Kruger, 2001).

4.2. Methodological Approach

Often, a question is asked to which there are multiple answers. This does not mean that anything is acceptable. Instead, there are alternative approaches to the question. Such approaches have specific philosophical assumptions and principles. Neuman (2000) explains that a researcher needs to establish exactly what the research is trying to achieve so it can be conducted within a broad framework which links abstract issues of philosophy to concrete research techniques.

Because this study is rooted in an empathetic understanding of the everyday experiences of a group of people in a particular setting, the interpretive approach is used. An interpretive researcher studies a "text", such as a conversation, to extract subtle, non-

verbal communication and to discover meanings embedded in the subjective, personal account of events and social actions. According to Neuman (2000), the reader of an interpretive account gets a feel for another's social reality because meanings, values and rules of living in the everyday lives of people are revealed. This research conveys the experiences of African learners through personal, descriptive accounts.

4.3. Research Design

Research design refers to the logical structure of the inquiry so that unambiguous conclusions are yielded. Various methods of data collection may be used in each of the designs (de Vaus, 2002).

In this research, a case study design is used since it is the prime example of qualitative research. Cohen and Manion (2000) suggest that in a case study research it is necessary for the researcher to become closely involved with those being observed to interact with them on an informal level. Gorden (1980) agrees that the relationship between the researcher and the respondent and their roles within the context of the research, play a vital role in either inhibiting or facilitating the flow of information. Case studies rely on the exhaustive analysis of individual cases and then on comparisons. Although case study designs might consist of a single case study, the findings from multiple cases provide, through replication, more compelling, powerful and convincing insights. However, as de Vaus (2002) explains, it is important in a multiple case design that each case be treated as an individual case before engaging in a cross-case comparison.

Although the case study deals with the whole case, it is impossible to describe everything about the subject of the case study, in this case, the African learners who, as a group, constitute the unit of analysis. De Vaus (2002) emphasizes that there must be a focus which is bound by theory or by pre-existing conceptual frameworks. This research has a clear focus that is rooted in the conceptual framework in Chapter Two.

De Vaus (2002) also identifies typologies in the reporting of multiple case studies. Inductive typologies begin with a question. That guides the researcher. For example, "How do teenagers get along with elderly parents?" Cases are examined and common elements are identified, resulting in clusters or types. This research begins with the question "How do African learners experience learning in this school?"

De Vaus (2002) argues that case study research can be parallel or sequential. This is a sequential design. The case studies are conducted one at a time. The advantage of this design is that each case can be informed by the issues or puzzles of the preceding case. Case studies also display a time dimension, which may be obtained either prospectively or retrospectively. This is a retrospective design since the respondents, on one occasion, recall past experiences. Disadvantages of this design are the distortion of past events in the light of the present; loss of evidence or details of the events; and the confusion over the sequence of events. However, the use of multiple case studies minimizes the effect of such difficulties. Case study design was selected because it facilitated the collection of personal accounts of situations. A case study, according to Bhana (1994), is fluid and

presents novel and unanticipated findings. Through observations, contradictions can be observed.

4.4. Data Collection Methods and Measurement Instruments

Non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups interviews were used to collect the data. Welman and Kruger (2001) suggest three aspects that must be considered. Firstly, the boundaries of the research must be demarcated. In this case, the focus is on the experiences of the learners. Secondly, recurring patterns and consistent regularities must be identified in an inductive manner. In this study, the interview data was analyzed thematically. Thirdly, triangulation was done to corroborate findings.

4.4.1. Non-participant observation

Non-participant observation of the learners on the playground and in their classroom provided the triangulation to corroborate their stories. The learners were informed of the research and the interviews but not about the observation for fear of creating inhibitions. Notes were taken of the learners' activities during the break. As Neuman (2000) articulates, what people do is also significant. Contextual factors such as who was present, who entered or left the scene, and where the incident occurred can help the researcher to assign meaning to a particular observation. Such details have been recorded, first in the form of jotted notes, then on a formatted sheet as soon as I was out of the learners' sight. This type of observation was easy to accomplish since I was often on ground duty.

4.4.2. Interviews

Learners who formed the sample were required to recall critical incidents therefore the semi-structured interview was best suited. Interviewing is not a straight-forward activity, but is commonly used in other disciplines, such as social science research, studies in history, and in professions that deal with helping and caring. It involves conversation and gives people the opportunity to voice their feelings. It was important to learn about the experiences of the African learners from those who actually experienced it. Arksey and Knight (1999) explain that interviews capture the individuality of each person's perception of the world and of their experiences in that world.

Because qualitative interviews concentrate on the distinctive features of situations and events, and upon the beliefs of individuals and sub-cultures, it was best suited for this research. In this type of interview, the researcher is anxious to listen to the interviewees' accounts of their behaviours, beliefs, feelings and actions. The interviewer, as Arksey and Knight (1999) explain, asks open-ended questions that do not necessarily yield data that can be put into numerical form.

Gorden (1980) identifies five advantages of using interviews in research. These are that interviews:

- provide more opportunity to motivate the respondent to supply accurate and complete information immediately.
- provide more opportunity to guide the respondent in his interpretation of the question.

- allow for greater flexibility in questioning the respondent.
- allow greater control over the process, especially if, for example, the researcher requires the questions to be answered in a particular sequence. ✓
- provide a greater opportunity to evaluate the validity of the information by observing the respondent's nonverbal manifestations of his attitude towards answering the question.

