MERGING IDENTITIES – A NARRATIVE INQUIRY INTO EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCES OF THE MERGING PROCESS OF FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING (FET) COLLEGES IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE MERGER HAS IMPACTED ON THEIR IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT.

THAVANAYAGEE PILLAY

STUDENT NUMBER : 204515996

A DISSERTATION PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION.

UNIVERSITY OF KWA ZULU NATAL

DECEMBER 2009

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The Further Education and Training (FET) sector in general and the public Further Education colleges specifically are in a state of perpetual transition. The merger as an attempt at restructuring and transforming public Further Education and Training colleges presents many challenges to its educators. This narrative inquiry explores four educators' subjective experiences of the merging process with a view to attempting to understand the effect this process may have had on their identity development and/ or the renegotiation of their social identities. The researcher who is also the quality manager at a FET college, is presented with the opportunity to reflect critically on her own experiences and identity development while actively engaging with other participants' narratives about their experiences of the merging process. A strong perception of the college as an oppressive environment emerged from the findings. The merger was evidently a catalyst for the different levels of awareness, introspection and renegotiation of participants' identities.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND TERMINOLOGY

FET – Further Education and Training

HSRC – Human Sciences Research Council

KZN – Kwa Zulu Natal

NBI – National Business Initiative

NCV – National Certificate Vocational

NDOE – National Department of Education

NQF – National Qualifications Framework

SAQA- South African Qualifications Authority

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

As part of the reforms to the apartheid education system, the merger of Further Education and training colleges was an attempt at restructuring the FET sector. Policy makers envisaged the transformation of the old technical colleges into FET colleges which offer: "high quality lifelong learning opportunities that are essential for social development and economic competitiveness in a rapidly changing world" (Department of Education, 2001:5) Questions arise as to whether this vision was shared by staff at the FET colleges, whether transformation has actually occurred and to what extent the identity of the FET colleges, the sector and college educators have changed.

After being an educator at FET colleges for 18 years, I am currently a quality manager at one such recently merged FET college. My own experiences of the merger and its impact on my identity development has encouraged me to explore educators' subjective experiences of the merging process with a view to attempting to understand the effect this process may have had on the development of their identities. It also presents me with the opportunity to reflect critically on my own experiences while actively engaging with other participants' narratives about their experiences of the merging process (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000:182).

The critical questions that this research study will attempt to answer are:
1. What are educators' experiences of the merging of this college?
2. How have educators' experiences of the merger of FET colleges impacted on the development of their identities?
3. Have these experiences led them to changing or renegotiating their understanding of their identities? If so, in what ways?

A brief history of public technical/FET colleges is necessary so as to provide a background against which the FET sector will be described. Policies and legislation

that govern FET colleges will also be discussed briefly to provide a context for the mergers of FET colleges in South Africa.

The literature study was limited in the sense that there were many publications and studies on policy implementation and governance of FET colleges and very little on identity or image of college educators or on the institutional image of FET colleges. Wedekind's report on research on Further Education Colleges in South Africa and Sooklal's doctoral thesis on: The Structural and Cultural Constraints on Policy Implementation: A case study for further education and Training Colleges in South Africa, has informed this study. I resorted to reviewing literature on teacher identity development and extending it to college educator identity development. It was also necessary to engage with literature on organisational culture and institutional identity. Literature on change and transformation was also reviewed.

This study is located within the Social Identity Approach which links individual social behaviour to the changes and dynamics of social structures. Since the identity of South Africans and South African institutions are shaped by various oppressive forces, this study will also draw on Hardiman and Jackson's Social identity Developmental Model which is informed by their model of oppression.

A qualitative research design is best suited for the purpose of this study and a narrative inquiry mode lent itself to exploration of the complex area of identity development. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed by grouping units of meaning into categories.

The study concludes that educators at the college have experienced individual and shared challenges during the merger in an environment perceived as an oppressive environment which is shaped by both structural and cultural factors. The educators' individual and social identities render their experiences of the merger different at times and similar at other times.

2. PURPOSE AND MOTIVATION

When I began this research project in 2005, I was a senior lecturer at a recently merged public FET college which consisted of 3 ex-technical colleges previously

segregated along racial lines. Two of these colleges were state colleges and one was a state - aided one which was governed and funded differently. The racial division of these colleges was also caught up with other inequalities such as sexism, classism, ageism and managerialism. Sooklal cites an extract from a department of education report which reiteriates this:

"Adverse working conditions and a breakdown in the culture of learning, teaching and service are reflected in poor morale, a poor work ethic and low professional self-esteem amongst many educators. An authoritarian management culture still pervades many institutions, which accentuates race and gender inequality within the sector" (Sooklal, 2004:44)

In order to acquire the knowledge and skills to cope with this organisational culture which I perceived as oppressive, I chose to pursue studies in Social Justice Education. In 2006 I was promoted to the position of quality manager at the Central office of the merged college. This role brought on a personal and professional dilemma in respect of the issues of blind compliance to the Quality Management System and value adding through continual improvement. The QMS refers to the sum of all policies and practices that enable an organization to develop products and services that meet and exceed the needs of clients and defined standards. The QMS is a legislated priority (according to SAQA legislation, the Quality Assurance Act and the FET Act 98 of 1998) and a moral imperative in Post apartheid South Africa. It serves as a framework for continual improvement so as to react to changing social contexts, labour markets and learner requirements.

My interest in the subject of identity arose when I had done my own narrative in the Introduction to Social Justice module. I have since felt the need for ongoing introspection so as to understand who I am and what the purpose and the meaning of my life is about. The multiplicity and complexity of identity holds a certain amount of fascination in so far as it can be "amoebic" and simultaneously distinctive; resilient yet malleable; established yet re-negotiable. The opportunity to construct, deconstruct and re-construct my own identity and experiences in relation to the identities of the other participants, may contribute to my understanding of my self and my self realization. It also leads to the debate around the certainty of knowing who you are and who someone else is. Kazdin maintains that

"identities that are more salient to the person may dominate thought and action" (Kazdin,1995:225). Since my occupational identity is more salient than the other aspects of my identity, I tend to understand my other identities in relation to my occupational identity as a quality manager.

The FET sector is without doubt a sector in transition as its strategic objectives in terms of empowering through skills development are in line with the broader goals of transformation in South Africa, so as to create an equal and socially just society. Parker et al (2001: 88) maintain that

"no organisation can be understood as a simple set of structures but should rather be viewed as being in a continuous state of becoming".

Similarly the identities of the participants are not static, but rather, dynamic and constantly developing. Through my direct experiences of the merger process and the theoretical knowledge I gained through my studies in Social Justice Education, I began developing insight into how the institutional identity of the college impacted on my personal, professional and social identity. Changing demographics in terms of learner, staff and institutional profiles in a merged FET college have undoubtedly impacted on how I perceive, understand and make sense of myself. The challenge then, in my understanding, would be for staff at FET colleges to renegotiate their own identities as the identity of the merged institution evolved. For this reason this research project will investigate to what extent the identity of the merged institution has impacted on the identity development of its educators.

There are numerous studies and overviews of the FET sector which attempt to quantify the success of merged institutions, according to the following criteria: responsiveness of programmes to community and labour market needs; rationalisation of programmes; redeployment of staff; increased learner numbers; redistribution of physical resources and financial savings (Powell & Hall, 2004). The intention of this research inquiry is not to measure the success or failure of the merger of FET colleges, in terms of policy implementation, but rather to focus on the humanitarian and social (subjective) aspects of educators who are experiencing this merging process, at a grass roots level. The focus of this inquiry will be qualitative rather than quantitative, investigating educators' experiences of the merger, whether the merger process has led to changes in their understanding of their identities, and if so, what the

nature of this change is. Sooklal's research demonstrates the serious consequences of attempted "restructuring" without "reculturing", a concept used by Michael Fullan to describe the process of developing new values, beliefs and norms. (Sooklal, 2004:9)

This research project will explore participants' subjective experiences of the merging process with a view to attempting to understand the effect this process may have had on them renegotiating their social identities. It also presents me with the opportunity to reflect critically on my own experiences while actively engaging with other participants' narratives about their experiences of the merging process (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000:182). This is admittedly a snapshot study and will not attempt to theorize or generalize about identity development during the merger. Instead it will attempt to deepen the understanding that identity is a complex issue which is rendered even more complex during a change process such as that of a merger. The organisational culture and the institutional image of the merged FET college will invariably be analyzed to some extent.

3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 History of public colleges.

Public Colleges have a long history which spans more than a century from education and training for mine workers, to trade schools in the early 1900's, to technical colleges of the 1920's – 1950's which promoted apartheid education and racial division of labour. Sooklal refers to a stagnation of the sector from 1950-1980 and the subsequent pressure on the apartheid government to extend training to blacks which resulted in the black state colleges being established. These colleges were funded and governed differently from state aided technical colleges. (Sooklal, 2004:19-32) Restructuring of the sector began in the 1900's and is currently continuing. However there is still the effects of the white colonial vocational systems and the discriminatory apprenticeship systems which influences the image of the college, even in this present day and age.

It was only in the 1980's that the technical colleges, as they were then called, started to accommodate black South Africans who could only then obtain skilled and semi-skilled employment. Wedekind contends that

" By 1994, there was a mixture of historically white autonomous institutions and less autonomous historically – black urban colleges, ex- homeland colleges and lower level training centres which needed to be placed under a unified system of common governance and finance" (Wedekind, 2008: 9).

The new democratic dispensation provided legislation and policies to transform the FET colleges to be more responsive to the communities' needs and to support skills development and the economy to a greater extent.

3.2. The FET sector

The FET sector is seen to be well positioned between compulsory General Education and Higher Education on the one hand and schooling and the world of work on the other. This sector straddles the last 3 grades of senior secondary school, private colleges, public colleges and some higher education institutions. Its mission is to offer high quality programmes in response to community and labour market needs so as to develop well educated, autonomous citizens who will be encouraged towards lifelong learning (Department of Education. 1998a). This sector has the potential to contribute positively towards achieving national economic and social goals as South Africa has a dire need for economically and socially productive members of society who have the necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes and values for a growing and developing economy. This sector is tasked with the following objectives amongst others:

- restructuring and transforming programmes and institutions to respond better to human resources, economical and development needs of the Republic
- promoting the values which underlie an open and democratic society based on human dignity, equality and freedom
- pursuing excellence, promoting the full realisation of the potential of every student and member of staff, tolerance of ideas and appreciation of diversity
- complementing the skills development strategy in co-operation with the department of labour (.Department of Education. 1998a).

The FET sector has therefore been tasked with helping to achieve the skills development targets contained in the Human Resources Development Strategy by:
- educating and skilling the citizens to meet the skills needs of the country
- helping workers improve their skills and knowledge to access better employment opportunities
- helping employers to develop their workforce to improve productivity, meet international standards and compete globally (Department of Labour.1998).

For the purposes of this study the focus will be on the public FET college sector only.

1.3. Policies and Legislation

The NDOE's National strategy for FET 1999-2001 clearly identified the important role that FET colleges had to play in meeting government targets in respect of skills development and job creation.(RSA,1998b) However there were many delays and challenges in realising the goals of this strategy especially because The FET Act of 1998 was based on the assumption that the Department of Education and the Department of Labour have an integrated approach to education and training which works towards a single learning system. This assumption also underlies the SAQA Act of 1995 and the NQF which works towards a single learning system. However, Gewer, cited in Wedekind, (2008:11) argues that: *"the policy assumes an integrated education and training field with a single ministry and the fact that in 1994 separate ministries of Labour and Education was established, resulted in significant confusion for colleges."*

The FET Act (98 of 1998) provided a broad legislative framework for systemic reform in the FET sector. The FET policy advocates the restructuring and reorganisation of public colleges through " a new governance framework, a new framework for programmes and qualifications, a new quality improvement and assurance institution and a new funding system" (Department of Education, 1998:18) The Act in itself did not bring about the anticipated changes and it was therefore necessary for a strategy to be devised. The reorganisation of the FET sector to meet the objectives of the Human Resources Development Strategy was documented in *' A New Institutional Landscape for public further education and training colleges:*

Reform of South African technical colleges' (Department of Education,2001). This then set up the rationale for the mergers of FET colleges.