The semi-structured interview has its place between completely structured and completely unstructured interviews, thereby providing versatility (Welman and Kruger, 2001). The interview schedule (Appendix A) served as a guide with opportunities for probing. Neuman (2000) explain that a 'probe' is a neutral request to clarify an ambiguous answer, to complete an incomplete answer or to obtain a relevant response. Probes such as "any other experiences?", "Then what happened?" and "What do you mean?" were effective. Closed and open-ended questions allowed for flexibility and improvisation. ✓

According to Silverman (2001), topics never arise "out of the blue". They are always based upon some perspective or particular model of looking at the world, or from some social problem that is identified. Similarly, questions are designed with the expectation of certain responses. This is supported by Silverman's (2001) view that open-ended interviews that generate data about people's authentic experiences are usually based upon prior observation. In this case, learners were observed on the playgrounds and during various activities at school. These observations informed the interview guide. ✓

However, I, as the interviewer, was very careful to avoid the use of leading questions. A leading question is one which is formulated so that it directs the respondent by suggesting certain responses rather than others (Welman and Kruger, 2001).

4.4.3. Ethical issues

As Neuman (2000) points out, "Ethics begin and end with you the researcher." Yet, there can be competing ethical considerations which researchers need to resolve, since there are no clear-cut answers (de Vaus, 2002). Codes of ethics are often general and provide ambiguous guidance concerning particular situations (Arksey and Knight, 1999). Nevertheless, researchers ought to conform to four broad ethical principles, namely:

- voluntary participation
- informed consent
- no harm to participants
- anonymity and confidentiality

Learners in this sample were first informed of the purpose of the study. They were enlightened about the topic and their role so that they could appreciate the need for and value of their inputs. This explanation also clarified how they, the African learners, were selected. They were informed that the data derived from the interviews would be used in a report, in the form of a dissertation, but that all names would be substituted thereby offering them protection. In addition, they were informed that participation was voluntary. They were given time to:

- discuss the matter with their parents

- think about it themselves
- acquire their parents' written consent.

Of particular concern to me were the ethical issues involved in interviewing children. There had to be extensive reading in this regard. Some of the issues that were pertinent to this research were, the skill in speaking with children; the request for a support person; the adoption of a friendly, neutral approach; and the use of appropriate language.

According to Bourg, Broderick, Flagor, Kelly, Ervin and Butler (1999), studies show that educators are very good at asking questions. Comprehension barriers are removed easily because educators are in regular contact with learners.

In this research, four of the respondents wanted to have a support person present. Bourg *et al.*, (1999) explain that at times a child might request the presence of a support person, in which case, the interviewer must ensure that this person is as unobtrusive as possible.

4.4.4. Covert research

Covert research, which is controversial, and considered by some researchers to be unethical, became a necessary part of this study. Neuman (2000) warns that covert research should only be used if absolutely necessary and only if overt observation is impossible. However, had educators and learners been informed of the observation, then the validity of the data would have been questionable.

4.4.5. Focus Group Interview

A focus group, according to Arksey and Knight (1999), is a selection of respondents who are invited to respond to the researcher's questions. Welman and Kruger (2001) say that the advantage of this type of interview is that the respondents stimulate each other and share their ideas and thoughts. According to Arksey and Knight (1999), focus groups are used to validate reports by giving the subjects a summary of the findings and by engaging them in a discussion. The researcher hears if the interpretation fits their understanding. It also enables the researcher to seek clarity on ambiguous details and unexpected findings.

In this study, the focus group discussion was used after all interviews were completed. The purpose was to allow the learners to stimulate each other during their discussion. It was also used to clarify details especially since the respondents often mentioned each other's names during the individual interviews. It was also interesting that every learner requested the presence of a friend during the individual interview.

The individual interviews and the focus group discussion were recorded on audio tape. The recordings were then transcribed. The use of the audio tape enables one to focus on the actual details of one aspect of social life. Silverman (2001) highlight the fact that we often can summarize what different people have said but it is impossible to remember details such as pauses, inbreaths, overlaps or change of tone.

4.4.6. Tapes and transcripts

Silverman (2001) as well as Arksey and Knight (1999) identify the advantages of using audio tapes. Firstly, the interviewer can concentrate on what is being said. Secondly, there is a permanent record of the conversation including pauses, emphases and intonation. However, ethics committees could insist that the tapes be destroyed to protect the subject. The third advantage is that sequences of the talk are preserved. Fourthly, audiotaping demonstrates to the respondents that their responses are being taken seriously.

There are also disadvantages. The transcription process can be time-consuming. This was true of my experience although not to a great extent. Respondents could also become nervous about being taped, and this could inhibit their responses. The learners in this research were initially nervous about being recorded but relaxed when they realized that they would be anonymous. A further problem was the poor acoustics of the school buildings. The background noises made transcription difficult. The common dictaphone was not suitable for this research site.

Although the interviews were recorded, notes were also taken to capture the non-verbal indicators, in this case, tear-filled eyes and quivering lips. Welman and Kruger (2001) encourage such note-taking but warn that this should not inhibit the spontaneous behaviour of the participants.