3.4. The Merger of FET colleges

After the so-called official end of apartheid and the advent of democracy, public education had to be reformed in order to address past inequalities and unite a previously divided society. In many countries throughout the world, institutional mergers occur as part of public education reform. The FET Act 98 of 1998 created a new institutional landscape for FET colleges and made way for the merger concept. In South Africa the 152 public technical colleges were involved in the merging process and 50 multi-campus FET colleges resulted. In KZN 27 technical colleges formed 9 merged FET colleges. The rationale for the merging of FET colleges was based on political, economic and educational agendas with a view to transforming the sector by addressing past disparities and widening access to these institutions by providing relevant education to all learners. The merger was not consensual and it was organised and imposed by the national and provincial education departments as part of their vision for a unitary FET system which offers a wide range of learning options for the pre-employed who wished to pursue vocational studies, the employed who wished to upgrade and improve their existing qualifications for better employment opportunities and the unemployed who do not have formal qualifications owing to historical reasons (RSA, 1998b).

Hannah and Holmes point out that

"in the case of post apartheid South Africa, there is also a political dimension. Mergers are intended to help eliminate discrimination and to contribute to social transformation" (Hannah&Holmes, 2004:3).

This is the intention at a policy level. Whether in fact this translates into reality at a grassroots or operational level is debatable. Sooklal's research on the structural and cultural constraints on policy implementation found that the restructuring of the FET colleges through mergers was constrained by systemic organisation inefficiencies or structural inefficiencies and that it underestimated the role of the institutional culture (Sooklal, 2004). Powell and Hall also allude to such deficiencies as a lack of managerial skill and capacities, differences in institutional culture and ethos, in

governance and programmes (Powell and Hall, 2004). The merger therefore arose out of the commitment to end racial divisions of the institutions, to transform and to realign the new FET colleges with the imperatives of the National Constitution by: *" healing the divisions of the past and establishing a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights"* (Constitution of the RSA).

Since there is very little literature available on the mergers of the FET colleges, one could extend the claims about what characterizes mergers deemed to be successful in Higher Education as:

- enhancing access and equity goals for both staff and students
- enabling economies of scale through the creation of larger multipurpose institutions with more efficient use of building and facilities and human resources
- overcoming the threat to institutional viability in terms of student numbers, income and expenditure patterns, and management capacities
- creating new institutions with new identities and culture that transcend their past racial and ethnic institutional histories and contribute to their deracialisation (Jansen, 2002:9).

The Western Cape Department of Education maintained in a media release that the merging process
" is not a process to reduce the system but to increase efficiency and that it is a two-part process to transform technical colleges into further Education and Training(FET) institutions. It is much more than just merging which is a formality. It is transformation which is more demanding" (The Weekend Argus: 25 January 2003).

3.5. Transformation and educational reform

Wedekind refers to Gewer's overview of recent policy development in the FET sector and forwards his argument that
" at the college level, the major challenges were to do with this immense delivery pressure compounded by a lack of cohesion in the policy environment. The guiding

policy frameworks were rooted in traditional partitions across the levels of the system, consequently impacting on the capacity to transform" (Wedekind, 2008:10).

College staff in general and educators in particular have always been aware of the so-called "inferior" status of the college Sooklal refers to the perception that the colleges offer poor quality education and training based on the premise that the sector *" is made up of small institutions that are neither effective nor responsive to the communities they serve"* (Sooklal, 2004:39) She also cites Kraak and Hall who allude to the perception that colleges offer " second- rate, poor quality education" (Sooklal,2004:39). The college is embedded in the complex FET sector which includes senior secondary school, public FET colleges and private education and training institutions. Often the public FET colleges had to compete with the schools and private colleges and try to prove that they had the capacity to transform themselves and shed the step-child status in the Department of Education. Wedekind observes that *"technical colleges, due to their smaller enrolment, received reduced national publicity, exposure and government attention and, consequently, in trying to operationalise policies, there was evident lack of balance between expectations and realities"* (Wedekind, 2008:10).

 Policy makers or government continue to believe in and remain hopeful that, the FET Colleges Act of 2006(Act 16 of 2006) will give more autonomy to public FET colleges in respect of management and governance. In effect the College Council would become the employer with the Provincial Education Department playing largely a supportive role. In 2007 college educators were given the option to remain with the state, which entailed leaving the college and relocating to another state institution or entering into an employment contract with the College Council.

The new National Curriculum Vocational(NCV) programmes which were developed and designed by the National Department of Education were first introduced at colleges in 2007. They had an outcomes based orientation which marries theoretical and practical education and training and is meant to replace the old N1 – N3 NATED 190/191 programmes. Colleges had to refocus on their core business which is further education and training and if they wished to offer programmes outside this band eg. NQF Level 5 and 6 programmes, they needed to partner with Higher Education

institutions in this regard. This phase-in, phase-out period is also proving to be quite a challenge for the different stakeholders at the colleges.

Government hoped that the Recapitalization of FET Colleges programme will go a long way in further transforming the sector as it provides the funding to develop and support the merged institution in order for it to deliver the New Curriculum Vocational programmes. This earmarked funding is intended for human resource development, refurbishment, infrastructure, equipment, operational systems and curriculum related requirements. The ex-deputy President of South Africa Phumzile Mlambo Ngcuka, always championed the cause of skills development:

"Never in the history has so much of money been invested in infrastructure, but if we don't develop skills to maintain it, it will become a white elephant. That is why the government allocated R600 million towards the recapitalization of FET colleges" (Mercury 2007:8).

Sooklal maintains that change is a process and it takes more than restructuring to resurrect FET colleges and to change the institutional culture. She therefore advocates 'reculturing' and maintains that *"to get the sector to deliver in terms of the policy mandate will require dismantling the deep seated conservative culture, and building a culture guided by the principles of a democratic society"* (Sooklal, 2004:48).

It seems that the FET sector is in a state of perpetual transition. The ability to embrace change and to manage it effectively and efficiently will decide whether the experience will be traumatic or value adding in respect of the growth and development of both staff and learners.

"Clearly the colleges are part of a wider system of technical and vocational education and form part of a larger human resource development agenda that is linked in with the economic policies of the South African state" (Wedekind,2008: 4). It is against this background and within this context that the identities of college educators will be explored in this research project.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Various policies and legislation which governed the FET colleges were consulted in order to provide the background and context for this study. On commencing with this project it was a challenge to locate local research with regard to FET college staff, FET colleges or mergers of colleges in KZN. The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and the National Business Initiative (NBI) it seems were the two main bodies which yielded quantitative data about staff in this sector and this data was distributed annually to college rectors via the Provincial Department of Education. Attempts to obtain current quantitative data about this sector also proved unsuccessful. It was only in September 2008 that I stumbled upon Wedekind's article which was distributed at an FET Conference in Cape Town that some of the assumptions and perceptions I grappled with as a researcher were clarified.

Wedekind maintains that *"There is a limited body of research into staff in the FET colleges... At a more qualitative level, little is known about the biographical profile of the college staff, their motivation for choosing to teach, their attitudes and values and their career paths with the exception of a limited number of dissertations that test perceptions, colleges remain a black box as far as the teaching staff and students are concerned. This is a major gap in the research"* (Wedekind.2008:14).

This brings into question the accessibility and availability of such research to the critical stakeholders in this sector itself.

There are *"case studies of individual colleges (see for example Barnes 2004; Mafaralala 2006;Manota 2003) and wider studies of the system more generally (Biscoff and Nkoe 2005) have dominated the process of merger and transformation into the FET colleges. Some research compares different styles of leadership (Ncono 2006) while others present models for management in the colleges (Mohlokone 2004) or perceptions on management activities such as total quality management (Sebeleng2005)"* (Wedekind, 2008:15).

A lot has been written on policy implementation and governance at FET colleges. (Sooklal 2004; Mclaughlin1987,Guiacquinta,1994). Hannah and Holmes' article is yet another that looks at governance or the college council's *" crucial role in the creation of new institutional visions and identities"* (Hannah&Holmes,2004:3). Many researchers analyse social transformation merely from a policy perspective whilst others put the responsibility of transformation solely on the governors/college council

18

when in fact the educators of the colleges have a crucial role to play in this regard. Clearly there is a conspicuous absence of research that explores FET college educators' experiences in general and their experiences of the merger specifically. Sooklal also refers to "dearth of first person accounts of the change process in further education" (Sooklal, 2004:1). This research project will attempt to fill this gap to some extent.

This research study will explore the individual and group identities of participants which in turn contribute to the organisational culture of an institution such as the college. Sooklal argues in her dissertation that " cultural factors constitute a key variable in the implementation of policy in FET colleges" (Sooklal, 2004:5). The fact that the merger brought together staff from different cultures who were used to the ethos at their own colleges, is bound to present its own challenges.

While structures are important when there is a change, such as a merger, transforming the culture is also important. Fullan refers to this as "reculturing" and advocates not just any reculturing, but *"one that tends to activate and deepen moral purpose through collaborative work cultures that respect differences and constantly build and test knowledge against measurable results – a culture within which one realizes that sometimes being off balance is a learning momen*t" (Fullan, 2001). Sooklal supports his view and maintains that : *"Change will require a high order of managerial and leadership capacities, funding commitment, a deeper understanding of the moral purpose of the sector and new beliefs and values"* (sooklal, 2004:46)

It seems that identity development of individuals contribute to the organisational culture and the organisational culture also impacts on identity development. Sooklal cites Bolman and Deal *"the organisation dimensions of a traditional education institution and its system relate to the structures, human relations, power and culture. Organisational structure also includes the individual within the organisation, and the way in which the individuals and groups of individuals within the organisation structures relate to one another in respect of collaborations and relationships."* (Sooklal, 2004:6). Individuals' identity development is what determines the relationships and collaborations that they will or will not form.

Martin Parker presents an interesting way of thinking about organizations and culture and suggests that " *organizational cultures should be seen as 'fragmented unities' in which members identify themselves as a collective at some times and divided at other. Further I argue that : 'organisational culture' is a term which should be understood as involving both the everyday understandings of members and the more general features of the sector, state and society of which the organization is a part- both the 'micro' and the 'macro' if you like* " (Parker, 2000:1). This then seems to be very relevant to what this research study attempts to do.

Sooklal cites Schein who "maintains that organisational culture concerns the patterns of thinking and behaving and assumptions that are historically rooted and culturally transmitted" (Sooklal, 2004:7). The history of the participants in the research as well as the cultures from which they come will therefore need to be analyzed. Schein offers a useful definition of culture as:

A pattern of basic assumptions – invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration- that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to these problems (Schein,1985: 9).

In the absence of more research data on FET colleges, I resorted to reviewing literature on teacher identity development and extending it to college lecturer/educator identity development. Many theorists and academics, including Jonathan Jansen and Michael Samuel, make the point that the personal identities of educators should also be seen in relation to the policy image of the ideal teacher and this may also apply to college lecturers. Jonathan D. Jansen offers James Spillane et al's clarification :

"By teacher's identities we mean their sense of self as well as their knowledge, beliefs, dispositions, interests and orientation towards work and change" (Jansen, 2001: 242).

He goes on to explore the relationship between policy images and the personal identities of teachers in the context of developing countries. His inquiry is guided by the following 3 questions:

"1. What are the dominant images of teachers in education policy documents?

2. How do these images of teachers compare with the lives of teachers in practice?

3. What are the implications of discordant " images" and I "identities" for teacher education reform and research" (Jansen,2001:244).

Jansen's proposed schema will be used in the analysis of the findings as its implications could be extended to college educators as well. Jansen plots the professional , emotional and political identities on a continuum which interfaces with the policy image changes from teacher as liberator (1980's), to teacher as facilitator (1990's) and teacher as performer (2000's) (Jansen,2001:246).

In order to understand the complexity of forces (such as biographical, contextual, institutional and programmatic forces) that influence college educator's identities I shall also explore Michael Samuel's "Forcefield Model of Teacher Development" in the analysis of my data (Samuel, 2005:1-16). Samuel makes the point that
" it is no surprise that the concept of the role and the identity of teachers has evolved in close relation to changing social, historical and political settings"
(Samuel, 2005:2). The role of the educator in this research study will therefore be seen in relation to the educational reform and restructuring in respect of the merger.

His model sees *"the teacher's conception of their role and identity as an electron within a forcefield. The direction that the individual electron moves within the forcefield is influenced by both the pull or push exerted by external forces in that field, but also by the stored potential energy that the electron itself has (its charge). The trajectory of the electron is directed by both internal and external sources which enable or constrain its mobility or actions"* (Samuel, 2005: 12).

Participants in this inquiry will no doubt be influenced by the ethos of the college as an institutional force as well as the merger as a contextual force. Samuel's comment that *"teachers are service workers with a responsibility to deliver the goals of the state's transformation agenda"* can also be extended to FET college educators (Samuel, 2005:7).
This also resonates with Wedekind's observations which were discussed earlier.