4.4.7. Access, time and setting

Since I teach at this school, access was very convenient. Nevertheless, the principal's written permission was obtained. He also conveyed the request to the Governing Body. Both the principal and the Governing Body expressed their interest in the findings

Having sought the permission of their parents, gaining access to the learners was easily facilitated. Observations were conducted on an ongoing basis during the year. The learners were consulted with regards to the dates of the interviews. In all cases, the learners expressed their desire to be interviewed only after the final examination, as they were afraid of "getting into trouble." Being grade seven learners, they were aware that this was their last year in this school. Interviews were conducted in a classroom behind closed doors. Thus learners were accorded the privacy they deserved.

4.5. Selection of Sample

This is a small scale study. The goal was to ^{gather} glean from experiences of a sample of African learners the level of integration at this school. This study is based upon the findings in one school, which might be representative of other schools.

4.5.1. The sample

4.5.1.1 School

The school is a former House of Delegates, co-education, primary school in Kwa-Zulu Natal with a learner population of 1050 of which 13% is African. The educator population is 34, of which 1 (2.95%) is African. It is situated in a residential suburb, 1km

from the main taxi route and approximately 4km from the railway station. Most learners live in the area whilst some hail from the nearby informal settlement. The learners range from diverse socio-economic, religious and ethnic backgrounds. Learners are taught through the medium of English. IsiZulu is offered as a third language for an hour per week.

This school was selected for practical reasons motivated by time and access. In addition, this school has a relatively low enrolment of African learners in comparison with other schools in the area. I was keen to see if the study revealed reasons for this.

4.5.1.2 Learners

African learners from grade seven were selected to take part in this research project because they were most likely to have been in the school for a longer period of time. In addition, these learners were most likely to be responsive since I do teach them. Being in their final year in this school, they would have fewer inhibitions in their responses to sensitive questions.

There were 131 learners in grade seven, of which 14 were African. This constituted 10,7%. A feasible sample of ten learners was selected using the stratified random sampling technique, the strata being race and sex. Of the 14 African learners, 5 girls and 5 boys were selected. All fourteen were informed of the research as was outlined earlier. Closer to the date of the interviews, they were informed that five girls and five boys may volunteer to be interviewed. This proved to be a productive endeavour as learners were

eager to tell their stories. Learners' names were substituted with codes that indicated G for girl and B for boy, followed by a number from 1 to 5, for example, G1, B3.

4.6. Data Analysis Procedures

The data generated from the observation stage of the research informed the interview stage whilst the interview stage motivated the focus group discussion. The data from the observation and focus groups were triangulation tools. The data from the instruments were recorded as narratives of critical incidents, therefore were subjected to a content analysis process. Silverman (2001), explain that content analysis is an accepted method of textual investigation. During this analysis, themes or categories were identified then examined in relation to the conceptual framework in Chapter 2.

Analytical categories were identified in the observation stage. This prompted further rounds of data collection through the interview process. This data refined the categories already identified or added to them. The transcripts of the interviews were indexed according to the themes that emerged in each critical incident. The unit of analysis was, therefore, the incident. The non-verbal indicators were also indexed for possible patterns, taking into account the gender of the respondents.

CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

The general impression one gets from the school is that there is a good understanding amongst learners and between learners and their educators. The ratio of Indian to African learners reflects only a marginal attempt at integration although this can be justified by low admission requests. There appears to be a constructive learning environment with learners and educators being pleasant to one another. However, upon closer observation, discrepancies are evident. This raises questions such as:

- Are there incidents of racial exclusion or rejection?
- Do the African learners feel marginalised or included?
- Do educators contribute positively or negatively to integration?
- Does the school have a race relations policy?

5.2. Observation of educators

Educators appear supportive of all learners. There is a general attempt to promote equality in and out of the classroom. However, some educators do reveal elements of racist intolerance, particularly in their interaction with individual learners or when they believe they are in the sanctity of the classroom. For example, an educator made the following statement:

You are a moron who belongs in the bush.

Another educator remarked:

*That is not the language we speak here. That, you can say in ***** (referring to*

a neighbouring African township).

In conversation with fellow educators, the following utterances, in reference to African learners, have been recorded:

These ones are raw. That will never change.

How can we use the pool once these ones have been in. Who knows what they do in the water.

Even the young ones have a stink.

There is also the commonly used “us” and “them” phenomenon. For example, an educator remarked:

That's their culture, it's so different to ours. If they speak softly, their people think they are gossiping.

Another comment was:

We must keep them under control and teach them our way or our school will end up like all the others.

The use of “us” and “them” sets the stage for exclusion. African learners are immediately seen as objects that need to be changed to suit the setting, namely, an Indian school. Even when educators are trying to be helpful, they do so by highlighting the differences between the Indian and African learners. This, too, promotes exclusion. For example, one educator thought she was being helpful when she seated African learners next to each other. Her motivation was that they would be able to help each other from a language perspective. However, the learners saw this as the educator’s attempt to keep them apart from the Indian children.

Educators prefer classes in a grade to have a balanced quota of African learners. After the 2003 class allocation was complete, one educator asked with reference to the African learners:

How did I end up with so many?

Before the 2004 class register could be finalized, another educator remarked:

We will first have to balance our Black learners.

It is evident from these comments and other similar interjections that accommodation of the African learners is largely superficial and patronizing. Yet, there is still a general air of good intention at this school.

Although the research question deals with the learners' experiences, I believe that an exposition of the "hidden" feelings of the educators can provide some verification for the learners' perceptions. This is supported by Rist (1978) who writes that an analysis of the desegregation and integration experiences of all children is incomplete without an analysis of their interaction with adults, particularly their principal and teachers in school.