Literature on change and transformation revealed that change is a process which must be understood and managed. Fullan asserts that change can be led and leadership does make a difference. He also concurs with other theorists that in the climate of change

(as with mergers) it seems that everyone is reorganizing and no one is getting anywhere and that this could be a wonderful method for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralization. (Fullan, 2001)

5. THEORETICAL LOCATION OF THE STUDY

5.1. Definition of identity

This research project necessarily explores identity at the different levels. No one definition of identity exists and different theorists use different theories to describe the way people define themselves. There are various aspects of the self that constitute an identity. Tatum maintains:

"The concept of identity is a complex one, shaped by individual characteristics, family dynamics, historical factors and social and political contexts"
(Adams et al,2000: 9)

These are interdependent, never static but dynamic and constantly developing. It is in a sense the integration of one's religious identity, ethnic identity, gender identity, racial identity, personal identity, occupational identity amongst others. Therefore Kazdin makes the point that

"On the one hand identity is a feature of the individual reflecting on the internal process of self definition. On the other hand identity emerges in a social context and is shaped by immediate circumstances as well as the broader culture. Furthermore identity can be conceptualized as a process occurring and changing over time"
(Kazdin, 2000:225). Because of this so–called multiplicity of identities a person may deem certain identities more important than others. Kazdin maintains

"Identities that are more important or salient to the person may dominate thought and action" (Kazdin, 2000: 224).

5.2. Personal identity versus social identity

A distinction is often made between personal identity and social identity where personal identification refers to the unique individual and includes individual attributes such as being patient, helpful and accommodating and social identification which is derived from membership to social groups such as being a female, Christian and white). Kazdin also points out that

" social identity refers to social categorization of self and other self categories that define the individual in terms of his or her shared similarities with members of certain social categories" (Kazdin, 2000: 342).

The self should not be seen as *"an autonomous psychological entity but as a multifaceted social construct that emerges from peoples' roles in society. Variation in self concepts is due to the different roles people occupy"* (Hogg, Terry and White,1995:257).

It is also necessary to differentiate between role identities and social identities: All the participants in this research project are educators at an FET college and this is their common role identity but they behave differently as educators because of the differences in their social identities and the salience of certain aspects of their identities.

As important as it is to focus on the individual in the group (individual participants at the college and their personal identities), it is also important to examine the individual's social identity (the group in the individual). It is also argued that individuals derive their identities or sense of self or self concept largely from the social categories to which they belong (Hogg and Abrams, 1988:17-19).

Since identity does not only consist of internal processes of self-definition, but emerges in a social context and is shaped by immediate circumstances as well as the broader culture, individual participants' narratives need to be understood in terms of the dialectical interplay of processes of internal and external definition (Jenkins,1996). Given also that identity is a complex and multifaceted issue, it would make sense to locate the research within the broad conceptual framework of the Social Identity Approach and specifically, the Social Identity theory .

5.3. The Social Identity Approach

The Social Identity Approach rests upon certain assumptions concerning the nature of people and society and their interrelationship. It also maintains

"that society comprises social categories (such as nationality, gender, race, class, occupation, religion and so on) which stand in power and status relations to one another. Social categories refers to the division of people on the basis of nationality, race, class, occupation, sex, religion and so forth while power status relations refer

to the fact that some categories in society have greater power, prestige, status and so on, than others " (Hogg & Abrams, 1988:14).

Social Identity theorists also maintain that categories exist only in contrast and comparison with other categories. There also seems to be a greater emphasis on conflict and competition between groups because of the differences in power and status. Hogg and Abrahams therefore conclude that

"order, stability and stasis is a frail and transient state of affairs in a world of dynamic social flux. This perspective opens the way for an examination of how dominant groups can create and enforce a status quo that masks, submerges or inhibits overt conflict" (Hogg and Abrams, 1988:15).

The analysis of participants' narratives will take into account the various facets of their social identities within the context of a transformation (merger) in post apartheid South Africa. It is worth noting that as a social structure post apartheid South African society *"is not a static, monolithic entity. On the contrary it is constantly in flux, constantly changing as a consequence of forces of economics and history, categories come and go, their defining features alter, their relations with other categories change and so on"* (Hogg and Abraham, 1988:14).

It is significant that social identities are not only descriptive and prescriptive but also evaluative. Hogg et al point out that *"when a specific social identity (for example race) becomes the salient basis for self regulation in a particular context (for example in the merging process) self perception and conduct become ingroup stereotypical and normative perception of relevant outgroup members become outgoing stereotypical and intergroup behaviour acquires competitive and discriminatory properties to varying degrees depending on the nature of the relations between the groups"* (Hogg, Terry and White, 1995:259-260)

The complexity of the self concept is emphasized by all social identity theorists: *"The self concept comprises the totality of self descriptions and self evaluations subjectively available to the individual. It is not just a catalogue of evaluative self descriptions, it is textured and structured into circumscribed and relatively distinct constellations called self identifications"* (Hogg and Abrahams, 1988:25).

The merger has had a significant effect specifically on my occupational identity and generally on my whole social identity development. It is an education reform intervention based on a social transformation agenda and it compels one to re-examine one's target and agent statuses. My decision to study Social Justice Education helped me realize that I wanted to better understand myself before attempting to understand those around me. I also needed to make sense of the changes and the challenges that the merger had brought with it. Because the merger has had a profound effect on my identity, I am therefore declaring up front my positioning in that the merger had affected my identity development to a great extent. I am also aware that as a researcher I am only getting a snapshot of the participants' identity at a give moment in time and in view of Tatum's observation that

"Integrating one's past, present and future into a cohesive, united sense of self is a complex task that begins in adolescence and continues for a lifetime... The process of integrating the component parts of our self definition is indeed a lifelong journey" (Adams et al, 10).

5 4. Renegotiation of the self

Individuals continuously negotiate their self conceptualizations since there is a *"dialectical relationship between cognitive processes and motivations or goals"* (Hogg and Abrahams, 1988:26). Deaux and Ethier maintain that social identities *"exist in a continuous process of negotiation and renegotiation whether the result of changed goals or changed circumstances, people actively adjust their self definitions, alter their reference groups and modify their behaviour to deal with these changes"* (Deaux & Ethier, 1998: 301). Since people also have a choice in which identities to claim and when to assert them , the participants' narratives will also be analysed in this regard.

The Social Identity theory also helps to understand the social structure and dynamics of social group relations and intergroup conflict. Hogg and Abrahams maintain that *"societies comprise large scale categories (race, sex, religion, class, occupation etc.) which stand in power, status and, prestige relations to one another. The dominant group imposes the dominant value system and ideology which is carefully constructed*

to benefit itself and to legitimate and perpetuate the status quo" (Hogg and Abrahams, 1988:27).

Human beings born into such a structure, internalize the dominant ideology, identify with the categories and acquire social identities which then give rise to either positive or negative perceptions of themselves. Hogg and Abrahams make the point that *"subordinate group membership potentially confers upon members evaluatively negative social identifications and hence lower self esteem, which is an unsatisfactory state of affairs and mobilizes individuals to attempt to remedy it"* (Hogg and Abrahams, 1988: 27).

Social Identity theorists also argue that Social Identity theory is better placed in linking individual social behaviour to the changes and dynamics of social structures as it *" concerns intergroup relations and group processes with a focus on the generative role of identity in group and intergroup aspects of behaviour (eg. Conformity, collective action, stereotyping, group solidarity, ethnocentricism)"* and they also claim that it goes further *"in elaborating the sociocognitive generative processes that underlie the operation of identity"* (Hogg, Terry and White,1995:266). In respect of this research project Social Identity theory will go a long way in trying to explain self categorization and otherness as

"it specifies in greater detail how identities are internalized, how contextual factors (such as the merger of FET colleges) make different identities salient and how identities produce identity consistent behaviour" (Hogg, Terry and White,1995: 266).

South Africa is characterized by an inequitable social system historically, culturally and socially and in Harro's words *"this predisposes us to unequal roles in the dynamic system of oppression"* (Adams, 2000: 15). Although we are now in the post apartheid or democratic era we cannot pretend that the identities of South Africans are not shaped by oppressive forces such as racism, classism, sexism, ageism and ableism amongst others. The identity of the then technical college and the now FET colleges was also borne out of oppressive social, historical and political contexts. Sooklal quotes from a major study that: *" within FET in SA there are organisational cultures and a work ethos which reflects the legacy of apartheid...these take a variety of forms including continuing patterns of racist, sexist behaviour, intolerance, authoritarianism and abuse of power.. ".* (Sooklal, 2004:43)

5.5. Hardiman and Jackson's theory and model

It is for the reasons stated above that Hardiman and Jackson's theory of oppression can serve as a lens through which educators experiences of the merger can be explored. Hardiman and Jackson conceptualize oppression in terms of the conditions and the processes by which it operates:

"Oppression exists when one social group exploits another social group for its own benefit...It is first and foremost a systematic phenomenon that involves ideological domination, institutional control and promulgation of the dominant group's ideology of domination and culture on the oppressed" (Adams, 1994:2).

Since the dynamics of oppression plays itself out on an individual, institutional and socio-cultural level, it is likely to impact on the social identity development of the participants in this research study (Adams, 1994: 4). The dominant / agent and subordinate / target statuses of the participants will no doubt impact on their experiences and their identity development (Adams: 1994:3). Since

" Harrassment, discrimination, exploitation, marginalization and other forms of differential and unequal treatment are institutionalized and systematic, they quite easily become business as usual embedded in social structures" (Adams et al,1997:17).

Social oppression involves an unequal relationship between an agent group and a target group that tends to keep the system of domination in place. The hierarchical structure at the college and the resulting bureaucracy of government agencies is likely to result in the abuse of power , position, control and authority. Social transformation in general and educational restructuring specifically present many challenges to educators whose value, belief and cultural systems were formed in a South African context characterized by social inequalities and significant differences in power relations. Participants' experiences of the merger will therefore be further explored in terms of Hardiman and Jackson's model of oppression.

This research study will also draw on Hardiman and Jackson's Social Identity Development Model which is informed by their model of oppression. This model

describes the *"processes that the oppressor and oppressed move through in the struggle to attain a liberated social identity in an oppressive environment"* (Adams, 1994:19). The five major points of reference within this theory are : naïve, acceptance, resistance, redefinition and internalisation. These acceptance and resistance stages may be manifested actively or passively depending on the individual, institution and the socio-cultural context. This study will necessarily explore participants' experiences of difference, inequality, discrimination and prejudice. Since the selected participants belong to different social groups, their differing experiences of power, privilege, control and authority will, no doubt, render their experiences of the merger different from those of others.

6. METHODOLOGY

6.1 Qualitative Research design

The proposed research will use the qualitative research design which
"in its broadest sense refers to research that elicits participants' accounts of meaning, experience or perceptions" (De Vos, 2002: 79). The focus of this research is on participants' subjective experiences of the merging process, with a view to attempting to understand the effect this process has had on their identities. Qualitative research will more likely yield descriptive data of participants' experiences of the merger and their identity development with a view to understanding rather than explanation. A qualitative research design will afford the researcher the opportunity to use an open and flexible design, in an attempt to find answers to the following critical research questions:

1. What are educators' experiences of the merging of this college?
2. How have educators' experiences of the merger of FET colleges impacted on the development of their identities?
3. Have these experiences led them to changing or renegotiating their understanding of their identities? If so, in what ways?

The leaning towards a postmodern paradigm is unavoidable, given the context and the nature of this inquiry

"with its emphasis on the social construction of social reality, fluid as opposed to fixed identities of the self and the partiality of all truths" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000: 178). This research will never lay claim to objectivity as it is a subjective social inquiry which will be 'messy' as it attempts to : *"search out and experiment with narratives that expand the range of understanding, voice and the storied variations in human experience"* (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000: 184). At times there will also be a new paradigm approach will also attempt to *"capture those elements that make life conflictual, moving, problematic"* (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000:179).

6.2. Narrative inquiry mode

Adopting a narrative inquiry mode will enable me, as the researcher to enter the life world (lived experience) of the participants, and so help me to understand the meaning they give to their experiences of the merger process. Narrative inquiry, therefore, lends itself to the exploration of the complex area of social identity development. Narrative inquiry is empowering for both the researcher and the participants as it is a collaborative exercise which promotes dialogue, empathy and understanding. Narrative inquiry will also allow for the social context of the participants to be explored in detail and for social identities to be understood in their complexity, multiplicity and interconnectedness (Adams, 2000:11). Narrative inquiry allows for diversity and difference in the responses and meaning-making of individual participants, and the representation of participants' voices as authentically as possible. Narrative enquiry focuses attention on and shows an appreciation of individuality, diversity and difference as opposed to collectivity, unity and similarity. According to Ricoeur *"identity is something which is produced through narrative"* (May, 2002: 249).

The focus of this mode of inquiry does not involve the search for absolute truths. Instead partial, fragmented and complex realities which are socially constructed will be explored (May, 2002: 243). Although the stories that participants share may be fragmented and partial they will still reveal a great deal about their experiences of the merger and its effect on their identity development. Klages makes the point that *"post modernism in contrast (to Modernism) doesn't lament the idea of fragmentary provisionality or incoherence, but it rather celebrates that"* (Klages,2007:2). She proceeds to say that postmodernism rejects grand narratives and favours mini

narratives - *"stories that explain small practices, local events, rather than large scale universal global concepts. Postmodern "mini narratives" are always situational, contingent and temporary, making no claim to universality, truth, reason or stability"* (Klages, 2007:4).

6.3. Data collection

Interviewing was used as the method of data collection and the informal conversational interview was found to be suitable as *"it resembled a chat during which participants may sometimes forget that they are being interviewed"* (De Vos,2000:297). Interviewing is a suitable method for qualitative research purposes in general and for narrative inquiry in particular. It involved spoken descriptions and reflections of the participants' experiences and its effect on their identities. A series of individual, one-on-one, face-to-face, semi- structured interviews were held with each participant. The critical questions were explored through a series of open-ended questions with the purpose of gaining understanding of the participant's experiences and the perceived impact these have had on their individual identities. The semi-structured interviews served to recognize and accept the uniqueness of each participant and his/her experiences but they were also *"organized around ideas of particular interest (namely identity and the merger) while still allowing considerable flexibility in scope and depth"* (De Vos, 2000 298).

A series of two interviews of half hour duration were held over two different days with each participant, so as to validate the inquiry. Interviews were audio taped and transcribed. Seidman makes the case for three interviews per participant and contends that *"in the process of conducting three interviews, the interviewer must maintain a delicate balance between providing enough openness for the participants to tell their stories and enough focus to allow the interview structure to work"* (Seidman, 1991: 13). He explains the function of the three interviews as follows:

"Interview1 - Establish the context of participants experience and focus on the life history

Interview 2 - Allow participants to reconstruct details of the experiences within the context which it occurs

Interview 3 - Encourage the participants to reflect on the meaning their experience holds for them" (Seidman, 1991:11).

Although it was initially my intention to conduct three interviews as Seidman suggests, only two half hour interviews were held with each participant one week apart. Although it was an initial concern as to what extent I could establish a relationship with the participants over this limited time, I did notice a development in our relationship over the two interviews. I made every effort to listen attentively, show interest, understand and respect what the participants said (De Vos, 2002:301). Participants seemed very willing to offer insights into their upbringing and culture and seemed eager for me to understand who they were and what they had experienced. This was evidence that I had established rapport and built a relationship with participants. They clearly felt comfortable and safe sharing their experiences and perceptions. I take comfort in Seidman's comment *"As yet there are no absolutes in the world of interviewing"* (Seidman, 1991: 15). This is in keeping with the Social Identity Approach as well as the narrative enquiry mode of research. Again this brings to mind the Social Justice orientation which reminds me that it is not a perfect world and as a quality manager my preoccupation with rational processes, structure and plans needs to be relooked at. There were times when I felt that the more in depth interviews might have been a better option as they would have yielded richer data. The interviews were scheduled for May 2007 which unfortunately coincided with the public servants strike proving disruptive to operations at the college and my research project. However I came to realize that the data generated from the two interviews was sufficient for the purposes of this research project and the analysis thereof led to valuable insights.

The interviews were semi-structured therefore the questions explored were not exactly the same. They were however all attempting to encourage responses to the research questions. I often found the need to rephrase questions because I thought there was a need to clarify or simplify the questions, especially during interviews with participant 3 as he referred directly to his language barrier. The broad areas explored in the interviews included participants' individual identities, their experiences of the merger and whether and in what ways the merger changed or affected them. The following probes were used such as : Tell me more. How so? Why do you think this was so?

Elaborate a bit more. The purpose of using probing techniques was to *"deepen the response to a question, to increase the richness of data being obtained and to give cues to the participant about the level of response desired"* (De Vos, 2000: 295).

Transcripts of the first interviews were read through so that the participants' experiences mentioned in the first interview could be further explored. The second interview picked up on points made by the participants' with the purpose of further exploring these in more depth. This process also afforded me, as the researcher, the opportunity to reflect on my own experiences and my own identities.

Interviewing is an avenue of inquiry which is very attuned to the purposes of this research project and the questions being asked. As an ex-English and Communication lecturer and a quality manager who has to continuously elicit feedback from various stakeholders, I am quite comfortable and familiar with the use of interviewing techniques. It also involves a great deal of listening and quite often time constraints do not afford me the luxury of listening. Like Seidman I also have *"an interest in other individuals stories because they are of worth"* (Seidman: 1991: 3).

Yet another challenge was to maintain a balance between flexibility and consistency in data collection *" maintain enough flexibility to elicit individual stories while at the same time gathering information with enough consistency to allow for comparison between and among subjects"* (May cited in De Vos, 2000:299).
Like Seidman I have found that *"It is hard and sometimes draining, but I have never lost the feeling that it is a privilege to gather stories of people through interviewing and to come to understand their experiences through their stories. Sharing those stories through developing profiles of the people I had interviewed in their own words and making thematic connections among their experiences proved to be a fruitful way of working with the material and of writing about what I learned"* (Seidman 1991: xv-xvi).

6.4. Access and Clearance

A letter requesting consent to recruit participants and conduct research on the college premises after college hours was fowarded to the acting rector of the college. This

letter outlined the purpose of the research and the methodologies to be used. Once approval was obtained, I forwarded the research proposal to the sample of prospective participants I had selected. Informal meetings were held with prospective participants, where I outlined the purpose of the research and the methodologies to be used. Participants had a choice in consenting to participate in the research and they all agreed to do so with much enthusiasm.

6.5. Sample

Purposive sampling was used to determine a small, select sample of participants. Purposive sampling involves thinking critically about the context of the population and necessitates clear identification and criteria for the selection of participants. Four participants were selected purposively, one from each race group and one from each of the merger partners. This method of sample selection was expected to yield *"rich data"* for the purposes of this research study (De Vos, 2002: 334). Ironically all four of my initial sample resigned in 2006 and I had to select another sample in 2007. I assumed that participants might communicate only what they thought I as a quality manager wanted to hear. However the participants seemed extremely honest in the interviews leaving me with a strong sense that they responded to me as a person and not just as a quality manager. I knew right at the outset that I was entering into a relationship with them. There is always the consideration that any participants tell only the stories they choose to, and while probing may reveal more about them and their experiences, I had to respect and accept the stories they tell.

The nature of the sample being representative of the different race groups and the merger partners enabled me to analyse the individuals in the group and group in the individual and also, to establish what is individually unique and collectively shared by the participants (Hogg & Abrams, 1998). Details of participation was negotiated with individual participants, in terms of the interview dates, venues and settings, anonymity, confidentiality and other ethical issues (De Vos, 2002: 64-76). All 4 participants involved in this research project chose to remain at the college and enter into Council employee contracts when they were given a choice ; however the process of transferring from state to college is yet to be finalized. This is yet another process

that would no doubt have impacted on the identity development of educators at the college.

I also chose to use the "maximum variation" sampling technique to select the participants. The range of participants covered the different races, genders, age groups and merger partners. I consciously tried to bridge the racial and hierarchical barriers by being sensitive and respectful and by exhibiting a genuine interest in the stories of the participants. I now wonder if the interviews were an attempt by me as the quality manager to improve my relations with the participants. This selection could also have been based on my own positioning in terms of my own social identities and categories. I am aware of the fact that I may have purposively selected them because I relate to them; I have similar thinking patterns and I may view them as playing an important role in the quality management system at the college. Seidman maintains that *"the researcher may find connections amongst the experiences of the individuals he or she interviews. Such links among people whose individual lives are quite different but who are affected by common structural and social forces can help the reader see patterns in that experience"* (Seidman, 1991:42).

I am reminded by Vithal and Jansen's (2002: 26) view that *"there is a range of ethical and political issues in data collection which must be considered"*. As the participants are from state run institutions, it is important that the I ensure that participants' relationships with the employer are not jeopardized and that they are not open to victimization. Every effort has been made to maintain their confidentiality and anonymity.

6.6. Data analysis

Tesch's open coding approach to data analysis was used. This involved:
(De Vos, 2002: 292):
- reading through all the interview transcripts in their entirety
- comparing the transcripts of participants' narratives and identifying main themes
- grouping units of meaning into categories
- providing conceptual names for each category

These themes and categories were then analysed and interpreted in terms of relevant literature and in relation to the theoretical framework. Relationships between the themes were identified and their interconnectedness explored according to the afore-mentioned frameworks and models to allow for some understanding, meaning and value to emerge.

6.7. Data representation

It was quite challenging to decide how to represent the findings authentically without compromising the anonymity of the participants or the relationship that developed between researcher and participants. Direct quotations were resorted to but names of the participants, the college and the campuses were omitted. The categories and themes into which the participants' experiences were clustered kept changing and this is possibly because you cannot separate documenting data from analyzing it. This may be so also because as Richardson suggests: *"categories are fluid, indeed what should be a category keeps altering, enlarging"* (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000: 167). The presentation of data collected from individual participant's narratives involved direct quotations relevant to and illustrative of points of discussion and analysis according to the themes that emerged. This served to capture the *"individually unique" and "collectively shared experiences"* that presented themselves throughout the research process (Jenkins, 1996: 19).

It is hoped that this research emerges as *"a social product ... within the context of specific social, historical and cultural locations... interpretative devices through which people represent themselves, both to themselves and others"* (May, 2002: 242). Hopefully FET stakeholders will be able to read, understand and even relate to the voices of the various participants presented in this research study.

6.8. Role of the researcher

As far as possible, the researcher and participants were meant to be equal role players who will learn from and with each other. It is the intention of this research that narratives are co-produced between the researcher and the participants. Every effort

was made to establish and maintain balanced power relations in the research process and for the researcher and the research process to be as flexible as possible.

As I, (the researcher) am an employee of the same FET college from which the sample of participants are drawn, and as I have my own experiences and perceptions of the merger process, total objectivity could therefore not be claimed. It was impossible to avoid positioning myself in terms of my own social identities and categories, and I was not able to *"avoid the task of criticism"* in analysing and interpreting participants' experiences (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000:182). However, I made every effort possible not to let my own experiences of the merger influence the participants' narratives. As I interweave my own experiences of the merger process and my perceptions of the impact these have had on my identity development, throughout the process of this research, I will allow myself the space and the opportunity to openly explore, document and investigate my responses to individual participants' responses.

This distinction between me as researcher and quality manager became quite blurred at times and I suspect it is because of my pre-occupation with my occupational identity. My interest in this research topic arose out of my own narrative done in the Introduction to Social Justice and Models of Social Identity modules that I studied. It has shaped this narrative to a great extent and positioned me as researcher. I myself am positioned in terms of my own social categories and identities. As much as I would like for the participants and I to be equal partners in this research project, I realize that they are very much aware of our differences and my role as quality manager at the college. My own experiences and perceptions of the merging process will no doubt render me subjective in the analysis of the participants' responses to my questions. I tend to read meaning and significance into things that I related to personally. Seidman makes the point that *"issues of equity in an interviewing relationship are affected by the social identities that participants and interviewers bring to the interview"* (Seidman, 1991:76).

I faced many dilemmas as a researcher who is also a quality manager whose occupation emphasizes compliance, structure and evidence. At times I tended to want to box and categorize data and interpretation into neat boxes and defined units of

meaning and this tended to limit my understanding of the complexities of identity. At times I was comfortable with being a new paradigm inquirer who attempts to *"foster emancipation, democracy, community empowerment and of readdressing power imbalances such that those who were previously marginalized now achieve voice "* (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000:175). At times I felt that I was unsure if I was in fact giving voice to the participants or whether I was re–presenting their voices and to what extent this was authentic and valid. My role identity as quality manager tended to want more structure and evidentialism which rendered me sceptical whilst my social justice orientation as a researcher rendered me affirmative. This tension and discrepancy in respect of discordant roles of a social justice inquirer and a quality manager led to a kind of schizophrenia which, through my continual reflection, I was able to resolve. It also made me more sensitive and aware of issues of validity and authenticity.

During the course of this research, I often wondered if this research project was a vehicle for assisting me to transcend the barriers created by own experiences with race, class and gender oppression, so that I could build coalitions with the participants which is essential for social change. My journey in respect of my identity development is still continuing and this research project is an integral part of that journey. Like Bakker's research in respect of *Voices from the Margins*, this research project also assumes a self reflexive stance, recognizing that *"what I describe in my research is no way existent apart from my involvement in it – it is not out there"* (Bakker, 1991).