5.3. Observation of Learners

African learners formed their own group on the playground, often forming a circle and playing a game they all seem to understand. They rarely communicated with the Indian children and when they did, it was of a confrontational nature. These learners seemed to enjoy strength in numbers. The older learners felt responsible for the well being of the

African learners in the Foundation Phase. On several occasions, the Grade 7 learners would be called upon to sort out a problem that the younger children encountered. These matters were often dealt with by the entire group. In the classroom, learners were comfortable with the African learners but on the playground, the group became a threat to the Indian learners, especially to those who teased and mocked.

There were often incidents, although minor, that indicated that the African learners were annoyed by the Indian learners. For example, G1, on one occasion went up to an Indian child much taller than she was, and slapped her on the face. Upon investigation, it was revealed that the girl had called G1 a “stinky kaffir”. After similar incidents of name-calling, a pattern could be seen. African learners sorted their altercations themselves, whereas the Indian learners sought the help of the teacher on duty. During the interviews, it became clear that the African children did not place much faith in the objectivity of the educators. Another observation on the playground was that the prefects most often got the African learners to pick up litter. This showed racial discrimination and the misuse of power. This also smacks of stereotyping. African learners were deemed better suited to the task of picking litter.

5.4. Learner Interview Data

5.4.1. *Duration at this school*

The average number of years that was spent in this school:

- Girls - 6 years
- Boys - 7 years

These figures indicate that the learners in the sample have spent quite a few years in this school, considering that the maximum number of years in a primary school is 8 years. Their assimilation in the school has obviously been slow on some levels.

5.4.2. *Choice of friends*

The five girls had all African friends because they felt comfortable with them and felt they were the same. Four of the boys had only African friends whilst B4 included one Indian in his list of friends. Their friends were predominantly African because only the African boys “wanted to be friends.” Three of the boys indicated that the Indian boys did not want to be friends with them. This was observed on the playground as well. Zafar (1996) observed similar exclusivity of friendship groups in a similar study. African learners in Zafar’s (1996) study chose to play together. Verma and Bagley (1979) explain that wherever there are established minorities there are usually some forces of exclusion within the majority. This sets the minority aside. On the other hand there are also some forces of inclusion within the minority that binds them as a group. Each group draws different boundaries although they partly coincide.

5.4.3. *“Things that made us happy”*

The girls listed sport, playing with friends, the state of the school, the quality of teaching and the acquisition of stationery as things that made them happy at this school.

The boys, however, differed. Their list was considerably shorter. Three indicated that their friendship was the only thing that made them happy. One included good education

and teachers, whilst one boy, B4, felt that he was happy because the school is good and the teaching is good. Both boys and girls were able to relate happy experiences.

5.4.4. *Happy experiences*

The girls listed common experiences of a general nature. These were:

- When we learn new things (2)
- When we play netball (3)
- Teachers teach well (1)
- Playing with my friends (4)

Most of the girls referred to their netball matches as a source of happiness and fun. These teams constituted more African girls than Indian. They were selected on their expertise at this energetic game and since they competed against other schools in the circuit, whose teams often constituted African learners only, the school 'stood a better chance' at winning. African learners received a group status. Whilst their sporting prowess, which is a stereotype of African learners, was highlighted, their inclusion in this team actually reinforced their exclusion. Sayed (2003) raises the issue that the act of inclusion actually presents those being included with new forms of exclusions.

The boys were a little more specific. They listed:

- When I was selected for soccer (1)
- When I play soccer (1)
- Playing with my friends (1)
- Meeting Mr. X (name with-held, educator on the staff) for the first time (1)
- Taking part in the Debs Ball (1)

➤ No special happy experience (B4 only)

The boys, too, highlighted the sporting events as happy moments. During these events they were able to excel and receive recognition. It has often been remarked by educators at this school, that African boys are typically talented in soccer. Sayed (2003) explains that the attempt to afford communities of learners the opportunity to explore and celebrate their common strengths, actually fosters new forms of discrimination.

Learners were able to recall other enjoyable moments. Many described certain learning areas as particularly enjoyable. The reason they gave in support of this description was always that the teacher was good and ensured they understood. The following was a common response:

I like the teacher who took me because the teacher, she like, will ask if I understand. (G.1)

It is observed that learners were generally unable to recall many incidents or events that made them feel happy. It seems that these learners sought happiness in each other or in an activity in which they are together, such as when they play netball.

5.4.5. Sad experiences

These experiences form the most important part of the research. They will be categorized according to themes in relation to the conceptual framework.

5.4.5.1. Teasing and mocking

The sample outlined incidents in which they were made uncomfortable. It became clear that what constitutes a joke for one, can become hurtful to the one on the receiving end. It is also evident that learners can be cruel as well. This highlights the need for intervention programs to help learners cope with racial issues and their sensitivity towards people of all race groups. Some recollections that learners made are:

Int : What makes you sad in this school ?

G1 : The way we are treated sometimes by the Indian children and sometimes the Teacher.

Int : What do they do?

G1: Sometimes when we stand in the line, they like, when we come and stand, then they say "sis".

Int : Give me examples?

G2 : Like, ma'am, maybe if you..., maybe if you speak and make a mistake, they'll repeat whatever you say, like maybe you say "I didn't finished my work." You supposed say "I didn't finish my work." Then the teacher repeats it, and the class laughs and make a fool of us.