6.9 Limitations of the study

This research project started in 2005 when I, the researcher was an educator at same merged college as the participants. Owing to various challenges, data was only collected in 2006/7 and analyzed in 2007/8. It could therefore be argued that this research study has become outdated in terms of the merger. But it is also true that the merger is a process and some learning can still be gleaned from the reflections on it. This also attests to the fact that to work in this FET sector is a challenge and to conduct research while working here is even more of a challenge.

As was mentioned earlier in-depth interviews might have been a better option than 2 half hour interviews with each participant, if only time and circumstance permitted. The data could therefore be perceived as being superficial and not a reflection of the complexity and multiplicity of identity development. The intention was never to simplify or reduce the complexity of identity development but rather to try and understand it a little more.

Since the participants and I are from the same merged institution, researcher bias could have possibly affected the data collection and data analysis. My positionality was therefore declared in the previous section. This narrative inquiry is not a pursuit of the truth but rather an attempt to interpret and understand human experiences without laying claim to objectivity. It is partial representation of partial understanding of partial data. The data cannot be generalized to all other FET colleges as it serves as a snapshot of four educators' experiences of the merger at a particular college.

On embarking on this study, I realized that there were so many more facets and aspects to identity development, all of which could not possibly be explored in a mini dissertation of this nature. It is possible that for this reason the study may seem fragmented or disjointed at times and over-ambitious at other times. The institutional identity and culture also proved to be a related area which could be explored in much more detail, but this was beyond the scope of this research study.

7. FINDINGS
7.1. Introduction

Participants' narratives were largely descriptive of the participants' identities and their experiences of the merger of their respective FET colleges. The bulk of this chapter is therefore descriptive and comprises authentic quotes obtained from the interviews. From the participants' narratives of their experiences of the merger, the following themes emerged:

- Participants' profiles
- Initial impressions and experiences of the merger

- Collaboration
- Dealing with diversity
- New opportunities
- Personal change
- Uncertainties, insecurities and threats
- Bureaucratic and resources challenges
- Surviving the merger

These themes were units of meaning for me and resonated with my own narrative. I therefore related to and identified with many of the participants' comments which I probably probed to a greater extent in order to understand and make sense of my own experiences. These themes will be further explored through the lens of the Social Identity theoretical framework in the following chapter.

7.2. Participants' profiles – Who are the participants?

Participants described different aspects of their identities, their self concepts and their self identifications which reflected different levels of conception of the self and the salience of some aspects as opposed to others. Some described personal attributes; some described different roles they played and some described the social categories to which they belonged. Their descriptions of experiences of the merger went on to reveal more about their identities and their reflexivity brought on a sense of introspection in both the participants and myself. The participants' description of themselves in terms of their different roles, identities and situated experiences served to provide a snapshot into their life-worlds:

Participant 1 described herself as a progressive white, 54 year old female senior lecturer who had a *"conservative Afrikaner upbringing"*. She is a single Christian mum to an adopted child, and reported that she was very comfortable with who and what she was at that moment in time. Participant 1 spoke of keeping her home life and work separate. She intends leaving the college but wants to remain in training but in another context. She saw senior lecturers as *"mediators..."* and *"glorified clerks"*; and felt that other lecturers saw her as the *"general dogsbody – I am there to do all the dirty work and there's this strange idea that I get slightly more salary"*.

Participant 2 is an Indian male in his forties who is a Head of Division. He described his roles as varying and changing as the need arises. He said that because he changed he survived the merger. He defined himself in terms of what his family said and he also had a proud sense of accomplishment. Participant 2 said that *"some people actually called me autocratic... I had to change that lifestyle, try and accept, consult and achieve consensus."* He reported that he was a family man and he has done some community work. Participant 2 left ESKOM to become a teacher; he has a *"passion"* for teaching. He said *"what I enjoy most is supporting and mentoring the Engineering staff... offering support to students"*.

Participant 3 is a black male in his forties who is also a Head of Division. He described himself as a very adaptable person who could accommodate a lot; but he constantly has to prove himself. He saw himself as a product of his history and background and reported being proud of himself as a result of his promotion at work. Participant 3 mentioned his challenging upbringing and said *"... Sometimes I am (emotional) because of the way I grew up if ..."*. He saw being in education as very different to being in the private sector and being driven by deadlines. He said that he did not believe in titles as *"it means nothing"*. He reported feeling good when *"when I see some of the learners who have gone through me driving those fancy cars and some of them are managers"*. He saw himself as playing an important role in advising and educating young people.

Participant 4 is a Coloured female lecturer in her forties who described herself as a very positive person although it is quite difficult to stay positive. She said she likes to compromise and not create conflict. She reported playing different roles with her family and her colleagues. Participant 4 spoke of her role in her family and of being a coach. She described herself as *"a very positive person, I am an optimist, I don't like talking, I am a tidy and clean"* and *"a compromising person"*. She said that *"I'm a teacher because I like being around people, I like learning and I like teaching"*.

She believed that admin workers are not as hardworking as educators and educators are not valued as such: *"I don't think it is a(name of the college) College problem, I think it is a countrywide problem...educators are not appreciated for the work they*

do…if you're a teacher, you're nothing". (It should be noted that the public service strike was taking place at that moment in time.)

7.3. Initial impressions and experiences of the merger

All the participants indicated that everyone was initially very excited about the merger. Then as the process unfolded challenges arose as there were those that embraced the merger and those that resisted it for various reasons.

Participant 1 said :

" The one thing that shocked me was how territorial people were and how possessive they were about their campuses… I guess I had this naïve rose tinted glasses idea that we were all on the same road going to achieve the same thing…there were people who had their own agendas…the bitchiness that came out in many ways…many of us came to this situation with baggage from (name of institution) and I don't think everyone was as receptive as they could have been… the task became painful and unnecessarily ugly as we weren't on the same page about it ".

Participant 2 felt that the merger was imposed:

"the merger was a national directive and we simply had to accept, we had no choice in the matter… we should have been given greater choice in the matter… in where we wanted to be located…" He also felt used and abused in the process: *"It was more a case of using you, people tended to include you when they could make use of you, when they were setting up their little committees… thereafter when it came to sharing of resources and making a more valued contribution which will affect our comfort zone I was excluded… it is more a sense of convenience and then total exclusion".*

Participant 3 lamented the fact that divisions and power struggles existed:

" I recall there was a lot of infighting because no one accepted the merger, there was more negatives than positives… Each college felt they had to keep their part, we have done this so we can't change… if you look at it now we still have the divisions… the Indian college, the white college and the coloured college… we haven't merged completely. We look at those who were principals of the colleges in the past… now they were merged they felt small… that is the power struggle… provisioning or

someone from the outside telling you how to run your campus...". He perceived his appointment as an affirmative action appointment and felt that *"others were not happy that I was promoted from level 1 to level 3 ...there's those that make you and those that break you ...".*

Participant 4 often alluded to the confusion and complications that merger brought about:

"I'm beginning to wonder what is going on before the merger I was at (name of her campus) from 2001-2007, nothing has changed as far as my salary is concerned...in fact what I can say is that things have gone worse for me... because every month I have problems with my salary". She went on to say that :

"Before the merger I would have problems, I would go to the person concerned, complain and ask what are you going to do about this. After the merger things just got more complicated for me personally because I go to one person who sends me to another...the merger has caused confusion...I follow the correct channels of communication and I still don't get any joy..."

7.4. Collaboration

The participants seemed to enjoy working as groups or teams across the merged institution as well as within their own campuses. All the participants seemed to see themselves as part of the group that embraced or supported the merger and referred to "others" who did not do so.

Participant 1 said that: *"We started out having combined Business Studies meetings... I found that very beneficial, I enjoyed meeting with other people on the other campuses and then it just stopped and I miss that. And I can't understand why it hasn't been put in place again".* She also decided to ally with another race group and she joined the group of Indians in the staffroom and mentors the Indian woman in her department: *"Then as far as people in my department go, we are all white except for one. So I guess this Indian lady is the one who feels isolated when she comes to meeting. Because of how I feel in the staff room, I really go out of my way to make sure she feels included and that there is nothing untoward said in the meeting that could be taken as racial because we're all women...".*

Participant 1 as a senior lecturer seemed to share a better relationship with Level 1 lecturers after she distanced herself from her HOD: *"Prior to the merger because of the hierarchy being what it was, before I could act I would have had to ask permission... certainly my rapport with my staff is better, there is trust and honesty which I never had before... I think they believed that I was merely living in my senior's pocket... it freed me up to nurture people more... they will come and chat about personal issues where they never used to before".*

Participant 2 seemed to enjoy the diversity that the merger afforded: *"During the merger there were a lot of positive things... training... meeting people from varied backgrounds...friends in the sense that you formed senior lecturer forums...".*

Participant 3 stated that there should be more black, Zulu speaking people who would relate to and understand him. He asserted that *" there should be equal representation at the college... there should be more blacks at senior level".*

Participant 4 made the distinction between educators at campuses and central office-based staff: *"HR must do their work just like we (educators) do ours...".*

All the participants refer to a "them and us" syndrome where campus staff and central office staff are concerned.

7.5. Dealing with diversity

All the participants were acutely aware of the diversity and differences that the merger brought with it. Some embraced the diversity whilst others saw it as a threat as it created competition.

Participant 2 explained the situation in the following way:

"The merger in our case was not smooth in the sense that we had merged HOD, HOA and HOR colleges... they did have their varied backgrounds, different admin systems, to come together as one system did have its challenges in terms of uniformity... We are trying to be totally tolerant and trying to accommodate people who are not willing

or would not buy into the merger. So in a sense you will make friends on the negative side and you will make enemies...".

Participant 3 reported feeling frustrated by the language barrier in that it threatened his chances of being understood at meetings:

"Sometimes in a heated debate, that is where the language becomes a problem. Sometimes if there were 3 or 4 people that could understand the language they would be able to explain and break it down because sometimes the emotions take their toll and you end up frustrated and you say that these people do not understand what I am saying, but if there was someone else who is saying this is what(participant's name) wants to say maybe he could put it in a better way because it is a cool and calm way, so that is where I was saying there is a frustration with the language... where in meetings even at the highest levels sometimes they throw in Zulu names and our people laugh just to ease the tension..."

Participant 4 recognized personality differences and indicated that

"If you tell me this is my job, I will do it now... I have also come to realise that is me and that is not you, you will get the job done in your own time... you learn a lot that we are all different with different personalities and that has taught me patience"

7.6. New opportunities

The participants also described some of the new opportunities the merger presented despite the fact that it *"complicated"* things and things often got *"confusing"*.

Participant 1 approved of the new FET programmes and said: *"I've also had the opportunity to lecture NCV for the first so that I feel I'm really making history and breaking new ground here."*

Participant 2 was aware of the challenges of the merger but still reported being:
"quite positive about (name of the college) like any organisation we have our ups and downs, we seem to be focused now that we have management structures in place; we have a sense of direction, we know where we want to go and how to get there."

Participant 3 referred to the levelling of the playing fields :

"the merger was a good thing because these imbalances as where there was this thing college A was better than college B because of the apartheid era where college A was mainly white and the other college was black, coloured and Indian..." He went on to explain that: *"The positive part was that it gave a lot of people a chance... and also the promotions only came about because even the young people were given a chance, we had more staff... we had a central office for the new merged college so everybody or most people got a job at central office, lots of people learnt a lot, can be culture wise...".*

He also felt empowered by the training that he received and mentioned that

" ...there is a lot of training I've been through and I've been given the platform to express my feelings as where I am now I've been given the chance to prove myself or maybe to uplift the campus...".

Participant 4 saw the following as positives:

"I am still doing the same things that I did except what has been positive for me has been the NCV. I think if it wasn't for the merger, I would not be involved in NCV. The NCV is a good concept, it is badly implemented, but it is a good concept." Yet another positive was *"... before the merger people were very happy just sitting back and doing very little for students. Now I must say a lot is being done for students and for me that is the greatest step forward... the intercampus sports day etc."* She also said that *"the merger has allowed us to have lots of people going to workshops in Pretoria. I actually don't think I would have got that opportunity if we hadn't merged... moderator and assessor training... I definitely developed a lot during the merger because of this.".*

7.7. Personal change

All the participants alluded to some sort of change that they perceived they had undergone as result of the merger. Participant 1 seemed to have been more empowered at a campus level:

"It's possibly made me stronger and far more assertive than I was before...If I see something that I want to do now I don't seek permission...If I see the need to confront someone, I don't go through the channels, I'll manage my team as my own...I am a

compassionate person towards people in my department because they are after all human beings" She stated that *"Prior to the merger because of the hierarchy being what it was, before I could act I would have had to ask permission... certainly my rapport with my staff is better, there is trust and honesty which I never had before... it freed me up to nurture people more... they will come and chat about personal issues where they never used to before."*

She also realized that *" I'm probably a lot more laid back than I used to be....I am definitely not as intense and I don't get myself so upset and worked up about situations like I used to before... I look at myself sometimes and I think is the person I am now the real me or have I adapted my behaviour to such a degree because of what has taken place..."* .

She concluded that *"It(the merger) has affected my identity positively; now I'm 54 ready to take a very big step and move out of a safety net and go into something different (working with a private education and training provider)"*.

Participant 2 said that the merger forced him to change as he had to adjust to the merged institution in order to survive and without the merger he would not have changed.

"Without the merger I would not have changed... It required that I be more accommodating, more willing to accept views and ideas from other partners. Some people called me autocratic... I had to change that, try and accept, consult and achieve consensus rather than push my own ideas through.... I am now becoming more accommodating. In fact I have already developed a greater sense of empathy... The only way I was able to survive, by changing otherwise one would find oneself being a misfit in the merged institution... you had to change ... to survive in a merged institution .... and that change is not something that is static, you got to keep on changing."

He went on to say that: *"my friends as well, not only my friends at work but also my friends who I socialize with, they also see me as more accommodating and outgoing...I am actually beginning to like the new the new (his name)...I find myself being listened to, accepted, being respected and these things that I am not enforcing but it's simply coming naturally. It must be something I'm doing right"*.

Participant 4 described her personal development in the following way :

"I've learnt to be a lot more patient... I have always been short tempered... central office has taught me to control my anger a lot more..." She said the merger helped her *"... before if 20 people walked in the door and asked me to do 20 different things I would do it... I can't say no... I think this new part of me made me realize that, so I might turn people down... I can't please everyone."* and that *"If you tell me this is my job, I will do it now... I have also come to realise that is me and that is not you, you will get the job done in your own time... you learn a lot that we are all different with different personalities and that has taught me patience".* She also mentioned that *"I have grown as a person and also as a teacher because the way I was taught to teach is totally different now. So I have learnt from it (the merger)"*

Participant 3 mentioned that he had changed somewhat:
"I would say so but just that even in the past I could adjust ...I can easily accommodate myself or adapt myself to a situation... ". He also maintained that *"I've been given the chance to prove myself and uplift the campus so that alone has changed me. And about other people seeing me, I don't know much about that because I am still the same (his name) even though I was at the same level nothing has changed in their eyes. They can come here and have coffee with me by all means...the promotion has not changed my status...ja on a personal level"*

7.8. Uncertainties, insecurities and threats

Participants felt uncertain, insecure and threatened by certain aspects of the merger. Participant 1 felt disempowered at a college level and said:

"Unfortunately in this merger as a senior lecturer I feel in many ways that I have been sidelined and that I have been totally disempowered... just a glorified clerk... I am not given the opportunity to make decisions as I would like to ... as senior lecturers we have almost been reigned in and we are not give the opportunity to function as I believe we should...we were far more empowered than we are now..." She went on to say *"I think with the whole feeling of disempowerment and responsibility not being totally on this campus and ultimately being held at Central. Sadly I am not as passionate about my job as I used to be... it's made me more cynical...Now I am prepared to sit on the sidelines and say OK we'll see how this*

develops first...it's simply in the workplace that I feel disempowered, to the point I am leaving at the end of the year...".

Her insecurity about her racial identity was evident in the following quotation:

"I am more aware of the whiteness of my skin than ever before...the quota system...is it now going to count against me".

She also reported feeling excluded at times when

" I sit with a wonderful group of Indian ladies, I am the only white sitting there and it is not an issue to me but at times there is just little comments or little chats...that I am obviously not included in..." and when *" I will sometimes walk into the staffroom and the level 1 lecturers conversation will stop and it's very obvious that something has been discussed, that it is not for my ears, for me as a person, for me as a level 2...it's very disconcerting...".*

Participant 2 spoke about competition as something positive as well as negative and said that:

"You were trying to cling onto what you have and trying to emerge tops... the competition in terms of attracting larger numbers, getting better results, trying to now get maximum resources from a central budget... basically to make your campus or division the best...I have succeeded in terms of competing with others. We are emerging on top... this makes me proud, gives me a sense of accomplishment...I strive to always remain on top...It's positive in the sense that parties merged will now shine and try and give off their best, try and prove to be worthy partners in the merged institution".

He went on to explain that *" On the negative side the playing fields was broadened, competition now became greater... Responsibilities have increased. We are now accountable to a larger pool of people...trying to be totally tolerant and trying to accommodate people who are not willing or would not buy into the merger. So in a sense you will make friends and on the negative side you will make enemies...On the negative side it was bunfight for resources, it was a bunfight to see who is superior and on the negative side to see who is going to be the dominant party ... not uncertainty, more of a threat, that how does one now progress in the organisation, eh in terms of promotion, in terms of career advancement... the playing fields are much bigger".*

Participant 3 said that smaller campuses felt threatened by the bigger campuses as they were rendered voiceless:

"But when it came to operations... where other colleges wanted to dominate using their power where they had 1000 learners ... so who are you to tell me what to do...".

7.9. Bureaucratic and resources challenges

The participants sometimes referred to their helplessness in certain situations as they had to subject themselves to the authority and control of management or the central office. Two participants referred to the pre-occupation with positions and titles owing to the line management structure at the college.

Participant 3 said that *" It affected me a little but when I was asked to move without notice from one campus to another because we were said to be one , but it would be better if I was noticed of that... I was asked to go back to that same campus and try to revive it... but with no ammunition..."*

Participant 4 said: *"I'm beginning to wonder what is going on before the merger I was at(name of college)...From 2001-2007, nothing has changed as far as my salary is concerned...in fact what I can say is that things have gone worse for me... because every month I have problems with my salary".*
She added that *"Before the merger I would have problems, I would go to the person concerned, complain and ask what are you going to do about this. After the merger things just got more complicated for me personally because I got one person who sends me to another...the merger has caused confusion...I follow the correct channels of communication and I still don't get any joy..."* She is also frustrated that *"I am teaching Maths Literacy... it is very difficult to teach without resources... so I phoned... , so the lady asks for the requisition again...it is now June and we still have not seen those resources; when you complain you are told to buy it from the campus budget... I need the resources...we were promised textbooks... we are still waiting."* This therefore led to her giving*" central a nickname, it is called 'pass the buck' ... the same thing happens at Truro House(KZN department of Education offices)...".*

Participant 1 mentioned that senior lecturer versus Head of Division roles and the accompanying power and control that it afforded *"Prior to the merger because of the hierarchy being what it was, before I could act I would have had to ask permission...."* and *"Unfortunately in this merger as a senior lecturer I feel in many ways that I have been sidelined and that I have been totally disempowered..."*

She also reported feeling disempowered by central office: *"I think with the whole feeling of disempowerment and responsibility not being totally on this campus and ultimately being held at Central. Sadly I am not as passionate about my job as I used to be... it's made me more cynical...".*

Participant 2 also referred to his experience of the hierarchical oppression:

"It was more a case of using you, people tended to include you when they could make use of you, when they were setting up their little committees... thereafter when it came to sharing of resources and making a more valued contribution which will affect our comfort zone I was excluded... it is more a sense of convenience and then total exclusion".

He also stated that *"I don't know what reports management are getting, but (name of the college) is looked upon by other educators as a quite a progressive college which management does not see; management always gets the impression that there are negative reports out there about (name of the college) college".*

7.10. Surviving the merger

Participants seemed to have acquired various coping skills which enabled them to respond to or cope with the changes brought on by the merger. All the participants were positive towards the end of the interview:

Participant 1: *"The further we go along with this merger the more stability is created and the more safety is created because many of us did not ever believe that this merger was going to work".*

Participant 1 feels more empowered on a campus level as she is *"no longer in my senior's pocket"* but feels sidelined and disempowered at a college level and intends leaving at the end of the year.

Participant 2: *" I am quite positive about (name of college). Like any organisation we have our ups and down. We seem to be focused now that we have management structures in place. We have a sense of direction. We know where we want to go and how to get there."*

He also said that he had to change to survive the merger, but part of him remained the same: *"It was also more of trying to retain my identity but at the same time getting as much out of the merger itself... not to lose my purpose in education, eh not to lose focus of my main interest to serve education, to see the merger as one of the phases in my life..."*

Participant 3: *"...Things are stabilizing..."* and he is positive because *"I've been given the platform to express my feelings as where I am now I've been given the chance to prove myself and uplift the campus"*

Participant 4: *"... people with an educational background are appointed."* and *'"Ja, things are looking up."* She remains positive despite the fact that many of her colleagues have become disillusioned and are no longer positive. She did however admit that it is becoming more difficult to remain positive.

8. ANALYSIS

8.1 Introduction

The various themes around which the participants' experiences were clustered and presented in the findings will now be analysed to establish whether and to what extent the merger impacted on the identity development of the participants. It was a challenge to keep the documenting of the data and the analysis separate. My Social Justice studies helped me to understand my past experiences and the impact of these experiences on my identity development. I will therefore try to understand the participants experiences of the merger and the effect of their experiences on their identity development.

8.2. The college as an oppressive environment

All the participants are developing their identities within the context of South African society which is characterized by systemic inequalities owing to differences in power relations. Their internal processes of self definition have emerged in such social contexts and were shaped by existing socio-political circumstances. Despite fourteen years into democracy, it is evident from the findings that discrimination has not been eliminated nor is social transformation occurring without major challenges. The various themes (namely, participants' profiles, initial impressions and experiences of the merger, collaboration, dealing with diversity, new opportunities, personal change, uncertainties, insecurities and threats, bureaucratic and resources challenges and surviving the merger) speak to power relations and suggest that this FET college is perceived as an oppressive environment by the participants. (sooklal 42-46)

The college operates within the context of South Africa's inequitable social system of historical, political, cultural and social oppression. All four participants allude to the college being an oppressive environment. This is understandable in view of Hardiman and Jackson's citation of Goldenberg: *"Oppression is above anything else a condition of being, a particular stance one is forced to assume with respect to ones self, the world and the exigencies of change. It is a pattern of hopelessness and helplessness in which one sees oneself static, limited and expendable…The end product is an individual who is in fact alienated, isolated and insulated from the society of which he nominally remains a member"* (Adams et al, 1994:1). The participants' experiences of exploitation, marginalization, powerlessness and cultural imperialism in the merger institution lead to the perception that the college is an oppressive environment. (Adams,2000: 39-45).

Participant 2 experienced exploitation when as a senior lecturer they were used and then excluded when it came to sharing resources and making a more valued contribution. The issue of marginalization also comes up quite often especially when the participants observe that seniors and juniors are treated differently. Participant 1 spoke of the staffroom cliques excluding her and *"conversations stopping"* when she entered and she was not sure whether it is because of her as a person or her as part of management. Participant 3 spoke of his own marginalization at meetings when he felt frustrated that there were not many other Zulu speaking people who could explain things better and support him.

The 'them and us syndrome' is related to feelings of marginalization which render people at the campuses powerless and at the mercy of the procurement unit and central office. All the participants mentioned that the central office disempowered campuses. This implies that bureaucratic oppression existed and relates in a sense to cultural imperialism where the ideas and actions of the central office are imposed on the campuses. The campuses were often not consulted nor involved in the decisionmaking, for example, in procuring resources such as textbooks that were required by them. All participants mentioned that they had to put up with delays and non delivery of the central office. Participant 3 also mentioned that the procurement unit dictated to campus managers who were ex-principals and *"they felt small... someone outside your campus telling you what is good for you"*. He also stated categorically that *"there should be more blacks at senior levels"* as if the increase in numbers would help empower him or enable him to form an alliance/collaboration.

Participant 1 also spoke of not *" being in the senior's pocket"* which is her attempt to resist hierarchical oppression at a campus level. Participant 2 said: *"I don't know what reports management are getting... management always gets the impression that negative reports are out there about this college"*. This speaks to hierarchical oppression where a sense of suspicion, mistrust and divisions exists. Participant 3 spoke of the dominance of the bigger colleges in the merger: *"The other colleges want to dominate using their power where they had 1000 learners"*. There was no consultation and shared decisionmaking and he *"was asked to move without any notice from one campus to another"*. He was rendered voiceless in a decision that impacted on his life directly. He saw himself as the outsider who needed to prove himself. Participant 4 constantly referred to the bureaucratic bungling surrounding her salary issue. She suggested that buck passing is a privilege people in power, abuse. She spoke of the confusion possibly arising out of the positions and titles people had and their pre-occupation with it.