G2 : Okay, ma'am, maybe the other children comb their hair, the girls comb their hair after P.E. in the classroom. They ask us "Where's your hair to comb?" It doesn't feel nice.

G5 : They (the teachers) make jokes of how we talk and the children laugh and the teacher laughs, too.

B1 : Sometimes, the teachers call us things.

Int : Like what?

B1 : Brainless, stupid, moron.

B4 : The teacher, one sir, he tries to sound like an African when he talks to us. That makes everyone laugh and we feel stupid because we talk like that.

Zafar (1996) identified a similar feature in her research. A learner said:

Learner: I don't speak because I'm afraid the Indian students will laugh at me.

Learner:the Indian students laugh at us, the teachers don't stop them.

The educators, whilst they have committed to fostering and developing good race relations, are often not conscious of their insensitivity. Verma and Bagley (1979) believe that educators are insensitive to the needs and potentials of black children and "label" them as "stupid". They add that such educators have the backing of the scientific racists who believe that blacks are biologically deficient. Power plays an important role in the unconscious attitudes displayed by educators. As adults, educators have more experience and knowledge than their students do and they occupy a position of power. Paul and Smith (2000) believe that this unequal power relation contributes to the teacher's potential to do both good and harm (Paul and Smith, 2000). This power relation between the educators and the racial minority, also results in educators not accepting that they need to change as well. It is myopically accepted that the African learners are the only

ones who must change in a desegregated school. Language is a powerful tool in promoting power and exclusion. English is one of eleven official languages, yet it is still acknowledged as the language of the privileged. By teasing African accents and errors, educators place difference under the spotlight. Such difference is constructed in relation to the educators' values and understanding of what is acceptable. Bhana (1994) identified a similar trend in her study.

She quotes one teacher as having said

It's fine if they speak it at home, but it does no good to speak it here.

5.4.5.2. Racist name-calling

The data revealed that name-calling brings about severe unhappiness amongst the African learners. Many of the learners, particularly the girls, shed tears, and spoke with quivering lips during their interviews. They experienced these emotions because this was the first time that they were asked to talk about their experiences. Name-calling is perhaps the most common form of racism. It is often done out of the earshot of the educator but has a traumatic effect on the African child. Epstein (1993) in her study of primary schools in Birmingham found name-calling common. One girl spoke about how she felt when she was called a "Paki" saying that it "makes me want to run away." Learners in this school related some of their experiences as follows:

Ma'am, when they embarrass you in front of the class. Ma'am, they call you a black, and all those kinds of things. (G.2)

Ma'am, like one boy in this school, he calls me a "kaffir", and I don't like it but he doesn't apologize. I think, (they do not want to be my friend) because I am different and I am not like them. (G.4)

Teasing makes me sad. Names are called. When I came to this school, they treated me like an animal. They used to push me on the ground and in the line. I am called an African or 'Kaffir'.(G.5)

Once, a teacher said to one child, he was making some sounds, and the teacher said to one child "stop making those "Kaffir' sounds.(B.2)

The Indian children call us names like "kaffir".(B.5)

Colucci (2000) points out that when differences amongst learners are openly pointed out, learners become stigmatized and are the brunt of cruel jokes and comments. It is evident that the educators in this school do not make an effort to eradicate such practices.

5.4.5.3 Racist remarks

Learners are aware of the racist implications of their educators' remarks but do not react because of the embedded power relation. What is crucial from this analysis is that these learners actually remember these incidents. Their hurt at the lack of sensitivity must be acknowledged if there is to be a change. The following are some of the recollections:

..... *She (educator) don't like Black children. Because she says things like "Do you think this is Umlazi" or "You should have stayed in Windy Heights (previous school)."*
If we make sounds like "A-we-ma", now that's how we speak, she gets very angry and she will say "this is not a place for 'Awe-ma'. Go tell that where you live." (G.4)

Here again, the educator's position of authority in the class magnifies the importance of his actions (Paul and Smith, 2000). In this incident, the misuse of power encourages learners to make racist remarks as well whilst the African learners accept the pain and cruelty meted out to them as something they deserve. There is clearly an internalization of oppression. In the following incident the child recalled feeling particularly upset but did not complain to the educator on duty because the "teacher just ignores it."

One day, I was on the ground. I was running. I tripped on someone and then when I woke up I asked him "What's your problem?" He said "Go find the problem in the bush because that's where you live." (B.3)

The following incident indicates that children are aware of their basic rights but are afraid to assert themselves for fear of reprisal. Traditional African culture respects hierarchy. It would be disrespectful for a child to confront an educator with this type of problem.

Int : *Was there ever anything that was told to you that made you feel uncomfortable in this school?*

B1 : *Yes. Like once I wanted to play with this Indian boy. The boy said I must go to my own school. Now, I don't know what that means because the government made this school.*

Int : *Why didn't you complain about this?*

B1 : *Ai, ma'am, I'm scared.*

5.4.5.4. Stereotyping

It has also become clear that stereotypes are very ingrained in learners' and educators' consciousness. An interesting observation is how young children imbibe the attitudes and of the adults. It is obvious that the following stereotypes are established out of the school. This opinion is supported by Adams, Bell and Griffin (1997) who believe that our early experiences and the socialization process that instill in us the sets of attitudes, values and beliefs that support racism. Subtle and blatant messages such as the use of separate dishes for domestic workers, encourages the acceptance of stereotypes and the internalization of dominance. Sleeter and Grant (1994) add to this by using the psychodynamic theory and the process of identification. They explain that most children identify with their parents, and in so doing, accept their parents' beliefs and actions as desirable. Similarly, educators are also role models in the development of attitudes and behaviour patterns. Learners referred to a variety of stereotypes as is evident from the following comments.