While participants did mention the empowering effect of the merger to some degree, they highlighted to a larger degree, the unempowering effect of the merger. Their greater focus on their perceived target statuses provides evidence of their internalized subordination within the college. Is this empowerment and disempowerment real or

imagined or is a systemic consequence of being South African? When theory states that the dynamic process of identity development is expected to be shaped by the present broader culture of transformation, it underestimates to what extent the old traditional dynamics of social structures such as differential and unequal treatment are still maintained. Regardless of how disempowerment is perceived, recognizing and being aware of our feelings of disempowerment and deciding how to handle disempowering situations is a vital part of our personal development. The subjective realities of the individual participants, is not questioned nor judged, nor is their behaviour because they react and respond to situations in very real terms in relation to their perception of the world. One invariably makes sense of the world according to one's own perception of reality. In turn this perception of reality again leads to self categorization and perceptions of otherness. The perceived inner conflict of me as the researcher and the participants may possibly not be conflict at all; it may be learning and growing in the guise of conflict. This so-called conflict between groups and individuals can also be understood in terms of power and status.

8.3. Participants' renegotiation of their identities

The participants were very different individuals with different personalities which made them unique in their own right and despite them sharing the same occupational identity (educators) they perceived their roles as educators differently. This can be traced back to other aspects of their social identities. Samuel makes the point that teachers' identities vary across many divides and that: *"the identity of teachers is a kaleidoscope of many permutations: race, gender, language, age and stage of career. Each of these permutations yield particular kinds of interpretations and framings of their relationship to professional development. No uniform identity of being a teacher is thus possible"* (Samuel, 2005:8). The participants wanted to be seen both as individuals as well as part of the different social groups and as Abrams and Hogg maintain: *"self categorization is the process which transforms individuals into groups"* (Hogg and Abrahms, 1988:21). Besides describing themselves, participants' descriptions of their experiences of the merger went on to reveal more about their identities and their reflexivity brought on a sense of introspection in both the participants and myself.

There is a sense that they saw their roles as important but were not sure that others, like support staff or administrative staff and top management were convinced of the important role they played. All the participants mentioned that they saw the need to prove themselves: *"The perception that one is enacting a role satisfactorily should enhance feelings of self esteem whereas perceptions of poor role performance may engender doubts about one's self worth and may even produce symptoms of psychological distress"* (Hogg, Terry and White, 1995: 257).

Participant 1 was very aware of her racial identity as a white person and yet she also focused on her target statuses as a female and lower manager. As part of the white oppressor group she also went through the different phases of Hardiman and Jackson's model: During her conservative Afrikaner upbringing she may have consciously and unconsciously accepted that she was part of the oppressor group which afforded certain privileges. It is possible that because of her internalized subordination as an abused child she also began to acknowledge that there were some injustices in society. She goes on to say *" I carry such a burden about my late father being such a racist... I have one of his brothers who is still alive who wants nothing to do with me...because I have a black child...he is convinced I am mad. His comment is that you lose your mind when you start associating with people of other colours"*. This speaks to her shame, guilt and anger at the existence of racial oppression and implies a kind of resistance to this oppressive behaviour from which she wants to distance herself.

She further states that *"I guess for the rest of my life I am going to be aware of my whiteness, umh, but I think having adopted a black child ... it is certainly not that I wanted it to be an outward statement... I have stepped over this white barrier"*. She also wanted to change the cycle of socialization and said *"I was very clear about the fact that if I were blessed with a child, I would not parent my child like my mother or father, I can honestly say that I have stepped out of that mould completely... I really think that it is a part of my being progressive and being different and doing things another way"*. She transforms herself into a progressive white in grappling with who she is or her identity and then this personal transformation leads to her redefining herself. She then extends this definition to other aspects of her identity like her religious identity where she is involved with "the ministry of helps" and her

occupational identity where she supports and mentors her team. Samuel maintains that the biographical forces which include racial, cultural, religious and other social situated experiences are the most powerful as it is an *"Inertial force, a residual force towards which individual teachers often retreat when other external forces begin to exert too forceful a control over their identity"* (Samuel, 2005:13).

Participant 1 also grapples with the contextual forces which include the macro social, political and cultural environment, which is characterized by many policy changes which are intended to restructure and transform the colleges within the FET sector. She said that the merger has affected her identity positively: *"I guess my biggest positive is believing that I would be here forever until I retired. And now that I am actually at 54 ready to take a very big step and move out of a safety zone, leave the safety net and go into something totally well not totally different, I'm still working with people..."*
Her newfound or redefined agency is possibly one of the factors that makes her confident enough to venture into something new at this stage of her life.

The ethos of the college also exerts an institutional force on Participant 1. Samuel asserts that *"teachers who either teach or learn within institutional settings are infused with a vibe of the institution and its ethos and this influences their conception of self, role and identity of members of this institutional community"* (Samuel,2005:14). Participant 1 says *" I guess in many ways right now I am more aware of my whiteness than I ever been before... I am quite embarrassed to have a white skin. Not that I have to apologise for it, I have gone through that process of I am sorry and all that stuff"*. The merger as an attempt at political and educational transformation and restructuring seems to facilitate or prompt an awareness or conscious-raising in white people. There is a sense that she sees herself as a victim of the very system she resisted and now feels threatened by and insecure about equity targets and affirmative action which may be used in redeployment. This brings about the concern *"is it now at this stage of my life, going to count against me... because of the quota system?"* She possibly perceives whites as having a target status in post apartheid South Africa.

It is ironic that Participant 1 who said that the *"negatives in respect of the merger were minimal compared to the positives and who is "more laid back now"* is no *"longer as passionate about my job"*. Her target statuses as a female and lower manager and her agent status as a white seems to create some kind of conflict. She maintained that the merger *"made me come out of my safety zone"* and she now feels so disempowered that she *"intends leaving by the end of the year"*. She also resisted her racist Afrikaans culture at home and redefined herself as *"a progressive"* white person but at college she allows people to disempower her. It seems that she was initially naïve of the oppressive environment at work; she then accepted *"being in the senior's pocket"*. She spoke of redefining herself as she forms alliances with other colleagues and shares better relationships with them as opposed to her seniors. However she then seemed to internalize her subordination and said that she was is *"so disempowered to the point that I am leaving by the end of the year."* This disempowerment seems to contradict her statement that the merger has made her *"stronger and more assertive"*. It can be assumed that participants do not go through the stages of Hardiman's and Jackson's SIDM model (naïve, acceptance, resistance, redefinition and internalization) as a once off event in one aspect of their identity only. Participant 1 goes through these phases on a personal identity level, an occupational identity level as well as on a racial identity level. The simultaneous existence of seemingly contradictory experiences suggests that one needs to realize that these contradictions do in fact exist side by side and one constantly renegotiates the complexities of one's identity in an attempt to make sense of such realities.

There are similarities between this participant and Mary in Nduna's narrative inquiry where he *"tries to make sense of a veteran white, female, middle class teacher's story as he analyzes the turning points in her life using analytical categories of 'footing', 'positioning' and 'voice' in a volatile educational environment in which her identity is in flux"* (Nduna, 2008: 98). He further concludes that *"Mary cannot find a position that will make it possible for her to use her voice (to be herself). She cannot create a context that is aligned with the whole sense of self and past… there are discursive signs that show a woman in identification turmoil. Her resignation is not a surprise"* (Nduna, 2008: 99).

Participant 2 did not mention much about his social categorizations. However, he did focus on his occupational identity and there is a sense that he felt that he adequately fulfilled the expectations of his role as HOD and he therefore had a good self image as he feels recognized and valued. Perhaps his internalization of his dominant or agent status as a male led him to say *"a white dominated environment did not bother me"*. He also liked the "competition" and believed that he had *"succeeded in terms of competing with others; we are emerging on top"*. Participant 2's agent status as a male and senior lecturer made him see himself as *" a leader"* who is *"respected by those inside the college and those that are outside it"* . He tended to resist his oppressor role by saying that he had become less *"autocratic"* and more *"accommodating, be more willing to accept views and ideas from other partners... try and accept, consult and achieve consensus rather than push my own ideas through... "*. He saw this *" as a slight adjustment required on my part"* but also adds that "the only way I was able to survive, by changing otherwise..." There is a sense that this participant believed that he still has a lot of power and control. As a lower manager he also had a targeted status and did feel used for some things and then excluded from major decisions.

Participant 3 maintained that there were more negatives than positives during the merger. He mentioned that *"racial divisions exist...there is a lot of infighting , competition and power struggles"* He did not however mention his direct involvement in it but rather tended to offer his observations of others: *"Look at the principals of the colleges in the past... when we merged ... they felt small... power of the provisioning department... someone from the outside telling you what is good for your campus. "* As a target at the receiving end of bureaucratic oppression, he was asked *"to move from one campus to another"* without consultation; and he had *"to prove myself and make this division work"*. It is ironic that although he said *" a level means nothing"* his promotion from a level 1 position as lecturer to Level 3 position as a Head of Division was seen as contentious by many in the merger.

Participant 3 did not categorically categorize himself as a black, Zulu speaking person but referred indirectly to these categories whilst describing his experiences. His agency status as a male and his promotion to level 3 seemed to give him an increased sense of power. His internalized subordination came through in his statement that *" I*

have been given the chance to prove myself or uplift the campus so that alone has changed me". There is a sense that he felt that he had not earned this position or deserved it. It can be assumed that this participant may be in the resistance stage of his identity development as he questions racism in safe situations and quietly asserts that there should be more black senior managers. He also became quite frustrated about not being proficient in English which speaks to cultural imperialism where the language of the dominant culture disadvantages and prevents others from having a voice. His *"adapting"* and *"accommodating"* could also be seen as symptomatic of his internalized subordination where he would like to fit in and not be seen as different. It may also be the result of the push and pull of biographical and contextual forces which impact on his personal and social identities.

Participant 4 described herself only in terms of her personal attributes and her occupational identity. Participant 4 felt undervalued as an educator as *"educators are nothing",* central office does not support the educators; *"central office has created more problems"* and she saw *"the delays in providing resources"* as frustrating. She has resigned herself to the Central Office's and Department of Education's buck passing and said that she has become very *"patient"* and
" has learnt that we are all different with different personalities". The word *"patient"* seems to be a euphemism for voiceless as she tends to resign herself to her subordination. It seems as if she has been possibly influenced by her historical subordination as a coloured and a female and it has become second nature to accept her subordinate role in social structures. She does attempt to redefine educators' role identity as "hard workers" but she has ultimately internalized her subordination and takes on a victim mode in not actively resisting bureaucratic oppression. Despite this she maintained that she had grown and developed and has learnt to say no to others but not to her family *"who can still twist me around their fingers".* This is the only participant who is not a manager and one questions whether only managers in education, by virtue of their agent status, feel empowered enough to challenge bureaucratic systems. I suppose this is one area where the QMS should strive to empower those who lack agency to challenge managerialism without the fear of victimization and to make their voices heard. She was extremely positive about the new NCV programmes which she saw as a good concept but badly implemented. She could no doubt make a valuable contribution towards the review of these

programmes. She also embraced the training and has a great capacity for transformation.

The merger was a catalyst in many ways for change, adaptation, introspection and even renegotiation of their identities. Some of the changes were brought about by the merger sometimes directly and at other times indirectly. How and why did they change? Deaux and Ethier maintain: " *Identity negotiation occurs ... when there is a perceived need to adjust or in some way redefine a particular identity as a consequence of some social, psychological or contextual demand*" (Deaux and Ethier, 1998:306). Negotiation and renegotiation usually occurs in response to contextual demands or changes or when you take on new roles.

Participants' indicated that some aspects of their identities remained the same whilst other aspects changed and this is reiteriated by Deaux and Ethier:
"Identity negotiation is an ongoing process best conceived as continual efforts directed at maintaining existing identities as well as adapting to changing circumstances" (Deaux and Ethier, 1998:301).