...And the thing that one sir said like didn't make me feel good. It just made me feel like I wish I was in a different school, not in this school. Why did the teachers

have to do this? We were in the class and we were passing out the papers. So he came and one paper was and he said, "I know it's a Black child's writing. Whose paper is this? Is it yours G3? Is it yours G1, Happiness, Peaceful? We said "No". One boy (Indian) picked up his hand and said, "It's my paper". So that really offended me. It made me feel pretty, pretty bad, like I didn't like it. (G.1)

This child refers to the common perception that Africans have a peculiar penmanship.

Other stereotypes are also identified. The following comment reveals one.

Ya, well on the ground there are like so many children on the ground, but when children have lunch they don't want; they just come to us and like they say "Do you want this, G1? Do you want this, G2?" Why do they have to come to us out of like a thousand children. That just makes me feel bad like maybe, am I poor or something. (G.1)

This learner experienced the stereotype of African poverty. Indian children assumed that all African awaited handouts. This is consistent with Adams, Bell and Griffin's (1997) belief that "people of colour are often associated with public assistance or with appeals for charity."

*In Grade 7, our **** teacher always called me "girl" and I don't like this.(G.3)*

Over the years, and even today, Indians refer to their domestic worker as 'the girl'. This has been perpetuated by the educator in this case.

Colucci (2000) explains that when teachers fail to establish positive relationships with learners, interaction between the two groups becomes limited. The relationship then relies on preconceived notions and stereotypes.

The following dialogues highlight the negative stereotype of Africans being thieves hence the need to view them with suspicion.

The other thing is that when something gets stolen, ma'am, they blame us. They'll say "G2, did you see that?" They blame us because we are Blacks, because they think you are a thief. (G.4)

Sometimes the teacherslook at us like we did something. If we are standing by the class, they think we are stealing, and they say " What are you doing here. Get to the grounds." (B1)

The stereotyping of blacks as intellectually inferior and as creating disciplinary problems is well documented. Troyna (1993) refers to a British survey in which Afro-Caribbean pupils were seen in a less favourable light than their white or Asian peers. They were described by their educators as being slower than Asian children, not as bright and volatile, disruptive and easily stirred.

Being historically oppressed, Africans in South Africa are perceived of as being disruptive and less intelligent than their White and, in this case, Indian counterparts. This is one of the long-term ravages of Apartheid. Having been raised with the culture of

racial domination many children and adults continue to foster such notions. The following comments reveal such stereotypes.

Int : You mentioned that some teachers called you stupid. Did this happen this year?

B2: Yes. When I pick up my hand to give an answer, the ma'am will say "Don't listen to that stupid."

Int : Was it only you or were other children called that?

B2 : Only me and G4 and Shangozi.

B2 : Ma'am calls me that because ma'am thinks I am naughty.

Int : Are there other naughty boys in your class?

B2 : Yes, there are but ma'am don't call them names.

Int : Why do you say that?

B2 : Because of who I am.

Int : And who are you?

B2 : I am B2.

Int : So?

B2 : I am an African.

B5 : She shouts at us. She says we won't ever understand. We must learn to do some other thing like sweep the road or something.

Another stereotype is that Africans are unhygienic. Adults often convey this message directly or by their discourse. This results in behaviour such as the following, related by the African children.

When I was in Standard 3, I used to sit in front of one Indian boy and every time I will turn around and shake his hand and he will wipe it on his shirt or pants. Also, This year, when we were training for the Debs Ball, I was asked to dance with girl and will quickly go and wash her hands. (B.3)

They tell us we stink. (B.5)

5.4.5.5. Exclusion

The interviews reveal that the learners feel excluded at times because of statements that the educators make. The educators' use of the terms "them" and "us" attests to that. Learners, too, choose to play in exclusive groups. To many Indian learners it is degrading to play with the African child. This is evident from the following incidents:

Transcript 1.

Int : Any other experiences?

G1 : Yes, ma'am. You know like when the tests were passed out, the other sir gets to class and I like didn't get like good results and he just comes to me and says "I wish you just went back to the African school."

Transcript 2.

Int : Do you answer questions in class ?

G3 : No, not all the time. Only if the teacher calls me.

Int : Why don't you volunteer?

G3 : I'm scared and also all the other children get the first chance.

Transcript 3.

Int : Do you answer questions during lessons?

G4 : I'm not good so the teacher don't ask me. If I answer they going to laugh or scold.

Some teachers said I'm not fit to be in this school. I must go to a Zulu school.

The following recollection by B1 indicates that the Indian children are well aware of what is politically correct, but do not follow through on their good intentions.

B.1: When I wanted to play cricket, er,..er, I felt they didn't want me to play because of my skin colour because when me and B2 went over there, they said "No, selections are over, but in the morning they made a all-call to say if you want to go for cricket you can come but when they saw us they said it was over. Also in the class, when the teacher says "Who's your partner?" and "Who's your friend?" then all of them say ya, ya, ya, but when you go out for break, no-one wants to be our friends.

Int : Who are these children and do they tell you that?

B1 : The Indian boys. They don't tell us, they just move away from us.

Sometimes there is a more direct reference to exclusion like in the following incidents.

One sir said that I don't belong in this school. I belong in a Zulu school because I am naughty. I don't think he should say that. He should say something like "Stop being naughty." (B.2)

On the grounds, when me and B.5 try to join the boys (Indian), they will move away, go far because we are black. This happened a couple of times. (B.2)

It is also easy to forget about the African minority in this school. These learners tend to be less responsive in the classroom. In an effort to complete the lesson, it is common for the educator to overlook the African child and, as was observed by one child, the weaker learner. Although this does not appear to be a conscious act of racial exclusion, it yields the same result, hurt.

Int : Why are you quiet during lessons?

B3 : I'm not quiet.

Int : Why don't you contribute to the lesson and answer questions?

B3 : The teacher doesn't ask me and we are not allowed to shout out answers.

The learners clearly lack self-esteem which was chipped away by the teasing, insensitivity and by being marginal in the school. Louden cited in Verma and Bagley (1979) discovered, from his research, that the higher the number of blacks in a school, the higher was the self-esteem.

A reference to the township school is particularly hurtful to B5 as it reminded him that he is different and that he is in foreign territory. He says:

The teachers, some of them, they ask us why we came to this school, when we don't do our work. They say "You think this is the township school?"

5.4.5.6. Racial discrimination

Racial discrimination is evident in several of the learners' stories. These learners see the difference in their treatment. The negativity that is created has an impact on learner relationships. One girl explains:

..... He shouldn't tell me why don't you go back to an African school. He says "You know your results are so bad, you know like.....but for the Indian children he doesn't say that. Even when we are catching a hiding, we get like the most amount of hiding but the Indian children, the teacher just touches them and the thing that I noticed is that the clever children don't even catch it but we, the African children, we catch it for everything. (G.1)

African learners display camaraderie. They feel for fellow African learners and are sensitive towards them. This is borne out of empathy. Bhana (1994) refers to the "other" and the "same". One gets the impression that these learners, too, feel they are the bonded together as the "other". G2, as did others in the sample, is observant of the experiences of

the other African learners in her class. Similarly, G3 knows that her being picked upon will be noticed by the African learners in her class.

Int : Who was embarrassed?

G2 : Certain children. Like G4, ma'am. She's not very good in schoolwork. Ma'am will always embarrass her in front of all the children, so the children, they tease her, too. All the children who are not clever, she picks on them, but mostly it is the black children, like Shangozi and G.4

*G3 : Our ***** teacher, she always worried me about my dress but there are the other two girls (Indian) who also wear short dresses but she doesn't ask them anything. Even G.1 and the other children noticed that she doesn't worry the other two but only me.*

Int : Why do you think the teacher worried you?

G3 : I don't know ma'am. I just don't know. Maybe it's my colour, my culture.

African learners are belittled by the Indians but this goes unnoticed by educators. The learners seem to have internalized these subtle forms of oppression; hence they do not complain or even talk about it. Paul and Smith (2000) highlight the fact that children tend to accept the cruelty meted out to them as something they deserve. This is because of the "authority" of the educator in the class. Unfortunately, such behaviour has far-reaching consequences. Later in their lives, these learners will be prone to heaping a buse upon other children to assert power. The following incidents were recalled.

When we are standing in the lines to go to the class, they don't want to stand behind or in front of us. When we do something wrong in the classroom, when, let me say like, the Sir, will hit us hard, the Black children, but the other ones, they don't hit them hard. (G.4)

The teacher, she only scolds us, the Blacks more than the other children, like those clever ones. She corrects them and she doesn't correct us. They hit us hard but the Indian children get slow shots with the ruler. (G.5. Pauses. Wipes away tears.)

Some, like B4, have resigned themselves to their plight. They accept it in exchange for a “good” education. Racially motivated actions are related in a very matter-of-fact manner such as the following:

Children won't play with us because we are African.

5.4.5.7. Marginality

All educators in this school are in favour of democracy and integration. Yet, ten years into democracy, learners still feel marginalized. The following comments sum up the sadness that African learners feel.

There are not so many African learners therefore we have not so many friends. (B.3)

I feel lonely. Only they (African boys) join me, nobody else. (B.4)

We play by ourselves. (B.5)

5.5. Conclusion

The findings reveal many issues related to racial oppression such as name-calling, exclusion, racist discourse and stereotyping. Other issues such as internalized oppression, internalized domination, the intersection of race, class, language and other diversities, assimilation and the lack of educator training in the aspect of racial integration. These issues are explored in the other chapters.

Despite their rather difficult experiences, learners still indicated that they would not want to leave this school. They were keen to receive the 'good' education at the school which was the reason for their enrolment at the school. This is similar to Frederikse's (1992) finding referred to in chapter 3.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

6.1. Introduction

In this chapter, a summary will be made of the key findings, and the critical themes that emerged in this study will be discussed. This will be followed by the main implications.

6.2. Overview of the study

This research report focused specifically on the experiences of African learners in a predominantly Indian context. The report, based upon my observations at the school and on the interviews with learners, outlines just how prevalent racist practices are in this school. Yet, the school appears to be educationally sound and constructive. Educators, too, deem their practices to be non-racial. The findings show that covert racism is difficult to uncover. Only through the learners' description of the critical incidents that they experienced, did I realize that they felt rejected.