Participants 2, 3, and 4 decreased the importance of their racial identity as they reordered their priorities and saw their occupational identities as most important at this moment in time. Deaux and Ethier maintain that *"although the basic set of identities claimed by a person is generally fairly stable over time, there are some fluctuations in importance, often these changes are due to altered circumstances"* (Deaux and Ethier,1998: 309). Participant 3 said that he was always adaptable and accommodating but this had taken on a new dimension since the merger where he had to prove himself and uplift his campus. Participant 2 said *"The only way I was able to survive, by changing otherwise you would find oneself being a misfit in the merged institution... you had to survive and to survive in the merged institution you had to change".* He went onto to say that: *"It was also more of trying to retain my identity but at the same time getting as much out of the merger itself... not to lose my purpose in education eh not to lose focus of my main interest to serve education, to see the merger as one of the phases in my life."*

8.5 Interrelated identities and agendas

Samuel makes the point that *"The post apartheid South African education context is infused with the euphoria that policy will be a major contributor to transformation of our education system"* (Samuel, 2005:13). This is possibly why all the participants referred to the excitement about the impending merger. They tended to underestimate their own contribution towards making these policies a reality. Educators have a crucial role to play in creating a new identity for public FET colleges. They need to believe in themselves and rise above their own feelings of disempowerment. The more empowered they feel the more likely they are to empower their learners and consequently contribute to making the college a credible high quality institution. Hargreaves' post modernist perspective holds much significance for college educators and restructuring in the public FET sector as well:

" The challenge of restructuring in education and elsewhere is a challenge of abandoning or attenuating bureaucratic controls, inflexible mandates, paternalistic forms of trust and quick fix systems in order to hear, articulate and bring together the disparate voices of teacher and other educational partners, particularly students and their parents. It is a challenge of opening up broad avenues of choice which respect teachers' professional discretion and enhance their decisionmaking capacity. It is a challenge of building trust in the processes of collaboration, risk and continuous improvement as more traditional kinds of trust in people. And it is a challenge of supporting and empowering school cultures and those involved in it to develop themselves on a continuing basis" (Hargreaves, 1995: 260).

If college educators rise above their target statuses and shed the blame culture they are more likely to be on the way towards dismantling the oppressiveness of the college environment. The college could shed its step child status through the effective use of the recapitalization fund to improve its infrastructure and develop its staff in consultation and in collaboration with them. The new National Curriculum Vocational FET programmes can serve as a programmatic force which Samuel describes as a curriculum intervention force which is *"a more explicit charge which declares the sequence, content and direction that the teaching and learning practices will follow"* (Samuel, 2000:14). The FET College Act which promotes a certain degree of autonomy from the Provincial and National Education departments could empower the college council to improve the working conditions of educators and to recognize

and value them. It is possible to create new institutions with new identities through the merger, but how this is done is what matters. The change process should be managed sensitively, transparently and in a procedurally fair manner. It has to take the past identities of all stakeholders into account and build on them. This calls for effective leadership and good governance.

Samuel's comment makes a case for embracing the diversity of all educators in the merger: *"The quality of a dynamic educational environment is precisely when there are multiple forces and charges that ignite the forcefield... Competing views and opposition are signs of a healthy democracy. We need to embrace the opportunity that each different force presents. It is precisely because we have so many competing and complimentary forces that it is important that teachers not become subjugated workers to the agendas of others"* (Samuel, 2005:15). The spirit of dialogue and debate should be encouraged around issues of diversity, restructuring, equity targets and so on. Educators should be empowered through inclusion and participatory decisionmaking. They should not be rendered powerless and voiceless in processes such as procurement and planning. There is a great need for a shared vision and open agendas where educators could exercise options and choices and take the accompanying accountability. Educators' own goals need to be reconciled with the common vision of the college for them to take ownership of their college.

9. IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The merger as an attempt at restructuring : *" is not an end to our problems but a beginning, a chance to set new rules for new purposes and new learning in a newly constructed world"* (Hargreaves, 1994:261). As the participants expressed their pride in being college educators, they seemed to understand the FET sector and their role in respect of education and training to some extent even though it was confusing and complicating at times. They are seemingly frustrated by perceived inequalities and injustices that characterize the college which they perceive as a bureaucratic institution. We can remain hopeful that with time, effort and commitment anything is possible, even creating *"the climate of free democratic participation and exercising of one's agency as a professional might also engender into the forcefield, a charge that allows teachers to interpret their role and identity as more flexible and potentially*

more powerful" (Samuel, 2005:13). The positivity of all the participants augurs well for themselves as individuals and for institutional identity and culture of the college. The so-called alliance that is formed is based on this positivity and hopefulness for the future of ourselves, the college, for the FET sector and the country.

This study makes the case for future research on how the QMS could influence transformation and contribute to the formation of a new identity of the merged FET college. The QMS could possibly also assist in trying to find a balance between educators' assertion of their identities and their search for professionalism on the one hand and the employers search for controls and compliance that ensure excellent results on the other. However Samuel's warning *"that blind compliance deprofessionalizes"* needs to be heeded.(Samuel,2005: 16).

There is no doubt that qualitative interviews have a place in eliciting meaningful feedback from various stakeholders in the quality management system as can be inferred from the following: *"By presenting the stories of participants' experiences, interviews open up for the readers the possibility of connecting their own stories to those presented in the study. In connecting, readers may not learn how to control and predict the experience being studied or their own, but they will understand better their complexities. They will appreciate more the intricate ways in which individuals' lives interact with social and structural forces and, perhaps, be more understanding and even humble in the face of those intricacies. Understanding and humility are not bad stances from which to try to effect improvement in education"*. (Seidman,1991:42)

This inquiry is an attempt to add value to the participants; someone took the time to listen to their voices. The inquiry has added value to me as a researcher and a quality manager. I certainly do not have all the answers to my research questions as there is no knowability for sure. What I do know is that there is still a lot more to learn and know.

The participants' identity development, and the institutional identity of the college are not separate processes; they happen concurrently and have many interfaces.

Fullan makes the point that *"selected educational reform that takes individuals meaning and development seriously not only stands a chance of being implemented; it also offers some hope for combating the stagnation, burnout and cynicism..."*

(Fullan, 1991:351). It is important for college educators to be knowledgeable about the change process so that they may come to realize that educational change demands responsibilities and accountabilities at all levels and not just from leadership and governance structures. It is only then that all stakeholders would be able to cope with change to greater effect.

There is definitely a need for more research in this field to inform the process of developing programmes which educators at college need to improve and /or extend their knowledge and skills to cope with the dynamic and ever changing FET sector. Wedekind advises that *"there is a critical need for the development of an internal research capacity within the college system itself so that knowledge about the sector is generated from within"* (Wedekind, 2008:18).

It is hoped that this research project has made some indentation, however small, into this process of introspection, reflection and investigation into the fascinating complexities of FET college educators' renegotiation of their identities within the context of a merging institution.

10. CONCLUSION

It is clear that there is an interrelationship between individual identity development and institutional identity development. The challenges and triumphs that educators have experienced through the merger has been highlighted. Some are shared and others are individual. It has also been demonstrated that different individuals react differently to the same contextual factors.

There is a strong sense that the college is perceived as an oppressive environment and educators' experiences of the merger have led them to different levels of awareness, introspection and renegotiation of their identities. Educators do grapple with their internalized subordination and as individuals they do try to challenge the different forms of oppression individually. However one wonders whether this is enough, or whether they should engage with unions or staff associations to collectively challenge oppressive behaviours at the college? It is possible that those who perpetuate oppressive systems are unaware of their behaviour and its impact or that they are unaware of their invisible privileges. It is as important for the college to declare its

social justice agenda as it is for its staff to use social justice strategies in whatever little ways to dismantle an oppressive ethos. It may also be mutually beneficial for policymakers to engage with college educators and to adopt both top-down and bottom-up approaches to educational restructuring and transformation in order to bring about significant social empowerment and change.

Sooklal concludes that restructuring in respect of mergers of the FET colleges resulted in fragmented rather than a coherent FET system as it underestimated the importance of reculturing. This narrative inquiry does confirm this conclusion to some extent.

11. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adams, M., Blumenfeld,W.J., Casteneda,R., Hackman, H.W., Peters, M.L., Zuniga, X. (eds). (2000) *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice.* New York: Routledge.

Adams, M., Bell, L.A.,and Griffin, P. (eds). (1997) *Teaching for diversity and Social Justice – A Sourcebook.* New York and London: Routledge.

Adams, M., Brigham, P., Dalpes, P., Marchesani, L. (eds) (1994) *Social Diversity and Social Justice.* USA: Kendall / Hunt Publishing Company.

Bakker, T.M. Voices from the Margins. Towards conservation of local knowledge in psychology during incorporation. South African Journal of Higher Education.

Burgess, S (2002) *SA Tribes – who we are, how we live and what we want from life in the new SA.* South Africa. David Philip Publishers

Clandinin, D. J., Connelly, F. M. (2000) *Narrative Inquiry. Experience and Story in Qualitative Research.* Canada:

Dardagan, C. Leaving a legacy depends on training. The Mercury. Wednesday, 23 May 2007

Deaux, K and Ethier, K.A (1998) Negotiating Social Identity. In J. K. Swim and C. Stangor (eds) *Prejudice: The Targets Perspective*, Academic Press.

Denzin, N.K and Lincoln,Y.S.eds. (2000) *Handbook of qualitative research.* (2nd edition). California: Sage Publications Inc.

Department of Education.(1998a) *Further Education and Training Act.* (No. 98 of 1998). Pretoria: Government Printer.

Department of Education. (1998b) *Further Education and Training Bill.* Pretoria: Government Printer.

Department of Education. (1999) *National Strategy for further educating and training 1999-2001: Preparing for the twenty first century through education, training and work.* Pretoria: Department of Education.

Department of Education. (2001) *A new institutional landscape for public further education and training colleges: Reform of South African technical colleges.* Pretoria: Department of Education.

Department of Education. (2006) The *Further Education and Training Colleges Act.* (No.16 of 2006). Pretoria: Government Printer.

Department of Labour. (1998) *Skills Development Act.* (No. 97 of 1998). Pretoria: Government Printer.

De Vos, A.S. (ed) (2002) *Research at Grassroots*, Second Edition., Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Fullan, M. (1991) *The new meaning of Educational change.* New York: Teachers college press.

Fullan, M. (2001) *Leading in a culture of change.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Hannah, J. and Holmes, K. *Social Transformation in South Africa. Mergers and college governance.* IIEP Newsletter. July-September, 2004

Heargreaves,A.(1994) *Changing teachers, changing times. Teachers work and culture in the Post Modern Age.* Cassel: London

Hogg, M.M., and Abrams, D. (eds) (1988) *Social Identifications A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and group processes*, Routledge.

Hogg, M., Terry, D.J. and White, K.M (1995) A Tale of Two Theories: A critical Comparison of Identity Theory with Social Identity Theory, *Social Psychology Quarterly*,Vol. 58 No 4

Jansen, J.D (2002) Mergers in Higher Education. Pretoria: UNISA press.

Jansen, J.D (2001) Image-ining Teachers: Policy images and teacher identity in South African classrooms. *South African Journal of Education.* 2001, 21(4)

Jenkins, R. (ed) (1996) *Social Identity.* London and New York: Routledge.

Kazdin, A.E (2000) *Encyclopaedia of Psychology.* New York: Oxford.

Klages, M. (2007) Literary theory: A guide for the Perplexed. USA: Continuum Press

May, T. (ed) (2003*) Qualitative Research in Action*, Second Edition., London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Nduna, B. (2008) A Veteran female teacher losing professional footing in a "New" South African school. *Perspectives in Education. 2008, 26(1):* V&R printers

Parker, D.,Sader, S., Stieleu, J., Green, W., Randall, D., D'amant, T., Douglas, J. (2001) *Core Education Studies. Unit 3: Diversity and Inclusive education.* South Africa: School of Education Training and Development, University of Natal.

Parker, M. (2000) *Orgaizational culture and identity: Unity and Division at work.* London: Sage

Powell, L. and Hall, G. (2004) *Quantitative Overview of the Further Education and Training College Sector – A Sector in Transition*: Johannesburg: NBI

Radnor, H (2002) *Researching your professional practice. Doing interpretative research.* Philadelphia: Open University Press.

Samuel, M. (2005) Accountability to whom? For what? Teacher identity and the Force Field Model of Teacher Development. Keynote address at 50th ICET World Assembly 2005. University of Pretoria. 14 July 2005.

Schein, E.H. (1985) *Organisational culture and leadership.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Schein, E.H. (1991) *Organisational culture and leadership.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Seidman,I.E. (1991) *Interviewing as Qualitative Research.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Sooklal, S.S (2004) The Structural and Cultural Constraints on Policy implementation: a case study of further education and training colleges in South Africa. University of Pretoria.

Symes, A.(2006) Democratization and quality assurance in South African higher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education.* 2006. 20(6). Unisa Press

Vithal, R and Jansen, J. (2002) *Designing your first research proposal: A manual for researchers in Education and the Social Sciences.* Cape Town: Juta and Co.Ltd.

Wedekind,V. (2008) Report on the research on Further Education(FET) colleges in South Africa. Project EAP 75. April 2008.

Wedekind, V. Keynote address at First Pan African TVET conference in Cape Town. 20 August 2008

Western Cape Education Department. Media release. FET college mergers will increase efficiency. Weekend Argus. 25 January 2003.