The interview data revealed the following findings:

- African learners feel excluded in the class and on the playgrounds.
- There are unequal power relations based upon race in this school.
- Learners have internalized the oppression; therefore, they believe that bad behaviour is the reason for any negativity displayed towards them.
- Learners are subjected to racist name-calling and racist jokes.
- Racist stereotypes are evident.

➤ There is a lack of a caring pedagogy at the school.

These findings highlight the dominant ethos of the school and raise the issues of assimilation, multiculturalism, critical anti-racism and the cycle of socialization.

6.3. Breaking the Cycle of Socialization

The cycle of socialization as explored in chapter 2, refers to the socialization process during which children acquire values, beliefs and attitudes; and to institutional reinforcements. Dominance and oppression are often internalized during these processes. In this country, Africans have been stigmatized as being lazy and incompetent to the extent that they have internalized the belief. Education and educators, I believe, have the means and the social responsibility to break negative cycles of socialization such as these in a responsible, sensitive manner. Educators, too, have some unlearning to do. They need to reframe their identities as superior beings whose purpose in a school is to uphold the status quo. Their identities are linked to power relations within the school. Sayed (2002) contends that those who possess power often do not recognise or acknowledge the subtle ways in which they wield it. Those who are alienated from power become acutely aware of it. Educators are unable to see their actions from a different perspective, and this breaks down communication and reproduces the cycle of exclusion.

6.4. Critical Anti-racism

This important theme has implications for any study on inclusion. The context of the school must be considered since school policy (or the lack of it), practices and the lived experiences in the school need to be interrogated if transformation is to become a

meaningful process. Central to critical anti-racism is the issue of stereotypical clustering which assumes that racial groups are homogenous. Africans and Indians, the two groups in this study are not homogenous because within each group there are cultural diversities. This raises the issue of the intersection of factors such as class, gender and ability, which according to D'amant *et al* (2003) are totally ignored. The intersection of the various injustices and inequities impact upon learners in varying degrees. This must be taken into account in order to address racist practices, thinking and processes.

Based upon my observation of the school in the study, it is recommended that a critical anti-racist multicultural approach to education be adopted. The total school environment and societal life must change in order to encourage socialization both in and out of the school. Activities arranged by the school must be inclusive of all cultures and there must be representation. Sport can be a unifying factor, yet learners in the sample indicated that they were not welcome on the cricket team, which constituted Indians only.

In the absence of an anti-racist inclusive education policy, it is not surprising that educators at the school adopt the "business as usual" attitude referred to by Sleeter and Grant (1994: 18). As a priority, this school should design a whole-school policy on anti-racism focusing on curriculum, staff and organisational development. Sayed (2003) identifies the following important principles of an inclusive policy:

- Learners should be placed in general education classrooms regardless of the individual or intersecting diversities.
- There must be a sensitivity to individual needs and differences.

- Educators must be reflective, and must modify their attitudes and practices.
- There must be collaboration amongst all stakeholders.

The management of such a policy requires a well-trained staff. This raises the issue of teacher training.

6.5. Implications for Teacher Development

Whilst this school purports to be a “moving” school (Ainscow, 2003) it measures itself only on an academic yardstick. As a member of the educator staff, I do agree that the school provides a strong academic foundation for its learners. However, one cannot ignore the existence of a strong assimilationist model, and exclusive practices.

D’amant, Sader and Sader (2003) comment that more attention needs to be paid to the professional development of educators. Initial teacher training did not address issues of racism, cultural diversity and anti-racist multicultural curricula. In-service training courses could serve as intervention strategies. Bot (1991) agrees that there is an urgent need for non-racial teacher training, as educators are not equipped for change, and adds that universities are in essential positions to play a supportive role.

Moletsane, Hemson and Muthukrishna (2003) tackle some important issues regarding teacher training. Some of these are understanding diversity; dealing with the emotional and relational aspects of teaching; understanding learner characteristics, and creating democratic learning spaces.

Diversity , according to Moletsane *et al* (2003), involves the interrelationships among race, poverty, class, gender, ability/disability, HIV status and many others. All these diversities must be addressed. Teaching and learning become laden with emotions, and educators must be equipped to deal with these emotions. Educators need to be trained to identify and understand learner characteristics. They need to know their learners in order to provide equal opportunities for learning and success. Ballard (2003) argues that inclusion is about social justice, and that graduates entering the teaching profession should understand how they might create classes and schools that address issues of respect, fairness and equity.

6.6. Conclusion

There is a need for educators to introspect. This chapter highlighted the issues that require introspection. We often tend to believe in our “righteous” conduct. We are able to rationalize our actions, and we become threatened by suggestions of change. Since this research focused on the learners’ stories, it would be productive to conduct a similar study focussing on educator perspectives.

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This study Appendix A: Learner Interview Schedule

Faculty of Education

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Topic: Below the Surface: African learners' experiences of schooling in a predominantly
Indian school.

Questions:

1. How long have you been in this school?
2. Which school did you attend previously?
3. Who are your friends?
4. Why did you choose these learners as your friends?
5. What makes you happy in this school?
6. Tell me about your happy experiences.
7. What makes you sad in this school?
8. Relate some of your sad experiences.
9. Which lessons do you enjoy and which do you not enjoy? Why?